

# AFRICA CALLING

Newsletter of the Missionaries  
of Africa in the Philippines

3/2012



**T**he canonization of **Blessed Pedro Calungsod** on Oct 21, 2012 brings blessings to the Church of the Philippines. At the age of only fourteen Bl. Pedro Calungsod left his home, family and friends to train in a catechists' school on the island of Bohol. Soon in 1668 he was selected to accompany Fr. San Vitores on the mission to the Guam islands. The three short years of mission were hard. He had to guide the short-sighted Fr. Diego through mountainous forests and brave the opposition of influential local leaders who feared the influence of the Christian faith could undermine their power. Yet deep-felt conviction enabled Blessed Pedro never to lose courage even to the point of giving his life in loyalty to Fr. Diego.

Bl. Pedro Calungsod's canonization brings to mind the challenge to the Filipino youth presented by Bl. Pope John Paul II during Pedro Calungsod's beatification on March 5, 2000: "Do not hesitate to **follow the example of Pedro!**"

Mission, the giving of one's life to share your faith, is not something of the past! It is a call and an invitation for today! May the example and intercession of Bl. Pedro Calungsod give **missionary hearts** to young men and women today to witness to their faith abroad without counting the cost!

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A simple way to contribute to the work of the mission:  
**Mass offerings and Mass intentions**  
**can be sent to the**  
**The Missionaries of Africa**  
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## *Brother Lito Chief Cook for Tanzania*



**B**r. Lito Doguiles from Maitum, Baybay, Leyte is the youth coordinator of the Archdiocese of Tabora in Tanzania. When meeting Br. Lito a big smile invites you to express your concern. He makes you feel he has nothing else to do but to listen to you. Yet he is a very effective person, moving from one activity to another in a very methodical way. When does he rest? We don't know... If you don't believe me, see how he spent his holidays:

*E.: Br. Lito you came from Tanzania for your holidays. You would have deserved a good rest surely after your three years in Tanzania. Instead, you decided to enroll in a course in Hotel and Restaurant Service Technology (University of Southern Philippines/Lahug). Can you tell us about your motivation and what made you sacrifice your holidays?*

**Lito:** Sacrifice! ? You already know that cooking is one of my passions! However, what really motivated me was my involvement in training young people in Tanzania. It convinced me that to deepen my knowledge and enhance my skills in the area of cooking and food preparation would make my work as youth coordinator more effective. One of the aims of my project is to train the youth to acquire skills for employment or better still to become self-entrepreneurs.

*E.: Who are these people you train?*

**Lito:** In Tanzania youths range from 14 to 40 years. Among those I am in contact with, many did not have the possibility of getting a formal education beyond the elementary level. Some already have their own families, some are single mothers. Economically they are hard up. Their main income comes from farming or small selling.

*E.: You are also in contact with special children?*

**Lito:** Yes but indirectly. In Tabora the Missionaries of Africa founded a center for the school for the Deaf. Many of them were not able to pursue higher education because of their condition. I am still in the process of integrating them into our program and giving them skilled training.

*E.: What are the challenges you are facing?*

**Lito:** My biggest challenge for the time being is financial. We received some funding to build a canteen from different benefactors. But still we are



in need of additional funding.

*E.: Can you tell us what do you need most right now ?*

**Lito:** The funding for the necessary equipment is still lacking. For example we need cooking and baking equipment and utensils which would amount to more than 100,000 pesos.

*E.: Based on your experience, do Tanzanians appreciate Filipino cuisine?*

**Lito:** Yes, very much! They like the adobo, kare-kare, pochero, etc. They like sweet dishes like cakes and ice-cream.

*E.: What are some of the recipes you introduced?*

**Lito:** Maximizing what food resources they have like cassava, sweet potatoes, carrots, bananas...enables me to introduce food like cassava cake, cassava roll, sweet potatoes pie, sweet potato roll, carrot cake, banana cake. They are also blessed with good meat like beef, goat, pork and livestock like chicken... I show them how to prepare goat stew, kare-kare, humba, adobo, pochero, etc.

*E.: What can Filipinos learn from Tanzanians?*

**Lito:** They cook excellent chapati (something similar to pancake) which you can find everywhere and I'd love to learn how to do it. They taught me how to bake bread and cakes using the casserole and putting charcoal on top and underneath..

*E.: Why this project ?*

**Lito:** This project developed after doing a survey in 18 out of 21 parishes of the archdiocese (The Archdiocese of Tabora is fifteen times wider than Cebu Archdiocese!). The result of the survey showed that together with human and spiritual formation, "culinary formation" or knowing such practical skills would help to improve their lives.

*E.: Can you give us a final word?*

**Lito:** I am hoping for the best.. that when I'll be back in Tabora, I can continue finishing the construction of the canteen and at the same time I can start putting up the skills training program for the youth. I am asking your prayers that this project will be supported so as to help the youth of Tabora. I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to the Missionaries of Africa for supporting me and helping me to be more equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills for the project. Lastly, I would like to say to the Cebu community- **Ahsante sana!!!** (Thanks a lot)



## *My experience as a trainee missionary in Mua|Malawi*

*Ryan Contamina from Siargao Island, graduated in Agriculture from Xavier University in Cagayan de Oro before joining the Missionaries of Africa. After two years of apostolic training in Mua (Malawi) he is in the Philippines for his vacation. In December he will go to South Africa to study theology in view of becoming priest. In this article he shares with us his experience of Malawi.*

The first thing I had to do when in Malawi was to learn the language spoken by the Chewa. The

Chewa are one of the peoples of Malawi with their own distinct language, culture and traditions, similar to the different peoples that we can find in Mindanao for example. I found it easy to learn to adapt to the culture and to learn the language which helped me to connect well. The Missionaries of Africa opened the mission of Mua 120 years

ago in 1890. Since then the number of Christians has been growing. Much work is needed to deepen the Christian faith. Mission in many ways is still what we

call **primary evangelization**. Mua Mission is a rural area where corn, sweet potatoes, tobacco and a special type of bamboo for roofing are produced. With the Catholic Agricultural Development Commission we gave advice to farmers in choosing crops, new techniques and building water tanks for irrigation. Aside from this I taught catechism in schools, brought communion to the sick and accompanied Small Christian Communities (BEC).

Mua Mission is also the place of the Kungoni **Centre of Culture and Art** founded in 1976 by Fr. Claude Boucher (Canadian, Missionary of Africa). I was given the chance to live with him and I am grateful. He is a wonderful person with amazing talents as an artist. He studied Chewa traditional culture. Not only did he study the culture but he also promoted dialogue and understanding of the

values of the Chewa traditional customs. Masks play an important role in Chewa culture as they are used in funeral celebrations and dances to communicate the presence of "the living dead". I really learned a lot from Fr. Claude as he asked me to digitalize his documentation.



Malawi is indeed a wonderful country. I have experienced its great beauty and the warm hearts of the people who supported me during my stay. I can never forget this and I thank God for giving me the opportunity to spend this wonderful time in Malawi. **Ryan Contamina**

Fr Claude Boucher has published *When animals Sing and Spirits Dance* 2012.

more information <http://www.kasiyamaliro.org/>



Kungoni center

## *President Joyce Banda: Malawi's hope*



**A**s a reader of this newsletter you may remember Br. Clayb Caputolan's article in the March issue (Newsletter 1/2012). It explained the severe crisis that Malawi was facing and how it was aggravated by the weak leadership of the late president. Clayb concluded his article with these prophetic words "It is my greatest desire that Malawians themselves will take courage to say **"We can do it!**" It

should be like this."

Clayb's wish was granted sooner than expected and in a way nobody imagined! Last April after president's Mutharika sudden death due to a heart attack, the vice-president Mrs. Joyce Banda took charge of the country. As opponent of the late president she had been previously marginalized and in the days following his death the president's brother with the cabinet secretly schemed against her taking office.



After only 4 month as President she has been able to take some remarkable decisions that speak well of her. First she dismissed the Information Minister and the police Chief. Then she decided to no longer keep the \$13.6 m presidential jet saying: "I can well use private airliners; I am already **used to hitchhiking.**" She also sold the fleet of 60 Mercedes government cars recently acquired by the late president.

Joyce Banda now is the second female president in Africa after Nobel-prize winner and Liberian president Ellen Johnson Sirleaf. We hope that she will be able to uplift the people of Malawi from poverty.

(The editor)

## *Fr. Luisito Poe our new vocation promoter*



**F**r. Lolo you were ordained priest by Archbishop Fernando Capalla in Davao (San Pablo Parish; Matina) in 2003. After your ordination you were assigned to Zambia for eight years. Was it difficult for you to adapt to a new culture?

**L:** No, I loved it (big smile)! I was very happy with the people. I enjoyed learning the local language Bemba. The more I learned the more I became close to people. I felt I was one with them. It was one of my dreams to be with Africans, and to share my faith with them.

*E: Why go to Africa when you could have been a priest in the Philippines?*

**L:** I cannot quite explain it, but when I saw the brochure of the M.Afr. I felt immediately attracted and my dream began ...

*E: What was your main apostolate?*

**L:** I was youth-chaplain in Kasamba Parish and also accompanied 200 youth that were supported by a scholarship programme. Later I was assigned to Kasama Parish where I was deanery youth-chaplain for six parishes (with 40 to 70 km distance between each parish). I helped in organizing the youth. One of the memorable events we had was a 4-days-camp with 200 youth. The last parish (Serenje) where I was assigned was so huge that it demanded a lot of energy to visit the **72 missions** (called sub-parishes). Serenje Parish is about five times the size of Cebu Archdiocese and we were only 3 priests!

*E: What did you value most in your apostolate?*

**L:** To share my faith by preaching and teaching. Living a simple life as a priest: Eating with people any kind of food. Their culture is family oriented and they share their food with distant relatives. Like Filipinos people in Zambia love eating together! People are sociable, religious and friendly. Before any activity they will exchange a particular greeting. Whether farming, eating, walking or resting ... they will say something like "Have a good walk!" or "Enjoy resting!"



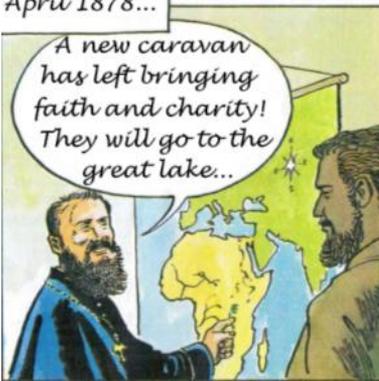
*E: Fr. Lolo, since March 2012 you are appointed to the Philippines as vocation promoter. What would you like to say to the youth?*

**L:** It is time for us (Filipinos) to reach out beyond Asia. We have been Christians for almost 500 years. It is time to share what we have received. We must go beyond our boundaries to preach the good news. In Zambia the Missionaries of Africa were the first to bring the good news 130 years ago only. There is a great need for more Missionaries. **Be part of it!**



### *Our Founder Cardinal Lavigerie (8) The First Caravan to East Africa*

April 1878...



Lavigerie was not the kind of man who would give up easily in the face of failure! After his missionaries had been murdered during the first attempt to cross the Sahara desert he continued to pursue his project to let the Good News reach the interior of this vast and largely unknown continent.

This time he sent them by ship along the East Coast of Africa (actual Tanzania formerly Tanganyika - Zanzibar) later to join a caravan to

the region called **the Great Lakes**.

On April 1878, ten missionaries left Algiers for Zanzibar by ship. Once in Zanzibar an adventure began which until then had been the experience only of the early explorers. Lavigerie had read the accounts of the explorers Livingstone and Stanley and this provided him with the information to plan and advise his missionaries. The risk he took in sending ten young missionaries was huge, but they were generous and eager to share their faith in new territories even at the cost of their lives.

They hired almost 500 porters and guides in order to bring all the material needed (seeds, medicine, paper, ink, including mass wine) to reach their destination in the far interior. They travelled **on foot for 1,500 km** from the Tanzanian coast, following the network of paths created by the slave trade.

Apart from weathering all kinds of difficulties like torrential rains, malaria-infested swamps, seemingly impenetrable forests they needed to deal with local chiefs and Arab slave traders. They were required to learn the local language

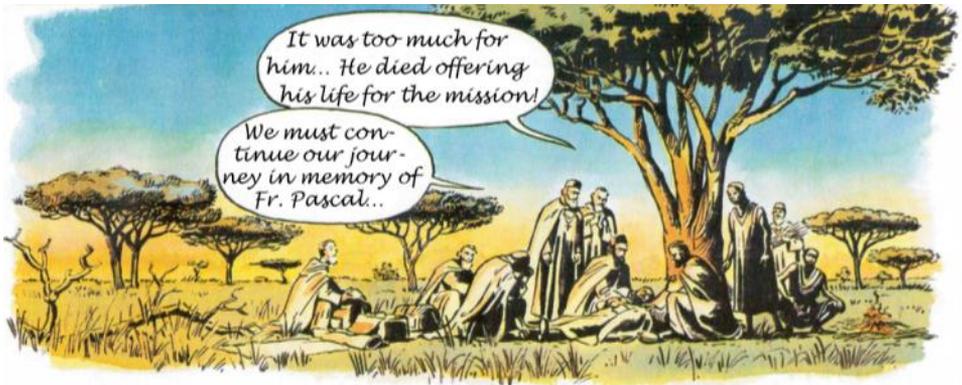
and to keep a diary to record their experiences during their journey as well as to document data about the climate, fauna, flora and local customs.

Among the ten missionaries were Fr. Léon Livinhac the future superior general, Fr. Simon Lourdel and Brother Amans Delmas who are honored for having sown the seeds of the Catholic **faith** among the peoples of **Uganda**.

Their journey from Zanzibar to the Great Lakes region took them eight months! After the success of this first caravan it did not take long for Lavigerie to send a further contingent of missionaries. Up until the Cardinal's death in 1892 twelve caravans were sent, a total of 100 missionaries. Many died at a young age due to the hardships they faced during their journey.

The Good News had reach the heart of Africa and **nothing would stop it**.

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*World Mission day Pope's message*

"The number of those awaiting Christ is still immense... We cannot be content when we consider the millions of our brothers and sisters... who live in ignorance of the love of God" (Blessed John Paul II Redemptoris Missio). Faith "is the most important gift we have and **we cannot keep it for ourselves**. Benedict XVI's (Message for World Mission Day, October 21, 2012)

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