

# NEW PEOPLE

No. 218 September – October 2025

The African Church open to the World



Missionaries of Hope  
Among All





“AI ‘will certainly be of great help to society, provided that its employment does not undermine the identity and dignity of the human person and his or her fundamental freedoms.’ It functions as a tool for the common good.” Pope Leo XIV

## NEW PEOPLE



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## Editorial

# Rising to Our Vocation in a Wounded World

Among the key motives behind Pope Francis' decision to proclaim 2025 as a Jubilee Year are the deep existential challenges that threaten human hope. In his Bull of Indiction, *Spes Non Confundit*, ("Hope Does Not Disappoint", Rom 5:5), he presented Christian hope as a divine gift something to be embraced, nurtured, and lived in the midst of a turbulent world.

The document does not shy away from naming the wounds of our age: unending wars that show no sign of resolution; rising poverty and inequality; mass migration and displacement intensified by political and economic crises; disillusionment among the youth; and spiritual fatigue born of impatience, consumerism, and the loss of the sense of eternity.

Yet *Spes Non Confundit* is not simply another papal document to be archived. It is a resounding call not to surrender to despair. It is an invitation to overcome fear and discouragement, and to bear witness to a future shaped by peace, justice, and eternal life. The Pope reminded us that the Kingdom of God, though often hidden from plain sight, is advancing quietly, mysteriously, but surely within and among us.

Now that we have passed the halfway mark of the Jubilee Year, efforts across the globe particularly within African Catholic Episcopal Conferences have sought to keep this call alive through prayer, tangible acts of charity, and major events spread throughout the year. Some of these have already taken place, inspiring many to live out hope in concrete ways.

However, the months since the proclamation have also been marked by worsening crises. The world has sunk deeper into the shadows of

individualism, armed conflict, and human-engineered starvation, as seen in Gaza and Sudan. Migrants have of late faced inhumane treatment. In Africa, the picture is no less troubling: injustice, abductions, and extrajudicial killings continue in places like Kenya, where the Kenya National commission on Human Rights reports that during the July 7th, 2025, anti-government protests, more than 31 people were killed and over 500 arrested nationwide.

In South Africa, the so-called "rainbow nation" still grapples with persistent xenophobic tendencies. Zambia-long admired for the warmth of its people-recent division among the people, resulting from the impasse between the government and family of the late president, Edger Chagwa Lungu, have exposed partisan hostility, and a weakening sense of mutual responsibility.

At times, it can feel as though the Jubilee Year has provoked the enemy to unleash his full fury, plunging the world into deeper turmoil with each passing month. Yet Pope Francis never promised that the challenges which inspired *Spes Non Confundit* would vanish. Rather, he called us to see these wounds with clear eyes and steadfast hearts, especially those suffered by Africa and other vulnerable regions, and to respond without losing sight of the hope that is ours in Christ.

If anything, the apparent escalation of suffering is itself a summons to pray more fervently, to act more generously, and to care more deeply for one another. It is an urgent reminder that we must not retreat into self-pity or complaint, but rather rise to our vocation as missionaries of hope in a wounded world. This world is scarred by hatred, poverty, and injustice, but we are not powerless because God is on our side (Cf. Rom 8:31).

**Fr. Christopher Silwembe, Mccj**





## Navigating a New World: A Climate Refugee's Tale of Urban Adaptation

By Hidaya Waguda

As I stepped into my new school, I felt like a stranger in a strange land. One day old, and I was already at the center of attention. People stared, and asked to touch my hair. I had never felt so different in my life. Growing up in a pastoralist community, where moving with our cattle was a way of life, I thought I had a pretty normal childhood. But it seems what one sees as normal, others might find fascinating or exotic. My siblings, Niffa and Saajad, seem to fit in fine. They are not troubled by the stares; instead, they bask in the attention.

For me, Nairobi was initially a city of opportunities I had heard about. No one warned me about the noise, the crowds, and the constant scrutiny. Our community has always moved together as a unit, with our livestock. In Nairobi it is different. We were forced to adapt to a completely new environment, leaving behind everything we knew.

As I navigate this new world, I am learning to cope with the stares, the questions, and the uncertainty. It is not easy, but I am determined to make the most of this opportunity. I

will learn to adapt, to fit in, and to thrive in this new environment. Who knows? Maybe one day, I will find my place in this city, and the stares will fade away, replaced by acceptance and understanding.

North Eastern Kenya has always been arid, but what changed this time? I'm also trying to figure it out. My friend Elvis says we are refugees, but refugees typically receive help from organizations. What about us? We are different because, where refugees are usually victims of war, we are victims of the environment, of climate change and its effects have displaced us from our home. But what can we do about it? We're not recognized by law.

My family and I were among the few lucky ones who had relatives in other places. I often think about those we left behind. How are they surviving? How do you move on after seeing everything you consider wealth, die, literally? I wish I could do something to help. I have realized that my community is categorized as an indigenous community, and it's not just our region being affected. Indigenous communities in East

## Prayer Intentions

### September

#### For formation in discernment

Let us pray that we might again learn how to discern, to know how to choose paths of life and reject everything that leads us away from Christ and the Gospel.

### October

#### For mutual co-existence

Let us pray that societies where co-existence seems more difficult might not succumb to the temptation of confrontation for ethnic, political, religious or ideological reasons.

and Central Africa are said to have historically maintained a symbiotic relationship with their environments.

However, the accelerating impacts of climate change manifesting through prolonged droughts, floods and resource scarcity are disrupting these relationships. The Hadza, a hunter-gatherer community in Tanzania; the Turkana, a pastoralist group in Kenya; and the Batwa, forest dwellers in the DRC, are also communities facing existential threats due to environmental changes.

As I write these words, I'm reminded that my story is not unique. There are countless others like me, displaced by climate change, struggling to adapt to new environments. But in these uncertainties, I have found a sense of purpose. I'll continue to learn, to advocate, and to support those affected by climate change. I will find my place in this new world, and I will make sure that the voices of those like me are heard.

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## West Pokot County: From Tradition to Transformation

*By Mr. Pius Oyoma, CLM*

### A Land of Rich Culture and Diverse Landscape

**W**est Pokot County, one of the 14 counties in Kenya's Rift Valley region, is located in the North Rift along the country's western boundary with Uganda. It shares borders with Turkana County to the north and northeast, Trans Nzoia County to the south, Elgeyo Marakwet County to the southeast, and Baringo County to the east. Geographically, the county spans longitudes 34°47' to 35°49' East and latitudes 1° to 2° North, covering an estimated area of 9,169.4 square kilometres. Its administrative center is Kapenguria.

The region is predominantly inhabited by the Pokot community,

with a minority group of Sengwer people. Despite a history rooted in pastoralist traditions, West Pokot is increasingly becoming known for its rich cultural heritage, potential for agricultural development, and social resilience.

### Religious Identity and Cultural Harmony

The people of West Pokot are profoundly religious. The majority are Christians both Catholic and non-Catholic, while a smaller population adheres to Islam. Religion plays a significant role in daily life and community decision-making. The Catholic Church, in particular, has made deep inroads, contributing to education, health, and social development. While the people

hold tightly to their cultural values and traditions, there's an admirable embrace of diversity. Cultural practices, songs, and dances remain a vital part of life, even as modern influences become more prominent.

### Economic Backbone: Agriculture and Livestock

Agriculture and livestock remain the backbone of the county's economy. Over 80% of the population is engaged in farming, animal husbandry, and related activities. The land's varying altitudes present different agricultural opportunities. In the northern and north-eastern parts of the county, the terrain consists of dry plains at altitudes below 900 meters above sea level. In contrast, the south-eastern section

features the Cherangani Hills, with peaks rising to 3,370 meters and spectacular escarpments over 700 meters high.

The higher altitude zones have excellent agricultural potential due to fertile soils and consistent rainfall. Medium-altitude regions, ranging between 1,500 to 2,100 meters above sea level, receive less rainfall and are mainly used for pastoralism. Low-lying areas like Alale, Kacheliba, Kongelai, and Kitelakapel are more vulnerable to drought and water scarcity, posing challenges for sustainable farming.

### **Social Challenges and Cultural Transition**

Historically, the Pokot community has been firmly rooted in traditional practices. This has contributed to delayed acceptance of formal education, especially among girls. Many families are polygamous, and early marriages are still common. These factors have led to high school dropout rates, early pregnancies, and limited educational attainment for young women.

Additionally, family fragmentation, rising cases of divorce and separation, and weak parental structures have had negative effects on children's emotional and behavioural development. Alcoholism, drug addiction, and the spread of sexually transmitted infections such as HIV remain pressing challenges for the community, particularly among youth and unemployed adults.

### **Kitelakapel: A Community at a Turning Point**

Kitelakapel, one of the rural areas in West Pokot, exemplifies both the challenges and resilience of the county. Approximately 90% of the population lives in poverty. A small middle class mainly teachers, civil servants, and a few commercial farmers forms the

remaining 10%. Despite these figures, signs of transformation are beginning to emerge.

Agricultural productivity is improving due to more consistent rainfall and the application of natural fertilizers like cow dung. Maize and vegetables are widely cultivated on fenced plots to protect crops from free-roaming livestock. Recently, hybrid livestock breeds have been introduced, helping boost both milk and meat production for domestic and commercial use.

The large tracts of land held by families offer great potential for commercial agriculture. Access to better equipment tractors, irrigation systems, and quality seeds would allow farmers to increase food production and prepare adequately for drought seasons. Additionally, reclaimed land, once considered barren, is now producing onions, green peppers, tomatoes, and leafy greens through underground water irrigation initiatives.

### **A New Path Through Community-Based Initiatives**

To address both economic and social issues, the local population under the guidance of the Comboni Lay Missionaries, Kitelakapel, formed a Community-Based Organization (CBO) aimed at empowering families and promoting sustainable livelihoods. Officially registered and certified by the government,

the group currently has 175 active members and continues to attract new applicants.

The CBO is launching income-generating projects such as beekeeping, handicrafts, catering services, and poultry farming. Profits from these ventures will be distributed as loans to members and also serve as interest on their savings. The initiative is especially important for women and youth who lack formal employment. Through these activities, they are gaining financial independence, steering away from addiction and social vices.

Self-help groups and cooperatives have become important pillars for social cohesion and economic inclusion. They foster trust, provide savings and credit opportunities, and encourage active participation in socio-economic development.

### **Faith and Leadership in Action**

As the local coordinator of the Comboni Lay Missionaries (CLM) in Kitelakapel, member of the parish development committee, and treasurer of CLM, I have drawn on my background in business administration, accounting, and project management to serve the community. It has been a deeply fulfilling experience to help unite people and share knowledge that promotes empowerment and transformation. Under the guidance of the Catholic Church,







and supported by structures like JPIC, Caritas, parish councils, and development committees, we have seen notable progress in community organization and spiritual revival.

### Restoring Men's Dignity: A New Spiritual Awakening

When I first arrived in Kitelakapel, very few men attended church. In many Sunday Masses, only two or three men would be present. This sparked the launch of the "Send Men to Church" campaign under the Catholic Men Association (CMA) and our CBO. Today, the results are remarkable: more than 30 men now participate actively in parish life, working alongside women to build a better future.

The collaboration between Catholic Men Association (CMA) and the Catholic Women Association (CWA) has strengthened family and community bonds. They regularly visit each other, offer financial support for those in critical need, and pray together. This spiritual partnership is restoring hope and dignity among many households. The Catholic Men Association has played a vital role in addressing addiction, domestic violence, and isolation among men. Their motto, *Good man, good family. Good family, good church. Good church, good society*, has resonated widely. In the past two years, many men have been baptized, trained, and actively integrated into church activities. Pilgrimages, retreats, and leadership

training have not only enhanced spiritual life but also built moral and social responsibility.

### Faith in Action: Programs and Partnerships

We recently hosted a group of international bubble artists, who conducted interactive and entertaining sessions with children in Kitelakapel and Kacheliba. Beyond fun, the event was a platform to teach the youth about joy rooted in purpose, learning, and resilience. One of our guests, a lay missionary called Monica Barrera, reminded the youth that "Happiness is not just about feeling good. It is something deeper; knowing who you are, and what you are created for." She further added that "When you want to achieve something meaningful, it often requires great effort, patience, and trust in God's will."

### Missionary Spirit and Global Connections

Our mission outreach is expanding. We recently held a fundraising drive at Kacheliba Parish to support Belinda Awino, a Kenyan Comboni Lay Missionary heading to Peru. Another fundraiser is planned at Kariobangi Parish. Three more Kenyan CLMs are set to join us for a few months of community insertion before departing for missions in Peru and the Central African Republic. We humbly request continued prayers, donations, and support to enable their success.

## Dates to Remember September

- 1 Independence of Somalia (1960).
- 2 First legal Conference of the African National Congress (ANC) in Pretoria, South Africa (1991).
- 3 Independence of Algeria (1962).
- 4 International Declaration of the Rights of People (1976).
- 5 Assassination of Tom Mboya, Kenyan nationalist leader (1969).  
Independence of Cape Verde (1975).
- 6 Heroes' Day Zambia  
Independence of Malawi.
- 7 Saba Saba Day (Tanzania).
- 11 World Population Day.
- 18 Nelson Mandela Day.

## October

- 4 Farmers Day (Zambia).
- 5 Independence of Burkina Faso (1960).
- 7 Independence of Ivory Coast (1960).
- 8 Nane Nane day (Tanzania).
- 9 International Day of the World's Indigenous People.
- 11 Independence of Chad (1960).
- 12 International Youth Day.
- 13 Independence of Central Africa Republic (1960).
- 15 Pope John Paul II beatified Congolese Clementine Anuarite (1985).
- 22 International Day Commemorating the Victims of Acts Violence Based on Religion or Belief.  
Death of Jomo Kenyatta, father of modern Kenya (1978).
- 23 International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition.





# HIRING FOR IMPACT



In her TEDx Talk titled 'The Power of Visualisation,' Fitness Instructor Ashanti Johnson relates how she started her entrepreneurial journey as a lone adventurer. For an entire year, she was a 'one-woman force,' teaching fitness classes, mopping the floor, answering the phone, doing all the marketing, attending trade shows, and creating mental fitness seminars. In the second year of her business, however, Ms. Johnson realized that she needed to build a team to enhance the efficiency of her business operations.

There are many stories of businesses that started off with a single person – the founder – and gradually grew into a mammoth global corporation: Jeff Bezos' Amazon, Mark Zuckerberg's Facebook, Tyler Perry's Tyler Perry Studios, and Colonel Harland Sanders' Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC), to mention but a few popular brands. Hiring is one of the strategic tasks of any start-up. In a business environment characterised by stiff competition, sometimes the very survival of an enterprise depends on the calibre of people in the organisation.



### **Organisations are Instruments**

The word 'organisation' is derived from the Greek word '*organon*', meaning 'instrument'. An organisation is an instrument created to carry out a specific mission. Organisations are therefore structured in such a way that the people in it carry out functions that contribute to the realisation of its mission. A common mistake entrepreneurs make is to hire too many people too early. Another mistake is to fill the start-up with friends and family who may not be suited to the tasks in the company. This tendency bloats the company's payroll and orchestrates underemployment or misemployment.

### **How to Know It's Time to Hire**

There are two scenarios in which entrepreneurs may consider bringing in additional hands. The first one is when there are skills gaps in the organisation, whereby some critical functions are not attended to or are

not executed to the desired standard. While some skills can easily be acquired through study and practice, others require significant investments in time and money to cultivate. In the interest of expediency, it is therefore sometimes more convenient to simply hire someone than to try and learn a particular skill from scratch.

Hiring can also be justified by unsustainable work volume, which can be caused by increased customer demand, low investment in technology, and business expansion.

### **Focus on Mission-Critical Functions**

When hiring, priority should be given to mission-critical functions of the business. According to Guy Kawasaki, the two critical functions of a start-up are production and sales. Every start-up needs someone who can make a good product and another one who can sell it. More

often than not, people who are good at production are not good marketers, and vice versa.

Alternatively, adapting Malcolm Gladwell's insights on how social epidemics spread, one can highlight three critical roles in nascent businesses: the maven, the connector and the salesman. The maven is the information broker, the organisation's knowledge powerhouse. This role is critical for product research and development. The connector is a person with a large social network. Such a person can generate value-adding linkages between the start-up and potential customers and suppliers. The salesman is a social influencer, capable of convincing people to adopt new ideas and products. Whatever the case, founders ought to ensure that every person brought into the organisation positively impacts its performance.





# THE GREAT COMMISSION

MARK 16:14-18

## “GO TO THE WHOLE WORLD”: MISSION AND POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT TODAY

*By Odomaro Mubangizi SJ*

After the resurrection, Jesus gave his disciples what has been called “the great commission”: *“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to observe all the commands I gave you. and, look, I am with you always; yes,*

*to the end of time.”* (Mt. 28:18-19). These are solemn words pregnant with meaning. What is the political significance of this great commission, that is the foundation of all the Church’s missionary endeavor to day? Are Christians today very passionate and enthusiastic about mission and its political ramifications and do they know how infinitely powerful they are?

These are the few questions that I try to address in this article, continuing the conversation on faith and politics. By way of introduction, this great commission with its temporal and spatial absolute claims, clearly feels like Jesus’ “manifesto” and foundational moral and imperative. The great commission is not a gentle reminder, wish or request, but a divine imperative or command.





### **The Context: All Nations**

The eleven disciples had been instructed to go to Galilee to the mountain to meet Jesus after his resurrection. It is a time that some of them were still doubting that he had risen, even though others worshipped him, proof that they believed him. The first condition for authentic mission is faith in the risen Lord, but also having encountered him. If one has not experienced the risen Lord, any attempt to do mission will be a hoax and deception, or just mere adventure. This is why Jesus first asserted his credentials: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me."

This absolutist claim by Jesus leaves no doubt that he is Lord of heaven and earth, and only him is absolutely sovereign. This is a very complicated and challenging claim, looked at it from a political perspective. What of the earthly rulers and kings who also claim sovereignty and absolute

power? There cannot be more than one absolute sovereign. If Christ the Lord is absolute ruler of heaven and earth, then other human rulers can only be exercising power on his behalf, whether they know it or not. They are stewards. Even religious leaders exercise authority on behalf of Christ, as the head.

In an age of Artificial Intelligence (AI), some tech gurus might argue that digital technology now commands more power and authority than human beings, since big data is the new engine that powers progress. Where does AI leave the disciples of Jesus in a world dominated by fantastic robots that can outpace humans in cognitive functions? The digital world or universe is much more complex than the world we have so far known.

Does Jesus's authority also extend to the digital world of AI ridden with machine learning and algorithms?

This is a topic for another day. But since Pauline theology asserts that everything visible and invisible was created through Christ and for Christ, AI and any other discoveries in future, cannot be outside the authority and power of Christ.

### **Go and Make Disciples of all Nations**

Only after Jesus has asserted his absolute power and authority, does he command his disciples to go and make disciples of all nations. Notice again that there is no limit to where disciples should go to make more disciples, and not specific nation is mentioned. This is where all missionaries throughout history have been travelling all over the world spreading the good news of salvation.

The concept of globalization that had gained currency since the late 1980s, applies to the missionary work as an element of global interconnectedness. Through missionary work, cultures



intermingled, values and ideas spread as missionaries traversed nations. Some of the missionaries were even pioneers in educational innovations, setting up schools, writing grammar of local languages, and forming local people into global leaders. Some like De Nobili and Matteo Ricci were even great scientists. There seems to be no limit to what mission entails.

The world of social media, digital technology and AI, are new “nations” that also need to be evangelized and baptized. They are at once tools for evangelization and spaces and sites that need evangelization. While there are many more distant lands that are still in need of primary evangelization (Most Asian countries and some African countries), have not heard of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. While there is new emphasis on interreligious dialogue, still the ever relevant message of salvation needs to be proclaimed to all nations, but with more respect and positive appreciation of existing religious beliefs and practices.

### **Baptizing and Teaching**

Before one can become a disciple of Christ, one has to first be initiated through baptism, so as to become a new creature, a citizen of the kingdom of God. Only baptism enables a person to share in the life of Christ, and divine grace. In every country, the constitution spells out how one becomes a citizen. The same applies to the kingdom of heaven! Baptism is spiritual adoption into the kingdom of God, that brings with it rights and responsibilities. Among those responsibilities is to spread the Gospel and make more disciples.

Teaching all that Jesus taught is the other responsibility. Teaching is what the Church refers to as the prophetic role of the Christians, regardless of status or ministry. Often times,

many Christians tend to think that preaching is reserved to ordained ministers. The other misconception is on the content of what is to be preached or taught. Since this space is dedicated to faith and politics, Christian teaching, it should be emphasized, also includes clarifying the public role of the Christians on controversial matters such as governance, human rights, peace, justice and economic development. But this discussion has to be rooted in Gospel values and the beatitudes.

The branch of theology that deals with such political hot issues is known as public theology or political theology. Other related disciplines include: social ethics, political ethics and Catholic Social Teaching (CST). When some women develop feminist theology to address injustices imbedded in social and cultural structures, there is some discomfort among some circles. Just as liberation theology in Latin America was looked at with some suspicion, and yet it is a legitimate role of the Christian faith to challenge oppressive structures.

Evangelization is holistic. It covers doctrinal issues, morals, social justice, human development and many other aspects of human life. But also Jesus taught in word and deed. He fed the hungry, healed the sick, cast out demons. It is perfectly in order for the disciples of Christ to feed the hungry, heal the sick and cast out demons of corruption, and violation of human rights. The disciples can also ask hard questions why there is not enough food in countries where there is fertile land and plenty of rain.

Back to the issue of social media, digital world and AI, disciples of the 21st century with its Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR), need to be skilled and schooled in current digital tools and use of chat-bots. For

these are useful tools for teaching, and evangelization, if used ethically. For did not Jesus teach his disciples to be shrewd like serpents but humble like doves? The parable of the astute manager also comes to mind. Whatever that is human should not be alien to disciples of Christ.

### **Till the End of the Age**

The mission of the disciples has no time limit until Jesus' second coming. At times followers of Christ feel some fatigue and boredom sets in. Jesus assures his disciples that he is with them till the end of the ages. They are not alone in the evangelizing work. Missionary work is challenging. There are new lands, new cultures, hostile countries, and cultures that might be too entrenched in their world-views. Even the new digital technologies pose unique challenges for disciples of Christ, who might be puzzled on how best to engage them.

When disciples feel fatigue and tired, it might be that they are forgetting to include Jesus in the projects and plans. Carrying a missionary burden all alone is a dangerous gamble. It is Jesus who invited “all who labour and heavy laden”, to come to him, and learn from him for his gentle and humble of heart, and that his yoke is easy and burden light.

The assurance that Jesus is with the disciples always is very affirming and consoling. There is no time that the disciple should feel alone or afraid. In trials, persecution, hardships, Jesus is always there to support. But the disciple must also be constantly in close communion with Christ through prayer, sacraments and reading of scripture. Only when the disciple is fully united with Christ, can he or she be an agent of positive transformation of society and the whole world, including the digital world of AI.





## Zambia: The Missionary Call to Heal and Console a Wounded Nation

*By Teddy Kalibuku, Mccj*

**A**t the beginning of his public life and ministry, Jesus made clear his mission when he said: “the Spirit of the Lord is upon me. He has sent me to proclaim the Good News to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives, restoration of sight to the blind. To set the prisoners free and to proclaim a year of the Lord’s favor.” (Lk 4: 18-21). In other words, Jesus came to console those in need of consolation, to bring light to those in darkness,

and healing and fullness of life to those in desperation.

In view of pushing his mission further, “He went up the mountain and summoned those whom he wanted and they came to him. He appointed twelve [whom he also named apostles] that they might be with him and he might send them forth to preach, and to have authority to drive out demons” (Mk 3:13-15). Just like Jesus, his disciples had the mission of bringing hope to those around them.

Today’s missionaries, called and sent by the Father throughout the world, have the mandate to be bearers of the balm of hope, to be agents of healing and consolation.

### **A Ministry of consolation (Is. 40:1)**

In *Spes non Confundit* (Hope does not disappoint), the title of the late Pope Francis’ letter of announcement of the Ordinary Jubilee of 2025, the Pope states that “everyone knows what it is to hope. In the heart of



each person, hope dwells as the desire and expectation of good things to come, despite our not knowing what the future may bring.” (No.1). He continues in the same number to point out the fact that even with the expectation of what is good, “uncertainty about the future may at times give rise to conflicting feelings, ranging from confident trust to apprehensiveness, from serenity to anxiety, from firm conviction to hesitation and doubt.” In fact, many people even become “discouraged, pessimistic and cynical about the future, as if nothing could possibly bring them happiness” (No.1).

Undoubtedly, we are living in a world that is wounded by grief, injustice, conflict and silence. A world in dire need of an assuring word that gives lasting hope. Our world needs missionaries who come as pilgrims of hope, as good Samaritans, carrying oil and wine to bind the wounds of those breeding from disappointments and other sorts of injustices. Missionaries having tender hands to raise and comfort the broken, and hearts that understand and offer profound spiritual hope. Our world needs missionaries who are not just carriers of the gospel, but bearers of healing, those who walk with the wounded, pray with the grieving and stand with the poorest and most abandoned. Their ministry is more than just proclamation, it is presence.

### **The Missionary's Healing Mandate**

After his resurrection, Jesus commissioned his disciples to go in his name to the whole world to preach the Good News to the whole creation and to cast out demons and cure the sick by invoking his name (Mk 16:15-18). Today, Jesus continues to give the same mandate to his missionaries to go to the periphery of our society where despair hides in plain sight. They

need to embody the compassion of Christ who “saw the crowds, had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd” (Mt. 9:36).

The biblical image of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37) remains a powerful model for today's missionaries. He did not just pity the man left for dead he interrupted his journey, bandaged the wounds, and paid the cost of healing. Likewise, missionaries are called to step into the messy places of people's lives, offering not just words but restorative action. They can do that by praying with the abandoned; offering pastoral presence to families torn by grief or loss; being mediators of repentance, forgiveness, and reconciliation; and reminding communities that the balm of Christ still flows for all who are broken.

### **Healing amid National Sorrow**

In times of national mourning or social disillusionment, missionaries become gentle shepherds who know the sheep by name and call them to trust again in the God who heals. Today, more than ever, Zambia, faces a season marked by deep reflection. Recent national tensions, including the impasse surrounding the burial of former president Edgar Chagwa Lungu, have reminded us that pain is not only personal; it can be national. And while the political dimensions remain a secondary concern of the Church, her primary call is to minister to the hearts of a people burdened with sorrow, fear, and division. In such moments, missionaries should step forward, not as commentators, but as comforters, following God's mandate as seen in Isaiah 40:1, “Console my people, console them!”

Missionaries are called to offer more than temporary relief, but lasting and transformational hope. They are called

to walk with those in sorrow, pointing them to a deeper hope that neither politics nor possessions can offer. Like Jesus on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-35), they should walk alongside the discouraged, explaining the Scriptures and rekindling faith in hearts gone cold.

Even as Zambia grapples with the burial of her former president an issue which, though largely political, has awakened deep emotions the church must not remain silent. Neither should she waste her time and energy in debate. She has the mandate: to minister, to listen, pray and to soothe. The voice of the missionary is needed in the quiet spaces of mourning families, confused citizens, and disillusioned youth. As St Paul reminds us “blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all consolation. He consoles us in all our tribulations, so that we can console those in any trouble with the consolation we ourselves receive from God” (2 Corinthians 1:3-4).

In a nation marked by both hope and hardship, the balm of healing still flows. Missionaries are God's reminder that He has not abandoned His people. They carry the balm of Gilead (Jeremiah 8:22) not in jars, but in their hearts and hands. They are the ones who whisper peace where there is confusion, hold the hand of the mourning, and say, “God is near”. The call is not always grand. Sometimes it's a quiet prayer, a warm meal, a visit, or a verse shared at the right time. But in every act, the message remains: the balm still flows, the Healer still comes, and hope still lives. Let every missionary rise and carry Christ to the wounded places of our land. Let them be the Good Samaritans on Zambia's dusty roads and beyond.





# Ecuador: Missionaries of Hope among all Peoples

*By Fr. Vicent Turinaŋwe, Mccj*

## Called to Be Missionaries of Hope

**T**he theme of this year's Mission Sunday truly speaks to every missionary. It is also a universal call to all the people of God. By our baptism, we have all been sent to be missionaries;

missionaries of hope. It is this very hope that has sustained me since I arrived in Ecuador in October 2022.

Coming from Uganda, I was used to a different rhythm of missionary life; busy days filled with sacramental activities and large congregations for

the Eucharist and weddings. Upon arriving in Ecuador, I encountered a very different reality. Often, the churches were half-empty, sometimes even on Sundays. On a few occasions, I celebrated Mass with fewer than ten people in the congregation. In such



moments, I found great consolation in the words of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew 18:20: “Where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there in their midst.”

### **The Good Shepherd’s Model**

I have come to learn that shepherding is not about numbers. This is why Jesus gives us the image of the Good Shepherd who leaves the ninety-nine in search of the one lost sheep (Luke 15:3–7). It is a powerful reminder that God cares for each of us personally. This understanding has given me the strength and courage to serve joyfully in the Parish of Virgen del Carmen in Borbón, particularly in the zone of Río Onzole, Vicariate of Esmeraldas.

In this remote mission, reaching the faithful requires long hours of travel by both land and water. To get to

the furthest chapel, I must travel for at least three hours by boat, under normal conditions. Sometimes, the journey takes even longer, not counting the road travel. Yet, the hope that I am never alone, that I journey with Jesus the Good Shepherd, keeps me going.

### **Inspired by Comboni’s Zeal**

I am continually inspired by our founder, St. Daniel Comboni, who left behind the comforts of his homeland in Italy to dedicate his life to the most abandoned people in Africa those whom society had written off. His zeal for Africa inspired me to join the Comboni Missionaries. Today, as I work among communities of different races and cultures in Ecuador, I do so with the same hope that one day the Gospel

will take deep root through the tireless efforts of men and women committed to mission, despite the many challenges.

These challenges are real and include poor transport networks, the vastness of the mission area, a lack of collaborators, and the absence of permanent chapels or infrastructure in many communities. Yet, we continue our journey with hope, remembering the words of St. Paul in Romans 5:5: “Hope does not disappoint.”

### **Collaborative Evangelization**

This hope encourages us to keep striving, believing that tomorrow’s mission will be better than today’s. We must never disregard the work of our predecessors. In our evangelizing mission, we missionaries must





collaborate with the laity, empowering them to be missionaries too. Without their active participation, our efforts will hit a dead end. After all, we come and go but they remain. If they are well-equipped, there will be continuity and sustainability.

I often liken this to the work of builders, whose consistent, small efforts adding one brick at a time eventually result in a beautiful building. In the zone of Río Onzole, the major challenge is that each new missionary often has to start from scratch. Some communities go for long periods without a visit or without celebrating the Eucharist. In contrast to regions where the faith has already taken root, these communities depend almost entirely on the presence of a priest or a religious sister or brother. When none are available, little to no pastoral activity happens.

### **A Mission of Awakening**

Jesus' words in Matthew 9:37 "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few" are profoundly real in these mission lands of the Vicariate of

Esmeraldas. I recall my early visits to communities for sacraments and Masses. I was surprised to find that some godparents baptized themselves, or were from Pentecostal or Evangelical backgrounds. It was not out of malice, but rather due to lack of formation. In fact, some pastors from other denominations bring their children to be baptized in the Catholic Church.

After nearly three years in Ecuador, I now understand why St. Daniel Comboni once said that if he had a thousand lives, he would offer them all for the mission in Africa. As for me, if I had a thousand lives, I would offer them for the mission in South America.

### **Finding Joy in the Smallest Flock**

Even when I travel over three hours by boat under heavy rain or scorching sun, and find only five elderly women and a few children in church, I still rejoice. That small gathering gives me energy. Just as the Good Shepherd left the ninety-nine for the one, I find profound purpose in these humble

encounters. The hope that does not disappoint continues to carry us forward as it has done for 70 years of Comboni missionary presence in Ecuador.

Hope reminds us not to be discouraged by current challenges, but to remain anchored in the future that our eyes may not see, but our hearts believe in. As missionaries, we are called to live in that hope to be men and women who dare to dream and build even when results seem slow or uncertain.

### **A Heartfelt Tribute**

This mission has taught me to "think little and feel a lot", to be a shepherd who smells like the sheep, walking with them and not above them. I strive to lead from within, not from the outside. My deepest gratitude goes to all the missionaries who preceded us. I can only imagine how much harder it was 70 years ago when the foundations were being laid. May God reward them eternally for their sacrifices, which paved the way for us and for the missionaries yet to come.







# Malawi:

## Voices of Hope Amidst Uncertainties

*By Fr. Frank Mwinganyama, Archdiocese of Blantyre*

The Celebration of the 2025 World Mission may not be an ordinary annual celebration for Malawians as it is shrouded in the political mist of the September General Elections. This is coupled with already existing economic challenges. Political tensions are simmering alongside the church's preparations for the celebration of Mission Sunday. The Pope's message, written in January by late Pope Francis, centers on being missionaries of hope.

Political uncertainties and other social economic challenges do not only give impetus to the call for Christians to be missionaries of hope but also give a reason for carrying out this missionary mandate. We are invited to be missionaries of hope beyond the present uncertainties.

### **Our Mission Field**

The socio-economic situation in Malawi does not inspire hope. Political

leaders clearly getting richer while the masses struggle with ripple effects of high inflation which is estimated above thirty percent. Economic growth remains a dream. The World Bank has even projected that election spending this year will increase the budget deficit considering the freezing of US assistance. The poor are gradually thrown to the margins of life. Visible signs of a miserable economic situation are the recurring fuel and forex shortages. Even in this situation, the vulnerable have now become the targets of political rhetoric, being promised heaven on earth.

The youth, who fill up our Churches are disillusioned. A recent Afrobarometer survey reveals that about 53 % of the youth are unemployed and most of these young people harbor desires to migrate. Unscrupulous politicians abuse them for political mileage. We have observed that political violence has already reared its ugly face in the main cities of the

country. It is because politicians have taken advantage of the situation of the youth.

Tribalism and regionalism seem to threatening our democratization process. One has just to look at the structures of our political parties to see the tribal lines. This too is a threat to the growth of our faith.

The socio-economic struggles highlighted above are not unique to Malawi. In fact, they have not spared any country in this region of the content. What is unique is the apparent absence of political will to improve the situation. This lack of political will is evidenced by the high levels of corruption in the public sector.

### **An Absent political Choice**

The General Elections may spark hopes for a better life in citizens. This is why those aspiring for political positions use the same

social challenges to woo voters by promising economic transformation. Generally, voters choose leaders with hope that they will change things.

In Malawi, some analysts have stated that when it comes to Presidential candidates in the 2025 General Elections, Malawians are presented with an absent choice. Arguably this could be the raw truth. This is because the top candidates do not really inspire much hope for a better Malawi from a socio-economic perspective. We see recycled politicians and their failed promises, leadership mediocrity, apparent political naivety and pure selfishness as clear marks of the candidates vying for the hot seat. The Malawi Conference of Catholic Bishops, in their Lenten Pastoral Letter, were cognizant of this fact but expressed it in a more positive way. 'Go for the lesser evil', they advised Malawians. Indeed, Malawians will go to the polls to choose the lesser evil while ironically hoping for a better Malawi.

The foregoing is a description of the mission field, where the Church and her faithful are called to be missionaries

of hope. It may appear fatalistic but not all is lost. Malawians are people of faith and are resilient. This is the real field where the reason to live the missionary mandate is urgent.

### **Missionaries of Hope Beyond the Ballot**

In the message for the World Mission Sunday 2025, the faithful are called upon to be 'artisans' of hope to all people. But we know real hope is weightier than optimism. It is that trust in God's providence at all times. So as missionaries of hope sent to all corners of the world, we are invited to bring light to those in the darkness of poverty and political uncertainty. Being a missionary of hope is actually a way of living the Missionary mandate in the Jubilee Year.

Being missionaries of hope entails immersing ourselves in concrete situations of the people. It is not about wallowing in theological doctrines and remaining there, but accompanying those who suffer. The Church in Malawi is not only a symbol of hope but journeys with people of God through any form of darkness.

### **Artisans of Hope in Today's World**

The Message of the Pope for this year's World Mission Sunday shows us the way to be concretely artisans of hope. The inspiration should come from Jesus who, the Pope says, "even now bends over all those who are afflicted, oppressed, and pours upon their wounds the balm of consolation and wine of hope". Such should be the duty of the clergy, the religious in their apostolates and most importantly the laity in their various professions.

'Pouring the wine of hope' in concrete situations shall involve being neutral bridges by advocating for peace in times of political conflicts. In a politically charged environment, Christians are called upon to initiate peace and dialogue. Where politics is seen and practiced with tribal lenses, Christians should tirelessly promote equal human dignity and coexistence. Where most of the youth are resigning to fatalism and engage in political violence, the Church reignites their hopes. While politicians use the youth to fight political opponents, the church should empower them to be independent citizens beyond the ballot.







This can be done by setting up education initiatives and other empowerment programs as alternatives to the failed public education. It is pleasing that the Catholic Church in Malawi is doing well on this. Our schools and hospitals should actually be places where those whose hope is fading find a reason to hang on. Even where such social initiatives are set for commercial purposes, the pastoral aspect of offering hope to the disadvantaged should not be forgotten.

In the Message for World Mission Sunday, the Pope has asked that special focus should be put on those 'who have been excluded from materialistic and consumerist society'. These should find light and healing in the local churches. This is an effective way of being missionaries of hope.

### **Mission Sunday: A Call to Hope Beyond the Present**

On a higher level, the celebration of

Mission Sunday is actually an occasion to be reminded that we are called to be builders of hope beyond these earthy joys and sorrows. The message of Pope late Pope Francis actually warns again focusing on temporal hopes and desires. Admittedly, it is difficult to preach hope in eternal joys without a taste of the same on earth. Such hope maybe deemed impotent. Nevertheless, as missionaries of hope we are called to show that total fulfillment of our present hopes shall be obtained when we meet God. Truly there is life after elections and all socio-economic struggles.

It is for the foregoing reason that the Pope highlighted prayer as the source and strength of hope. It is said that prayer is itself the 'primary missionary activity'. Every form of prayer should inspire hope as well as give strength for participants to be missionaries of hope beyond their present challenges and localities.

As the Church celebrates World Mission Sunday Christians the message of the Pope should motivate us to reaffirm our commitment to be missionaries of hope. For Malawi and other African countries, the call for all Christians to be missionaries of hope is very urgent. It has become common that periodic political elections bring hope for social change. But this hope fades away almost immediately after the casting the ballot. The challenge of every baptized is to live the missionary mandate by concretely inspiring hope in the midst of political uncertainties and social challenges.

Drawing strength from our Lord through prayer, we should look beyond the ballots. From our communion with the Lord we generate hope that rises above the temporal joys and fears. This is our mandate.







# Missionary of Hope Among the Karamojong People

By Fr. Inácio Manuel Mutatapuele, Mccj

## A Vocation Rooted in Hope

In the dry, stony landscape of northeastern Uganda lies Karamoja a region of striking contrasts, where beauty coexists with hardship, and resilience is born from vulnerability. This is the homeland of the Karamojong people: proud pastoralists with a rich culture and a deep spiritual thirst. As a Comboni Missionary priest, I have been called to live and serve among them, sharing in their struggles and their joys, and witnessing to the hope that faith in Christ brings. Through sacraments, pastoral care, and simple daily presence, I try to embody the love of Christ, to be, in a small but real way, a missionary of hope.

My mission draws strength from the words of St. Daniel Comboni, our founder, who dreamed of “saving Africa by Africans,” and from the late Pope Francis’ reminder that the Church must always go forth, carrying the joy of the Gospel to the peripheries (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 20).

## Discovering Grace in the Periphery

Karamoja is often described as one of Uganda’s most neglected regions, plagued by droughts, hunger, cattle raids, and low educational attainment. Yet, amid these hardships, I have found incredible human dignity and an inspiring faith. When I first arrived, everything felt unfamiliar: the customs, the language, the territory.

But slowly, as I began to walk with the people, listening to their stories, celebrating with them, grieving with them, I saw how the Gospel is alive in hidden and surprising ways.

Here, faith is carried by mothers who walk for hours to attend catechism, by elders who teach under the shade of trees, and by children who sing and dance at Mass with pure joy. Hope is not theoretical here; it is lived every day, born from suffering but sustained by grace.

## Evangelizing Through Presence

My mission does not rely on great projects or big events. Rather, it rests on presence. As Pope Paul VI once noted, “Modern man listens



more willingly to witnesses than to teachers" (*Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 41). That's what I strive to be: a witness. Living among the people, eating their food, speaking their language, and walking their dusty paths becomes the mission itself. Even accompanying a family in mourning, or visiting the sick on a Thursday with the Blessed Sacrament, becomes an expression of the Gospel.

Celebrating the Eucharist under a tree or sharing laughter with the youth during a football match—these ordinary moments are the true fabric of mission. They reveal what matters most: love, fidelity, and communion.

### Standing With the Young and the Vulnerable

The youth in Karamoja face real difficulties: unemployment, alcoholism, early marriage, and the tug-of-war between traditional values and modern influence. Many feel invisible, voiceless, and uncertain of their place in the world. In my ministry, I walk with them through choirs, sports, small Christian communities, and retreats. I remind them of their worth

and dignity. I urge them to believe in their potential and to become agents of positive change. As St. Paul wrote, *"Let no one look down on you because you are young, but set an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, and purity"* (1 Timothy 4:12). These words guide our journey together.

### Faith That Grows Amid Poverty

Karamoja's poverty is both material and spiritual. Humanitarian aid is important, but more powerful is the witness of Christian love that affirms: *You are not forgotten. You are loved—not for what you have, but because you are God's child.* I have seen families bring gifts to church despite having little to eat. I have heard prayers of thanks from people who have known hunger. This is where the mystery of Christian hope shines most clearly: it takes root in dry soil and still bears fruit. As the Second Vatican Council reminds us, *"The joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the people of this age... especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted... are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ"* (*Gaudium et Spes*, 1).

### The Eucharist: Source and Summit

The Eucharist is the heart of everything. Whether celebrated in a humble chapel or under a tree in the bush, it unites us most powerfully. In every Mass, I affirm to them that Christ is present, right here, even in suffering. The broken bread and poured wine reflect the missionary life: offered, shared, and given in love. In the Eucharist, I find the strength to continue; it reminds all of us that God walks with His people.

### Trials That Purify the Mission

Challenges abound: violence, food shortages, child deaths, broken roads, and stalled development. These wounds can be heavy to bear. Yet they also purify us, reminding me that our mission is not to control or to succeed

by worldly standards, but to remain faithful. As Pope Benedict XVI once said, *"The world offers you comfort. But you were not made for comfort. You were made for greatness."* And this greatness, I have come to see, lies in humble, costly love, in giving without expecting anything in return.

### A Mission that also Transforms the Missionary

Though I came to bring the Gospel, I have been evangelized in return. The generosity, joy, and resilience of the Karamojong people have reshaped my heart. They have taught me to live simply, to be grateful for small things, and to trust in God's providence. Mission is not a one-way street; it is a journey walked together. As St. Daniel Comboni believed, a missionary is not a hero, but a brother among brothers and sisters.

### Hope that Endures

From the people of Karamoja, I have learned that hope is not naive optimism. It is the conviction that love is stronger than fear, that light still shines in the darkness, and that Christ is truly risen. My presence among them, though small, is meant to point to this deeper truth: a hope that *"does not disappoint"* (Romans 5:5). And to all who feel forgotten or weighed down by life, I offer the words of Christ Himself: *"I am with you always, even to the end of the age"* (Matthew 28:20).

May that promise sustain every missionary, every believer, and every person who longs for hope.

*Fr. Inácio Manuel Mutatapuele, Mccj, is a Comboni Missionary priest serving in Matany Parish, Catholic Diocese of Moroto, Uganda. His ministry includes pastoral outreach, youth engagement, and daily accompaniment of the Karamojong people, among whom he lives as a witness to the Gospel.*





## Witnessing Hope in Mozambique: A Mission Rooted in the Message of World Mission Day 2025

*By Fr. Edward Matovu, Mccj*

**T**his article is based on the message of the late Pope Francis for World Mission Day 2025. The theme of the message is *Missionary of Hope Among all Peoples*. This theme calls upon all Christians to be messengers of hope especially in challenging situations, following the footsteps of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is from this background that our radical missionary commitments become meaningful. Therefore, in this article I will share my missionary experience in the mission of Muxungue, Moçambique. Additionally, I will present the geographical, political, religious and social-economic situation of the people. Then, there will be a discussion on how my missionary experience has been relevant in the life of the people.

Geographically, the mission is located in the central part of Moçambique, occupying the southern province of Sofala. It has six townships namely, Muxungue, Mucheve, Chikupse, Casa Nova, Chitauzi and Mutindiri. These small towns are situated along the highway that connects the southern part of the country to the North. Apart from these towns, the missions occupy also extensive coverage of villages, where the missionary has to spend some hours to reach the people.

Fortunately, the government has rural-regional hospitals that offer almost free-medical care to our people, however, the challenge remains on how our poor people can reach this local medical facilities. Many children and women die before reaching

the medical facilities due to lack of transport. But amidst this suffering, through our missionary zeal, the Church learnt to plant hope.

Socially, here, the local people, (the Ndau), are very hospitable, very assertive and very proud of their local traditions. Yes, it is imperative for any missionary who hopes to work here to learn the local language, Chindau, and other cultural traditions, like totems that are guided by clan-heads and chiefs. Therefore, respect to the elders is prime. For example, the women kneel while greeting and addressing the people.

Religiously, the people have lively liturgical celebrations, characterized by charismatic and vibrant singing and dancing. When the Mass is cel-



celebrated, there is an awesome sense of participation that incites congregation for coming more. On the other hand, some catholic values are not yet deep rooted into the culture of the people. And one can easily notice a mixture of some cultural elements in Church-liturgy, and often these elements have got hidden cultural meanings that have not yet been elaborated and accepted by the Church.

### **Muxungue Mission: A Community of Faith Amid Socio-Economic Challenges**

The Muxungue Mission is part of the Archdiocese of Beira. It is a home of over 5,000 parishioners. The Mission of Muxungue takes care of two parishes that are almost 76kms apart, each having nearly 2,500 parishioners, and many of whom are youths and women. The major economic activity of local population relies heavily on agricultural production, such as pineapples and cashew nuts, maize, and groundnuts and beans that are usually affected by recurring prolonged dry seasons. In previous years, our people have experienced hunger, caused by the above factor. In addition, there is limited opportunity for formal education and employment opportunities for youths. This has resulted in widespread poverty, high crime-rate, and a lack of self-sustaining livelihoods.

### **Inculturating the Gospel: A Mission of Hope Rooted in Local Traditions**

Bearing witness to the redeeming mission of Christ, we strive to promote radical values of justice, peace, and the integrity of creation. Fortunately, our senior missionaries, such as Fr. Jiocondo Pedin (RIP), studied and wrote many pastoral books in this local language, and this has facilitated our insertion into the culture of the people. As a missionary of hope, I have learned the local language and immersed myself into

the culture of the community. Now, we are able to incorporate traditional values into Church celebrations, such as dances. This has enabled the message of hope to penetrate more deeply into the lives of our people.

In our ministry, we offer liturgical and sacramental care towards the faithful. Frequently, we have community and home visits. These visits have been valuable, enabling us to assess the needs and offer assistance to the people. Socially, we organize workshops on social, economic, and spiritual programs. As the number of youths is steadily growing, we dedicate ourselves for the integration of their life. We also promote the missionary vocation in our encounters with the youths. We assist in building churches using local materials for those who were praying under trees.

In particular, we offer spiritual care and counselling services to the marginalized, including the elderly, veterans, and the grieving every Thursday. We bring hope to the sick through hospital visits, anointing of the sick, and visiting the hospital staff, offering them spiritual support in their mission, spiritual services to the terminally ill patients in hospital, and transportation of sick people in emergency situations. For the dead, we transport the dead to their home or to the funeral and burial grounds. Amidst this suffering, the Church, through our missionary zeal, learns to plant hope. To deal with the challenge of food insecurity, food has been supplied to the people during long spell of drought.


### **Empowering Hope through Faith and Livelihood Initiatives**

Our population is affected by the marginalizing poverty caused by varying factors. However, this has motivated us to come up with practical rosary and handcraft-making projects, and agricultural set-ups that

empowers the people to live a hopeful life. As pilgrims of hope, we have embarked on projects of pineapple farming and animal husbandry, and we envision supplying seedlings to the community while also offering a practical training ground to equip youth and peasants with rosary-making and farming skills. This, we hope, will ultimately promote self-reliance and improve the living standards of our people.

To a larger extent, the above-mentioned initiatives demonstrate practical Christian witness by integrating faith-based values with agricultural work, encouraging community members to live responsibly and sustainably through the principles of hard work and self-reliance (2 Thess 3:10–13). Yet, we maintain the practical approach of evangelization, influencing people by example (Mt 5:16).

In conclusion, contemplating on my missionary experience, I have learnt to be a person of hope now more than ever. Yes, the missionary does not live or work alone. In our Archdiocese, we have had moments of sharing pastoral experiences with other agents in the mission. Effectively, sharing movements of hope has enriched me to have hope for better mission. Regarding the challenges we face, there has been a combined effort in the Archdiocese through caritas services that helped us to advance in our missionary activities.

Similarly, our congregation leadership has endorsed our community initiatives, such as, rosary making, community food relief project and agricultural projects that are intended to bring hope in the lives of our people. The missionary of hope is the one who meditates on the mission of Christ, following Him, prays ardently, faithful in his vocation to reach out to others and actively shares his hopes with others, especially the poor. 



# Rethinking the Translation of “Politics” as *Ndale* in Chichewa Language of Malawi

By Fr. Pius Chilimba.

## The Classical Roots of “Politics”

The word “politics” originates from the Greek word *polis*, which means “city-state”. From this root, two related Greek terms are derived: *politikē*, which refers to the art or science of governing the city-state, and *politikos*, which means relating to citizens, or political, civic, or public. It encompasses all administrative aspects of the city-state such as institutions, public debates, and common life of the citizens. In *Politics*, Aristotle argued that the *polis* exists for the sake of living well as a self-sufficient community.

## Understanding “Politics” in Chichewa: The Word *Ndale*

In Chichewa, “politics” is translated as *ndale*. *Ndale* has three other meanings, namely: 1. A crack in a wall, 2. Tripping an opponent (commonly referred to as *kutchera ndale* in a game of football), and 3. A trap to get someone into trouble. A crack suggests division that leads to a fall, tripping implies foul play that causes someone to fall, and a trap refers to conspiracy that makes someone fall, not physically, but by getting him or her into trouble. Therefore, the verb *kugwa* (to fall),

which also means *kulephera* (to fail) in Chichewa, unites the three meanings. *Ndale* is, therefore, an art of making one’s opponent fail in politics.

In the pre-colonial era, as Prof. Pascal Kishindo (a professor at the University of Malawi) observes, *ndale* did not mean “politics” but referred to a game of wrestling. The word acquired political meaning during colonialism and has remained a stable term in political discourse in Malawi.

## Why *Ndale* Is Not Equivalent to “Politics”

There are reasons for which *ndale*





cannot mean “politics”. Whereas the origin of “politics” in the Greek *polis* places a community at the centre, the origin of *ndale* in wrestling places an individual at the centre. *Ndale* focuses on making one’s opponent fail, rather than addressing issues that affect the nation. While “politics” is about administration of public goods, *ndale* reduces political activity to a game of wins and losses.

To achieve its goals, *ndale* uses division, conflict, deception, and cruelty, traits that are antithetical to the very foundation of a functional society. The only common aspect between *ndale* and “politics” is competition. However, fair competition seems unachievable in *ndale* due to its inherent tendency towards deception. Moreover, *ndale* places competition at the centre of political activity thereby

marginalizing the common good which means the sum of those conditions of social life which allow social groups and their individual members relatively thorough and ready access to their own fulfilment (*Gaudium et Spes* no. 26).

The common good transforms politics into an act of service. It is oriented towards others without excluding the self. The dimension of politics as service is further rooted in delegated duties. Citizens entrust political leadership with responsibility of organizing the society on their behalf and in collaboration with them. The task of organizing the society is both a duty incumbent upon political leadership and a right of the citizens. Therefore, development should neither be reduced to a favour dispensed by the government nor exploited as a tool to solicit votes. In the same

vein, handouts during campaigns should be strongly condemned as corruption of the electorate. They diminish the quality of our politics and injure the dignity of our people who are reduced to beggars. Often, handouts are resources stolen from the poor, used to corrupt the poor, in order to steal even more from the poor. In such a scenario, politics becomes a scramble for taxpayers’ money.

It is curious that politicians are considered “bosses” (*mabwana*) for performing their duties which reveals a disjuncture between the ideals of democratic governance and the lived political reality. This contradiction underscores a need for serious citizen-driven reforms aimed at transforming political offices into positions of genuine public service, marked by accountability and stripped of unwarranted immunities which often lead to political impunity and plundering



of national resources. Besides, while *ndale* has a negative connotation, political figures continue to be referred to as “honourable” (*olemekezeka*), further highlighting the tensions inherent in our political culture.

These contradictions between *ndale* and “politics”, along with *ndale*’s association with individualism, dishonesty, corruption, conspiracy, tribalism, unaccountability, division, intolerance, defamation, intimidation, and violence, clearly demonstrate that *ndale* is different from “politics”. *Ndale* should, therefore, be best understood as a negative political ideology, one used during both the colonial and post-colonial eras to serve foreign interests and suppress our people. There is a need to decolonize the concept of “politics” in Chichewa to reestablish a connection between the concept of “politics” and what politics ought to be in practice.

To realize this objective, I propose a new concept for “politics” in Chichewa.

Using a three steps method that I call *Makwelero* method, I propose a new concept for “politics” as follows: 1. Extraction of essential components of politics, 2. Translation of the components into Chichewa, 3. Fusion of the translated components to coin a new concept.

### Step 1: Extraction of Essential Components of Politics

From its Greek origin as *polis*, politics is about organization of social life for the highest good of the citizens (*eudaimonia*-happiness or human flourishing) which is a service. From this understanding, I extract two essential components of politics: service (as it implies a delegated duty) and organization. I shall set aside competition and the common good on the understanding that competition

in politics is merely a means, not an end in itself. As far as the common good is concerned, it is possible when politics is exercised as duty and service. Therefore, the two essential components extracted from the concept of politics are:

Service and Organization

### Step 2: Translation of Essential Components into Chichewa

The second step involves translating these components into Chichewa. Service is translated as *utumiki*, derived from the verb *kutumikira* (to serve), which itself originates from *kutuma* (to send). This root emphasizes the sense of duty and delegation inherent in any political role. The verb *kukonza* means to organize in Chichewa. Accordingly, I translate organization as *ukonzi*. Notably, *kukonza* (to organize) in Chichewa also means to repair. Therefore, we have the translations: *Utumiki* and *Ukonzi*.







### Step 3: Fusion of Translated Components

The third and final step fuses the translated components (*utumiki* and *ukonzi*) to form a new term for “politics” in Chichewa: *Utumiki + Ukonzi = Utumikonzi*. In coining this new concept, “ki” is removed from *utumiki* and “u” from *ukonzi*. A single politician will be called *mtumikonzi*, multiple politicians *atumikonzi*, and to do politics will be *kutumikonza*. *Utumikonzi* re-establishes the link between the concept of “politics” and its ideal practice. It underscores the fact that one should join politics with an intention to serve and consider himself or herself sent by the community.

Politics should be a form of service that not only organizes social life but also repairs what is “broken”, addressing what does not function well in society. At this point, politics ceases to be a mere game and becomes a serious responsibility, one that should be entrusted to truly responsible members of society. Therefore, *utumikonzi* redirects political engagement towards an ethos of service, serious social concern, constructive gov-

ernance, accountability, and fixing of societal dysfunctions.

### Utumikonzi: A New Vision for Political Engagement

*Utumikonzi* calls for a different way of thinking, understanding, and living politics, one grounded in the full awareness that tribal politics and *ndale* are colonial legacies. In Malawi’s history, colonial administrators institutionalized tribalism as a strategy to counter nationalist movements. This divide-and-rule approach served to fragment political unity and maintain colonial dominance. The task ahead is to decolonize and reform our political system which unreasonably grants excessive power to political leadership at the expense of the citizens. We should fix a system that tolerates a lack of accountability, extravagant spending, and irresponsible borrowing. We have to question a system that promotes dependency while failing to prudently manage and utilize our natural resources.

We should evaluate a system whose educational approach appears inadequate in addressing the needs and challenges of this nation. We have to be critical

towards a system that permits handouts yet claims to fight corruption. Amid all this, poverty is deliberately manufactured and weaponized for political gain and control. Our politics can no longer depend on powerful individuals, personal goodwill, or empty promises.

### Utumikonzi: A Call to Transformative Citizenship

To make progress, Malawi requires a strong political system that allows institutions to be fully independent and free from the suffocating influence of the political class. We need a model of democracy that is affordable, inclusive, development-oriented, and committed to good governance. We should have a unified national vision that all political parties will strive to implement, ensuring continuity and focus. In this endeavour, we can refrain from unnecessary imitations and focus on addressing our unique challenges as unique people. *Utumikonzi* is a call to common problem-solving grounded in historical consciousness, sincere dialogue, and a firm resolve to reorient our national destiny.







# The Ecclesiology of Vatican II

*The Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) has accurately been described as a “Council of the Church about the Church.” For four years the Church reflected on her own self-identity as the community of Christ’s disciples. This reflection seeks to capture a “Vatican II Ecclesiology” in eight “snapshot” images.*

## Foundation of the Church.

The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (Lumen Gentium) asserts: “The mystery of the holy Church is manifested in its very foundation” (LG 5). The foundation of the Church is not simply a “one-time event”; six elements enter into a comprehensive understanding of the Church’s foundation.



The six events are: 1. Jesus' Preaching of the Kingdom, 2. Jesus' Choice of the Twelve Apostles, 3. Promise to Peter, 4. Last Supper Event, 5. Jesus' Death and Resurrection, and 6. Sending of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.

### Preaching the Kingdom

Vatican II noted: "To carry out the will of the Father, Christ inaugurated the kingdom of heaven on earth and revealed to us the mystery of the kingdom" (LG 3). During his public ministry, Jesus took concrete steps (e.g. choosing the twelve apostles and the promise to Peter) to assure the continuation of the preaching of the kingdom.

The kingdom demands new attitudes and renewed relationships. The kingdom is *not* a place, but "God's dynamic rule in our lives." The Church has the mission to continue the preaching and concrete realization of God's rule and kingdom in this world.

### People of God

Several biblical images of the Church are employed by the Council. The predominant image focuses on the "People of God." This people is "God's property"; it does not belong to any one people, race, ethnic or cultural group. One becomes a member of God's people by being "born anew" through faith and the sacrament of baptism (cf. Jn 3:5).

The title of the second chapter of *Lumen Gentium* is "The People of God." Thus, it is asserted that the *entire people* is responsible for the Church's mission. One can validly affirm the Church is to be a "servant people."

### Body of Christ

This image of the Church proclaims a mysterious, yet real communion between Christ's own body and the members of the Church. Jesus always associated his disciples with his own

life, giving them a share in his mission, its joys and sufferings.

Jesus revealed a real communion between his own body and ours, between his person and the Church; he said: "He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me and I in him (Jn 6:56). Yet, there is diversity in its members. Truly, there is "unity in diversity"!

### Temple of the Spirit

The Holy Spirit makes the Church "the temple of the living God" (2 Cor 6:16). Saint Augustine asserted: "What the soul is to the human body, the Holy Spirit is to the Body of Christ, which is the Church."

The Holy Spirit endows the temple of the Church with a great variety of charisms. These Spirit-given gifts, whether extraordinary or simple and humble, are the many, diverse graces and abilities found among the members of the Church.

### Missionary Identity

**A fundamental description of the Church is found in the missionary decree *Ad Gentes*:** "The pilgrim Church is missionary by her very nature" (AG 2). Thus, if the Church is not engaged in evangelization and an active preaching of the Gospel, she is not being faithful to her very self. *Ad Gentes* centers the Church's missionary identity in the Trinity. The Father sends Jesus Christ and together they send the Holy Spirit. Our Christian God, Father, Son and Spirit, is truly a "missionary God."

### Church as Servant.

In *Gaudium et Spes* (Church in the Modern World) the Council asserts that the Church is to be a "servant Church," imitating Jesus himself who came "to serve and not to be served" (GS 3). There are literally dozens of ways for the Church to imitate her

servant-master: health-care, education, justice and peace, environmental preservation, promotion of women, interreligious dialogue, catechesis and proclamation; the list seems nearly endless.

### Family: The Domestic Church.

**The family is called the "domestic church" in *Lumen Gentium* 11.** This beautiful description suggests that the community of faith begins in the home, in the family unit. Families beget new members for the Church. It is in the home that the faith is first transmitted by the word and example of parents. Love is best imbibed in the family setting. Family prayer and devotions can effectively foster the faith. The family is the "seed-bed" of the Church.

**Conclusion. Indeed, each of these rich Council insights is an ongoing challenge to authentically become the living Church of Jesus Christ! Pope Francis has marvelously captured the core identity of the Church, affirming that we are Christ's "community of missionary disciples" (EG 24; cf. 40, 50, 119-121; 173).**



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By Peter Knox, SJ



# Our Mission about Emissions



**W**hen I did a word-search in my favorite document, *Laudato Si'*, I found that Pope Francis had only written once about “mission” in this landmark encyclical on care for our common home. This single use of “mission” was in reference to his earlier apostolic

exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium*, in which he “wrote to all members of the Church with the aim of encouraging ongoing missionary renewal.” He was reaffirming that every Christian has a particular mission in his or her life.

### **From Emissions to Mission: A Christian Call to Care for Our Common Home**

In the text of *Laudato Si'*, “mission” also appears in the word “emission” – the gases put out by vehicles, industries, melting permafrost, burning fuels, etc.



Many of these 'e-missions' are toxic, and/or, like methane, carbon dioxide and carbon monoxide, they contribute directly to global climate change. They form a "blanket" in the atmosphere, trapping in the heat of the sun, which gradually raises the temperature of the planet. Pope Francis argues that these emissions are severely harmful to the health of the people, and the planet.

This can be a starting point as we consider our own mission as Christian citizens to care for our common home. Mission does not necessarily mean that we go to foreign territories to announce the good news and convert people to faith in Jesus Christ. Far more often, mission is about living our lives, in our place, as responsible citizens, motivated by the love of God for ourselves, our fellow human beings, and the beloved world God has placed in our care.

Pope Francis wrote the good news that many emissions are avoidable if we change to more renewable sources of energy. For example, once the appropriate technology is in place, hydroelectric, wind and solar power installations produce no emissions at all, unlike fossil fuel-powered generators. However, they all have other environmental drawbacks.

### **Practical Steps to Cut Our Personal Emissions**

We can also significantly reduce the emissions for which we are personally responsible, by changing the way we use transport and energy. If we have a *shamba* (farm) and keep livestock, we can use their manure to fuel our cooking. A relatively simple biogas digester can provide enough methane to keep the kitchen fires burning. More significantly, the larger our vehicle, the more energy is needed to move it around. In the case of petrol, diesel and gas-driven vehicles, this means burning more fuel, and thus emitting more climate-changing

gases. So if we share transport, or use more modest vehicles, like smaller cars, a bicycle, or even our feet, then we reduce the amount of greenhouse emissions we put out. If we consider what journeys are really necessary, and what journeys might be combined, then we might end up travelling considerably less.

A lesson that many of us learnt during the Covid-19 lockdown, is that a lot of our work can be done from home. We can connect and interact with our colleagues via the internet. This is not always ideal, but in many cases, it saves us hours of commuting and polluting. In some cities, there are now motorbike delivery services, which produce far fewer emissions than getting into a car to go to the local supermarket to buy a few items, or to the workplace to pick up one or two documents.

Using public transport brings a whole range of other considerations. Ships and steam trains often use the heaviest of fuels, which also produce dirty emissions. Similarly, matatus, when they are not properly maintained, are notoriously polluting, with their black smoke carrying tiny carbon particles in the air, which directly affect our airways and lungs. And if you are a jet-setter, the energy required to get you into the air and transport you at speed to your distant destination is also enormous. Jambojet estimates that the return flight from Nairobi to Mombasa burns 1970 kilograms of jet fuel, and emits some 40 kilograms of carbon dioxide per passenger.

In *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis also wrote that we should not simply ignore the true environmental cost of all of the things that we take out of, and dump onto the planet. Often these costs are incurred in countries far away from where the actual consumption takes place. For example, flowers

grown in Africa are sold in Europe. Profit is made at every step along the commercial journey, but the environment in Africa pays the price in terms of fertilizers which pollute the soil, emissions from the farm machines, and lost opportunities for growing food for African citizens.

Likewise, the value chains of mineral extraction, poaching of wild plants and animals, and commercial farming, make profit at every link in the chain – except at the very beginning where people often earn paltry sums and are exposed to health and environmental damage. If we work in these sectors, we should make it our mission to ensure that nobody and no part of the natural world suffers because of our business.

Another way to fulfill our mission to reduce emissions is to plant trees that absorb carbon dioxide in the air as they grow. Ideally the trees we plant are indigenous, and suitable for the particular region, so that they can nourish the various animals that live in that area. Or if they are fruit trees, they will feed people and many other living creatures.

### **Missionaries of Hope in the Face of Climate Change**

In this jubilee year, we have a deep hope that we share with other people, particularly when things might seem desperate. We see statistics reported by the international agencies about the rising levels of emissions, and the consequent global climate change. But as followers of Christ, we should be missionaries of hope, bringing hope and action where things are getting bad. It empowers people to know that there are things that we can do to make a difference – however small – to the looming environmental tragedies. I am sure that each of us can find other ways to reduce the amount of emissions in the world.



# Family and Mission

## Family, The Field of Evangelization

### Celebrating World Mission Sunday as a Family

As the Church prepares to celebrate **World Mission Sunday** on the penultimate Sunday of October 2025, Pope Francis (may he rest in peace) gave a theme that resonates with this **Jubilee Year of Hope**, “*Missionaries of Hope Among All Peoples*.” In his message, the Holy Father reminded Christians that hope is at the heart of the Christian mission.

The most profound example of a missionary family is the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. Their simplicity and unity offer timeless lessons for families today. It was through this humble family that the mission of salvation became visible. The presence of Christ in their home showed that mission is not just human effort but that it begins with God Himself. The family becomes a vessel through which His purpose is revealed.

The soul of the Church is mission, a calling that begins at Baptism. Every baptized person is sent forth to continue Christ’s mission of bringing the Good News to the world.

To awaken this missionary spirit, Pope Pius XI, in 1926, instituted World

Mission Sunday to be observed each year on the second-last Sunday of October. His goal was to raise awareness about the Church’s missionary work, encourage prayer, and invite financial support to keep the mission alive. It also calls for the renewal of commitment to evangelization so the Gospel may reach more people.

One of the most important agents of this mission is the Christian family. Often called the “*domestic church*,” the family is the first place where faith is taught, lived, and handed on to the next generation.

Within the home, children learn best by watching what their parents do more than what they say. They learn to pray, to forgive, to serve, and to love not just through words, but through lived examples. This means parents must model Christ-like living, showing love, humility, prayer, and service daily.

The saying *Charity begins at home* captures the idea that the Church’s mission starts within the family. When families live out their faith through love, forgiveness, kindness, prayer, generosity, and service, they become visible witnesses to the Gospel in their neighbourhoods, and other areas.

A key document on modern



Tom & Lynette Lichuma  
Authors Family Life Books

evangelization, “*Evangelii Nuntiandi*” (*On Evangelization in the Modern World*), written by Pope Paul VI in 1975, teaches that evangelization is not merely an activity, it is the Church’s very identity. He wrote: “*Evangelizing is in fact the grace and vocation proper to the Church, her deepest identity. She exists in order to evangelize...*”

It means that every Christian is a missionary. Mission is a personal calling. Families are invited to share their faith in both word and deed. By doing so together, their bonds are strengthened while they help build the Kingdom of God on earth.

Families can be missionaries by participating in parish life, supporting mission efforts financially, and raising mission-minded children. In this way, they fulfil Jesus’ Great Commission; “*Go and make disciples of all nations*” (*Matthew 28:19-20*).

### Financial Support for Missionary Work

On World Mission Sunday, Christians around the world unite in prayer and generosity to support the Church’s missionary activities. It reminds all Christians that “*we are the Church*,” the living body of Christ. Your donations no matter how little helps spread the Gospel, sustain missionaries, and bring hope to the most vulnerable. Contributions can be made through your parishes or other available channels.

Through this support, every Christian home becomes a mission field small, yet vital to the Church’s global mission. A family on mission is a family filled with purpose. No one is too small, too busy, or too ordinary to serve God’s mission. United in love and guided by faith, a family can light up the world beginning in their home, and beyond.

Tom & Lynette Lichuma Authors of Family Life Books: **To The Altar & Beyond The Strength and Courage of a Woman, A Man of Dignity & Honour**





# Through a woman's lenses

By Maximillia Muninzwa



*By baptism, we are called to be missionary disciples; bearers of light in a world that thirsts for hope.*

I remember as a child hearing stories of foreign missionaries and encountering them in school and at Church. Back then, the Church we attended was called a Mission, not a Parish. Through my young eyes, I saw in these men and women of God a radiance of holiness. Their love, marked by joy, compassion and patience, left a lasting impression on my soul.

Over the years, my spiritual formation has been shaped by many missionary families, among them the Holy Ghost Missionaries, Missionaries of Africa, Discalced Carmelites, Franciscans, Mill Hill, Comboni, Guadalupe, and Quebec Missionaries. And, of course, by a vibrant community of religious sisters, brothers, and nuns. With their hearts ablaze, these missionaries travelled far beyond their borders to share the love of God in foreign territories.

Mission is not just a function of the Church. It is the very essence of who the Church is. From the first apostles to modern-day missionaries, the Church has always understood herself as “Sent”. Sent to proclaim the Good News. Sent to bear witness to God’s transforming love. Sent to serve His people.

One of the most profound shifts in our understanding of mission today is the growing recognition of the role of the laity. Their witness in everyday situations within their families as they raise children and serve the community, engage in their workplaces, and in civic life, makes them frontline missionaries.

Today, lay and religious missionaries alike continue to witness through institutions and services that support the Church’s many apostolates. Catholic schools, healthcare, refugee shelters, food programmes, and social justice and peace advocacy, among others, are all expressions of the Church’s missionary heart. *Ad Gentes*,

The Second Vatican Council’s decree on the missionary activity of the Church, reaffirms this deeply-rooted character of the Church.

In today’s fractured world where war rages and the poor cry out, where the earth groans and many feel spiritually lost, the Church’s missionary call takes on new urgency. We are being beckoned to rediscover our baptismal identity and to rekindle our missionary spirit, not just within Church walls, but in the rhythm of our daily lives, and in the hidden places of human pain and hope.

This year’s theme for Mission Sunday, *Missionaries of Hope among all Peoples*, speaks powerfully to this call. It also resonates deeply with the Jubilee Year. In a time when the world is marked by war, division, secularism, religious indifference, and spiritual thirst, Pope Leo XIV reawakens this mission with renewed urgency, inviting us to let our faith shine in action.

Whether we are in conflict zones or classrooms, surgical theatres, refugee camps or boardrooms, parish outreaches or online spaces, that is where we are being sent to proclaim, to witness, and to serve; accompanying God’s people, bearing light in a world thirsting for hope, and being bridges of peace and places of welcome.

As the 21st century is calling, the Lord is sending, and the world is still waiting. Will you be counted among the messengers of hope and bearers of peace? Among those who shared the joy of the Gospel?





### From Chad to Kenya: My Journey as a Comboni Missionary

**Fr. Djasgombaye Gokam Bienvenu, A Comboni Missionary priest recounts his vocation journey from his multicultural upbringing in Chad to serving in Kenya's Diocese of Lodwar. His story spans early encounters with the Church, years of formation in Chad and Nairobi, ordination milestones, and the ongoing challenge of learning new languages to serve God's people more effectively.**

I come from a family of two boys, and I am the firstborn. I grew up in a large extended family, where our compound included grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins, and grandchildren. Within our family, there is a rich mix of religious beliefs: some are Christians, both Catholics and Protestants, while others are Muslims. This multicultural and multifaith setting greatly shaped my upbringing.

As a child, I attended the Baptist church for several years with my grandfather and took an active part in its activities. However, when my grandfather fell ill and could no longer accompany me, I began attending the Catholic Church with my grandmother, my mother, and many of our neighbours. Over time, I grew accustomed to the Catholic tradition, and even on Sundays when my family did not attend, I would still go with our neighbours.

A key aspect of my family life is the freedom of religion; no one is compelled to follow a particular faith or denomination. Everyone is free to choose their own spiritual path. Additionally, it is worth noting that in Chad, infant baptism is uncommon. Baptism generally takes place in adulthood; for this reason, I was baptised as an adult on March 26, 2005, and later confirmed on September 10, 2006.



## Early Love for the Eucharist

As a child, I often went to Mass with my family and sometimes with our neighbours. Over time, I developed a deep love for the celebration of the Eucharist. It became such a cherished part of my life that on Sundays, when no one was available to take me, I would cry inconsolably. The joy of attending Mass, especially with other children, was something I looked forward to with great anticipation. Occasionally, on our way to church, we would encounter the priest driving to Mass in his car. Each time he stopped to offer us a lift, we were thrilled, and it felt like a special blessing to ride with him. These small moments added to the sense of wonder and reverence I associated with the Church.

## A Childhood Inspiration

One day, I attended a diaconate ordination with our neighbours. I sat beside a young lady from our neighbourhood, and I was completely absorbed in the ceremony. What struck me most was the transformation of the Albs worn by the ordinands. Initially, they wore simple white Albs, but after the Litany of the Saints and the consecratory prayer, their garments seemed to become dazzlingly white, radiant in a way that felt almost heavenly. In that moment, I turned to my neighbour and said, "I want to be like those people, so that my Alb will become dazzling white like theirs." It was a child's innocent dream, and soon life carried me forward, leaving that moment tucked away in memory.

## Joining the Vocational Path

As I grew older, our parish welcomed a new priest who brought fresh energy to the community. He revitalised the parish's vocational group, and I eagerly joined. The group was open to all young people discerning their path in life, whether toward religious life, priesthood, or marriage. It was connected to the diocesan vocation commission, and we participated in quarterly recollections at the diocesan level.

It was during these recollections that I

had the privilege of meeting Comboni Missionaries working in Chad, Fr. Renzo Piazza and Fr. Amasandro Fietosa da Silva. Before meeting them, I had read about Saint Daniel Comboni and his missionary journey from Italy through Egypt to Sudan in a French magazine called *Pirogue*, which is now known as *Afriquespoir*. Meeting these missionaries in person was deeply moving; they were the very people whose work I had admired in the pages of that magazine.

## Walking with Jesus and Comboni

Inspired by their witness and the legacy of Saint Daniel Comboni, I began my vocational journey with the Comboni Missionaries of the Heart of Jesus. I attended monthly encounters with Fr. Renzo Piazza at their community in N'djamena, where we explored the theme: Walking with Jesus and Saint Daniel Comboni. These gatherings became a sacred space for reflection, growth, and discernment, a continuation of the longing that had first stirred in me during those ordination years before.

After a period of personal discernment and with the blessing of my parents, I officially began my vocational journey in September 2009 by entering the postulancy program in Sarh, Chad. This initial stage, known as the propaedeutic, was designed to help young men transition from home life into a deeper spiritual path. It introduced me to foundational elements such as spirituality, scripture, and basic psychological tools to foster

self-awareness and personal growth.

## Life in the Postulancy

The postulancy was specifically for Chadian candidates, and it marked my first experience living in a community with others from across the country. It was a time of learning, not just academically, but relationally. We faced challenges in communication, dialogue, and building relationships, as we were all encountering new personalities and perspectives. Yet, these difficulties became growth opportunities and laid the groundwork for communal living.

## Entering the Novitiate

In 2012, upon completing the postulancy, I was admitted to the novitiate in Sarh, which had recently been established. We were the second cohort of the Holy Cross Novitiate, which welcomed candidates from several French-speaking countries namely, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Togo, Ghana, Benin, the Central African Republic, and Chad. This was my first time living and sharing life with people from outside my home country, and it was a profoundly enriching experience.

We exchanged cultural practices, discussed liturgical differences, and worked together to harmonize our celebrations, especially the Mass, so that everyone felt included. These conversations helped us find a common ground and deepened our appreciation for the diversity within the Church.

## First Vows and Theological Studies

On May 11th, 2014, at Saint Kizito Parish in Sarh, we joyfully professed our first religious vows. Out of the 19 novices who began the journey, 14 completed it and were sent to various scholasticates for further formation. I was assigned to Nairobi, Kenya, for theological studies. Moving to Nairobi was a major milestone; it



was my first-time leaving Chad, and I didn't speak English.

Upon arrival, my first task was to learn the language, as all courses at Tangaza University were conducted in English. My time in Nairobi was filled with grace. Learning English and studying theology were both challenging and rewarding. I encountered new cultures, deepened my understanding of the faith, and grew spiritually and intellectually. I thank God for guiding me through each step of this journey and for the many blessings along the way.

### Final Vows and Diaconate Ordination

After completing my theological studies, I returned home to begin my missionary service. This period of pastoral engagement was both formative and fulfilling, culminating in two significant milestones: my final religious vows, professed on July 18th, 2020, and my diaconate ordination, celebrated the very next day, July 19th, 2020, at Holy Trinity Parish in Moïssala.

### Priestly Ordination

Then, on January 30th, 2021, I was ordained a Roman Catholic priest at the Immaculate Conception Cathedral in Sarh. The ordination was presided over by Bishop Miguel *Ángel* Sebastián Martínez, a Comboni Missionary and bishop of

the Diocese of Sarh. Being ordained by a Comboni bishop had long been a personal dream of mine, and I thank God for making that dream a reality.

### Missionary Assignments

Following my ordination, I was assigned to serve in Chad. I remained in the same community at Holy Trinity Parish in Moïssala until 2022, after which I was transferred to Saint Michael Parish in Bodo. Then, beginning January 1st, 2024, I received a new assignment in the Province of Kenya, where Fr. Andrew Wanjohi, the Provincial Superior, appointed me to Risen Christ Parish – Nakwamekwi, located in the Diocese of Lodwar, Kenya.

### Embracing New Languages

One of the ongoing challenges in my missionary journey has been language. While I have a natural gift for learning languages, each new context brings its own hurdles. In Kenya, I am currently working hard to learn Swahili and Turkana, both of which are essential for effective pastoral ministry in Lodwar. Despite the difficulty, I find great beauty in learning new languages; they open doors to deeper connection and understanding. With daily effort and by God's grace, I remain hopeful that I will soon speak these languages fluently, continuing to grow as a missionary and servant of the Gospel.

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# JUBILEE 2025

## CALENDAR OF MAJOR EVENTS

### DECEMBER 2024

**24 December**

Opening of the Holy Door of Saint Peter's Basilica



Photo Vatican Media

### JANUARY 2025

**24-26 January**

Jubilee of the World of Communications

### FEBRUARY 2025

**8-9 February**

Jubilee of Armed Forces, Police and Security Personnel

**15-18 February**

Jubilee of Artists

**21-23 February**

Jubilee of Deacons

### MARCH 2025

**8-9 March**

Jubilee of the World of Volunteering

**28 March**

24 Hours for the Lord

**28-30 March**

Jubilee of the Missionaries of Mercy

### APRIL 2025

**5-6 April**

Jubilee of the Sick and Health Care Workers

**25-27 April**

Jubilee of Teenagers

**28-29 April**

Jubilee of People with Disabilities

### MAY 2025

**1-4 May**

Jubilee of Workers

**4-5 May**

Jubilee of Entrepreneurs

**10-11 May**

Jubilee of Marching Bands

**12-14 May**

Jubilee of the Eastern Churches

**16-18 May**

Jubilee of Confraternities

**30 May - 1 June**

Jubilee of Families, Children, Grandparents and the Elderly



### JUNE 2025

**7-8 June**

Jubilee of Ecclesial Movements, Associations and New Communities

**9 June**

Jubilee of the Holy See

**14-15 June**

Jubilee of Sport

**20-22 June**

Jubilee of Governments

**23-24 June**

Jubilee of Seminarians

**25 June**

Jubilee of Bishops

**25-27 June**

Jubilee of Priests

### JULY 2025

**28 July - 3 August**

Jubilee of Youth

### SEPTEMBER 2025

**15 September**

Jubilee of Consolation

**20 September**

Jubilee of Justice

**26-28 September**

Jubilee of Catechists

### OCTOBER 2025

**4-5 October**

Jubilee of the Missions

**4-5 October**

Jubilee of Migrants

**8-9 October**

Jubilee of Consecrated Life

**11-12 October**

Jubilee of Marian Spirituality

**31 October - 2 November**

Jubilee of the World of Education



### NOVEMBER 2025

**16 November**

Jubilee of the Poor

**22-23 November**

Jubilee of Choirs

### DECEMBER 2025

**14 December**

Jubilee of Prisoners

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