



AFRICA CALLING

**NEWSLETTER OF THE
MISSIONARIES OF AFRICA
IN THE PHILIPPINES**



2/2015

Every year, the month of June marks a new beginning in our community. It is a time when things come to life as we begin another academic year and our candidates, after a period of holiday, get ready to, once again, battle with the often complicated language of Philosophy. It is also the month that quite often brings changes in our community and this year is no exception.

We start with some old faces among our candidates. Larry and Xandry are returning to our community to start their third and final year of philosophy studies. To join Larry and Xandry this year, we are blessed with one new candidate who will join our community to start his Philosophy studies at the Rogationist Seminary. His name is Andy and he is one of four young men who attended our month-long Come and See Programme. These three candidates will be joined by another new face as we welcome to our community another young man, who also attended our month-long Come and See Programme. His name is Vincent, but, at 17 years of age, he is still too young to join our full formation programme. We have invited him to stay with our community while studying English. You can see a picture of both Andy and Vincent as well as learn a few things about them in this edition of our newsletter.

We thank God for the growth in our community, but, in missionary life, we do not just welcome new members to our communities...we must also, from time to time, say goodbye. As we enter our new academic year, we say farewell to Fr. Charles Timoney, the elder statesman of our community. Fr. Charles, known by many of the children around us as Father Santa Claus because of his white beard, has been an important part of our community for 7 years. He has not only been the bursar of our community, but, more importantly, he has also been actively involved in the formation of our candidates over the years. A number of candidates, who have passed through our doors, have experienced the wisdom of Fr. Charles. Now, at the age of 72, he is appointed to his home country of Ireland to take on new responsibilities. We take this opportunity to thank Fr. Charles for his wonderful contributions to our community over the past 7 years and we wish him a good transition to this new challenge in his life.

A replacement for Fr. Charles is already known to us and possibly to some of you as he has been in the Philippines before. He is Fr. Neil Loughrey from Ireland. He was here in the early days of our community here in Cebu; therefore, he is no stranger to the Philippines or to Cebu, but we do not expect him in our community until later this year. He will complete his current assignment in Ireland before taking a bit of

time to renew himself prior to coming to the Philippines. When he arrives, we will introduce him to you.

The remainder of our community remains the same. Fr. Coro still remains as superior of our community, Fr. Luisito as the vocation animator and Fr. Paul as rector of our formation centre.

In the main articles of this issue of our newsletter, you will read about Fr. Phelim Malumo, a Zambian member of the Missionaries of Africa working in Masbate with FAZENDA. We introduce you to the newest members of our community in the persons of Andy and Vincent. Those who attended our month-long Come and See Programme share some of their experiences, especially the impact the one-week family immersion had upon them. Fr. Charles writes a few words about his experiences here over the past 7 years.

We thank you for taking the time to read our newsletter and being part of our wider Missionaries of Africa family in the Philippines and beyond. We are always open to hear from you should you have any comments or suggestions. We also thank you for the interest you have in our community as well as in the work of the Missionaries of Africa in Africa and throughout the world. Your support is needed and greatly appreciated. Continue to pray for us and for the success of the mission in Africa.

Paul Johnston, M.Afr.

Editor

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A MISSIONARY PRIEST IN THE FARM OF HOPE

Fr. Phelim Malumo is a member of the Missionaries of Africa originating from Zambia. He is currently in the Philippines based at FAZENDA in Masbate where he is on a fact-finding mission hoping to eventually return to South Africa to help establish a similar community in the Diocese of Bethlehem in South Africa where another of our confreres is Bishop. Fr. Phelim writes to share some of his experiences of FAZENDA at "the Farm of Hope"

My name is Fr. Phelim Malumo, 42 years old and I am from Zambia. I have eight siblings at home. I finished my secondary education in 1992 at the Christian school in Mongu, Zambia. I joined the Society of Missionaries of Africa as a postulant in 1994. After that, I studied Philosophy in Tanzania for 3 years (1994-1997). I went to the novitiate in Kasama, Zambia. Next, I went for my 2-years pastoral experience in South Africa. I did theology in Nairobi, Kenya from 2002-2004. I took my Missionary Oath in 2003 and I was ordained Priest in 2004 in the Diocese of Mongu, Zambia. My first Missionary appointment was to South Africa, Siyabuswa Parish. After 3 years, I came back to Zambia and worked in different Parishes in Zambia.

I had issues related to alcohol addiction, and I tried therapy in Zambia, Tanzania and Canada. In 2012, I had fully recovered and I was appointed to Lumimba Parish in Zambia for 2 years from 2012-2014.

After a positive and fruitful experience there, the Province of Southern Africa thought that I could use my experience to help other people facing various kinds of addiction. Moreover, due to the experience of other priests at Fazenda in Mozambique and Brazil, it was thought that I should go to one Fazenda community to live, discover and learn the Fazenda way of helping people with their addiction. Fortunately, as I knew Bishop Jan de Groef from my previous time in South Africa and who was very positive about Fazenda activities, I was very keen to start something like that in Bethlehem Diocese in South Africa. Now, in collaboration with Father Hans, Nelson, Roland and Richardson together with the Provincial Council of our Southern African Province and our General Council in Rome, I was made welcome to build on my experience in their community here in Fazenda Masbate in the Philippines.

Since November 2014, I am part of Fazenda in Masbate. For 1 year, I will live here to get to understand better the charism, spirituality and mission of Fazenda to the world. We feel that the Rule of Prayer, community life and their mission can make it easier to collaborate and profit from each other's spirituality. Currently, the Chairman of Fazenda Masbate is Richardson da Silva from Brazil. So far, I have been very much touched by the spirit in Fazenda with lay people, sisters, priests, and even married people working together to help the young people. I admire the spirituality of Chiara, the Word of Life that guides our community living based on the Gospel. Our sharing of goods helps us to form a united family. I help this community through Mass and spiritual guidance together with the Sisters and the Missionaries. I hope

that after this experience, the Society of Missionaries of Africa could establish something like this in South Africa where we have issues with addictions and other related problems.

Our community in Cebu is also connected with Fazenda through the Group of Living Hope. It regularly meets in their house, and slowly, collaboration seems to be improving. I am also happy to be connected with the Focolare Movement. Recently, I learned a lot from Mariapolis that was held here in Fazenda. Fazenda has opened up for me an experience of collaborating with different kinds of people with different skills.

We strongly believe in the Spirituality of Hope. Fazenda is a place where people are coping with various addictions and issues. They get new hope and meaning in Life through prayer, community life and work.

It is my conviction that this experience will be of help to me, the church, society and all people faced with various kinds of addiction and related issues This fulfils Christ's words in John 10:10 "I came that they may

Phelim Malumo, M.Afr.

SWAHILI PROVERB

Muomba Mungu hachokake: Who petitions God does not get tired.

Meaning: God is the true and only recourse of the poor. Jesus will say: "...pray without getting discouraged..." Do not be afraid on tiring God out

MEET ANDY AND VINCENT—OUR NEW COMMUNITY MEMBERS



Andy Deala was born on 18 September 1986 in Davao City. He is one of 9 children born to Gildo Deala and Digna Deala. His siblings are Arlene, Ruel, Joel, Kristine, Melody, Angelica, Gildo (Jr) and Gilbert. He is from St. John Paul II Parish in the Archdiocese of Davao. He achieved his high school equivalent through the Alternative Learning System. During his life he worked in different places.



Mart Vincent Adtoon was born on 6 June 1998 in Calinan, Davao City. He is one of four children born to Martino Adtoon and Judity Adtoon. His siblings are Johan, May Joy and Jenny. He is from Sacred Heart Parish and attended Holy Cross College in Caliron, Davao City. At only 17 years of age, he is the youngest member of our community.

COME AND SEE - APRIL 2015

For a period of one month, from 4 April to 4 May 2015, four of us, Joel from Negros, Andy and Vincent from Davao and Niño from Cebu, came to the formation centre of the Missionaries of Africa in Cebu to attend a Come and See Programme. While each of us came to the programme with different expectations, we all came with a common purpose...to discern if God is calling us to a missionary way of life, but also to have a taste of life in a Missionaries of Africa community. We arrived with our questions about this way of life and hoped that, during our time here, we would find answers to some of these questions.

For two weeks, we spent time getting to know one another through various activities. We shared our stories and the members of the Missionaries of Africa community shared their stories along with their experiences of life in Africa. Through manual work and other activities, we experienced the daily life of the Missionaries of Africa community that welcomed us. Different sessions helped us to deepen our discernment and come to better understand our vocation journey and who we are before God. We learned a bit more about Africa and the work of the Missionaries of Africa. Fr. Charles shared with us his love for the cosmos through which he opened our minds and gave us a totally new insight into the creative power of God in the wider cosmos.

After a few weeks at the formation centre in Cebu, we moved to another phase of our programme. Along with Frs. Coro and Loyo, we travelled to the northern part of Cebu to Calambua. There, we were assigned to 4 different families with whom we would spend one week during which we experienced a little bit of their daily life, their struggles, their joys and their Faith. Each of these families was extremely hospitable to us for the one week we lived in their families. We each had a wonderful and beautiful experience with them. Parting was very difficult both for ourselves and the families who received us.

We can never really express the deep gratitude we feel toward these families, but we share with you a few personal reflections:

Joel shares:



"...My foster family was very good, loving and caring toward me. I enjoyed and nurtured the bonding I had with them. I literally fell in love with their family. They were very generous and hospitable people. I enjoyed helping them in the field and the different tasks we did on their farm. Because of them, I was able to feel the presence of God in our immersion..."

Andy shares:



"...I lived with Kuya Nick and Ate Missay along with their 3 children. I will never forget waking up at one o'clock in the morning and go with Ate Missay to a deep well two hundred metres away from their house to fill 8 containers of water for the day. It is difficult to believe that Ate Missay is doing this every day because Kuya Nick works in the city and only returns home once a month. I am thankful to them because they were so good to me. I am sad that the immersion was too short. I wish

I was able to bond with them for a longer period of time because they treated me like a family member..."

Vincent shares:



"...I thank the Lord and the Missionaries of Africa for the experience they have given me. For being able to spend a week with Kuya Charlie and Ate Emily's family. It was a short time, but I felt the goodness they have towards me. They made me feel like I was a member of their family. I cannot forget the experience of fetching water from a well 2 kilometres from their house. I will also never forget the delicious food they cooked for me. I pray that God may bless their fam-

ily..."

Niño shares:



"...I am thankful for Nanay Amy and Tatay Jimmy, the patriarch and matriarch of the Flores family. With them, I was able to enjoy life in the simplest way. They shared with me the happiness of living a very simple life on their farm on a hilltop. Even though they were elderly people, it did not deter them from working on their farm showing their thankfulness and praise to God. I learned much from them. I was able to have a glimpse at how to be a missionary, living

with a family that was not my own and to be able to embrace their way of life in the same way as they embraced my presence as if it was God's blessing to them..."

When we returned from the family experience, we had the opportunity to share with Larry and Xandry, the two current candidates of the Missionaries of Africa who are entering the third and last year of this part of their formation. They shared their own stories and experiences with us. In the evening, we went with them for a meal and then for videoke.

As we approached the final days of our one-month Come and See Programme, we went with Fr. Paul for a three-day retreat at the Holy Family Retreat House, where we had a time of quiet to reflect upon our experiences of the past 3 weeks and to put it all within the wider context of discerning our call to the missionary way of life. This was an important moment for us. It was a time to ask questions, to present our fears and anxieties and to come before God. The retreat allowed us to approach the “burning bush” within our hearts, to speak to God and to listen to what he is asking of us.

As we write this article, our programme is coming to an end and the bitter-sweet feeling of separation comes with it. While we return to our own places, the bonds and the experiences we have shared, along with the friendships that have developed between us, are just beginning. We have much to share with our families and friends. While our parting will not be easy, it is a reminder to us of an important part of missionary life which is...loving and leaving many times. What we have experienced here will remain a part of us wherever we may be. Whether some of us will become Missionaries of Africa in the future remains to be seen, but the Come and See Programme is now part of our life story that cannot be taken away.

We are thankful for all we have received during this time. We give thanks to God and to all who have helped to make this a most wonderful experiences.

Joel, Niño, Vincent, Andy

Come and See Programme – April 2015

PLEASE REMEMBER OUR DECEASED CONFERES IN YOUR PRAYERS

- Fr. Jacques Maltais from Canada at the age of 77 (52 years as a missionary)
- Fr. Jacques Roly from France at the age of 101 (76 years as a missionary)
- Fr. Piet Tibax from Belgium at the age of 89 (65 years as a missionary)
- Fr. Alain Coëffic from France at the age of 82 (56 years as a missionary)
- Fr. André Pirmez from Belgium at the age of 84 (58 years as a missionary)
- Fr. Roland Prescott from Canada at the age of 83 (57 years as a missionary)
- Fr. Pierre-Alfred Leclerc from Canada at the age of 83 (59 years as a missionary)
- Fr. Jan-Marie Blanchard from Canada at the age of 91 (65 years as a missionary)
- Fr. Gregorio Miguliz Huarte from Spain at the age of 79 (55 years as a missionary)
- Fr.. Antonio Jose Molina Molina from Spain at the age of 83 (60 years as a missionary)
- Fr. Maurice Boissinot from Canada at the age of 89 (63 years as a missionary)
- Fr. Clement Alekwe from Nigeria at the age of 55 (23 years as a missionary)

MISSION INTENTIONS OF POPE FRANCIS

June, 2015

That the personal encounter with Jesus may arouse in many young people the desire to offer their own lives in priesthood or consecrated life.

July, 2015

That, amid social inequalities, Latin American Christians may bear witness to love for the poor and contribute to a more fraternal Society.

August, 2015

That setting aside our very selves we may learn to be neighbors to those who find themselves on the margins of human life and society.

CONGRATULATIONS



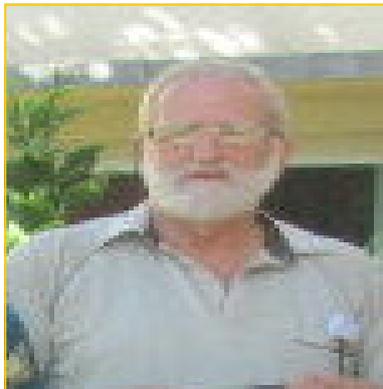
On Saturday, 16 May 2015, at a celebration held at Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish, South B, Nairobi, Kenya presided by Rt. Rev. Emanuel Barbara, Bishop of Malindi (Kenya), 9 candidates of the Society of Missionaries of Africa professed their Oath. Among these 9 was Clayb Estano Caputolan, a native of Cebu, the Philippines.

Born on 17 October 1981, Clayb entered the formation programme of the Missionaries of Africa in June 2007 and was part of our community in Cebu where he followed a course of Philosophy. In 2010, he left the Philippines and was appointed to Kasama, Zambia for his Spiritual Year, which he completed in 2011. He was then appointed for his two-year pastoral experience in Malawi, where he stayed until 2013 before moving to our formation centre in Nairobi, Kenya for the last part of his initial formation programme.

Clayb took his Oath as a Brother in our Society and is now a full member of our Missionaries of Africa family.

We say to him...Congratulations and welcome to the family! May the Lord continue to work through him as he now enters this new phase of his life in the missions in Africa.

BON VOYAGE AND FAREWELL TO FR. CHARLES TIMONEY



After seven years as part of our community in Cebu, Fr. Charles Timoney is returning to his native Ireland to take up new responsibilities in our community in Dublin.

We take this opportunity to thank him for his dedicated service to our community as bursar and formator of our candidates as well as for the many ways he has always made himself available to serve the wider community in Cebu and beyond.

In this article, he shares with us some of his experiences and memories during his years in the Philippines.

In June, I will be leaving Cebu. I've spent seven happy years here. Leaving is always difficult. Shakespeare got it right when he had Juliet say to Romeo: "Parting is such sweet sorrow". But people echo the Bard when they ask: "What will you miss? What will you be happy to leave behind?" Let me list them.

I will miss the People – their ready and friendly smile and their question, when they know you: "...where are you going..." I will miss their many beautiful women, so easy on the eye. I will miss the beautiful custom of the Blessing. Children are encouraged to ask for the blessing from their elders – they take your hand and press it to their foreheads. It assures the child of its specialness and that it is beloved and graced by God. I will miss the orchids outside my window and the clear skies outside Cebu where the Milky Way is so clear you can touch the stars.

I will miss the shomai, the shrimp and the spring rolls. When you first taste the crackling skin of lechon and wash it down with a cold beer you think you have died and gone to heaven. It is an eating culture. It is impossible to have any kind of celebration without food. And when I am asked about Ireland, I tell them to substitute drink for food and they'll have the picture. However, I will not miss the rubbery squid and the smelly durian.

I will miss the majestic landscapes and the white beaches. But I will not miss the Sun. A few years ago I had some skin cancer removed from my forehead. I went to Manila for surgery. As I lay on the operating table under local anaesthetic, I wondered if it was the Filipino Sun that had triggered the cancer. "No, no", the lady surgeon replied "don't blame the Filipino Sun; it was chronic exposure to the African Sun." As her scalpel at that moment was digging into my forehead, I did not argue. No, I will not miss the Sun. And you can keep your typhoons tsunamis and tremors too.

I love the way religion and its concrete – or better its incarnational expression is woven very naturally and unapologetically into ordinary life. So unlike the secular scepticism of the West. As a priest I will miss the

confessional ministry. There, you are the privileged witness of life changing conversions and you need to take off your shoes. After four hours of concentrated listening and imparting God's forgiveness you can experience a wonderful fulfilling exhaustion. But, I will not miss the high and really ridiculous pedestal on which they place the priest. Some pretend prelateens parade around like purple peacocks. Jesus would turn in his grave if he hadn't risen from the dead!

I will miss the bright chrome and riotous colours of the jeepneys – the kings of the road – but not riding in the as I invariable bump my head on their low ceiling.

I will miss the international community of M.Afrs in Cebu: the gentle teasing, the laughter and humour. The differences that always surprise and the disagreements that don't destroy. I will miss the respect and courtesy shown senior citizens – where else would you be led to leap-frog a hundred people for your driving license? Care-giving, especially of the elderly seems to be carved on the Filpina soul. And talking of soul, one Carmelite sister here says that if you want to understand the Filipino Psyche you need to see three levels: "The Filipino mind is pragmatic and American; the Filipino heart is Spanish and Religious; and the Filipino Soul is Eastern and Mystical."

On balance the "misses" far outweigh the "not misses"; the latter being minor irritations. Most of all I will miss the Filipinos and the Filipinas who have mad my years here happy ones. Thank you!

Your General McArthur's famous promise: "I Shall Return" was said with great conviction. I'd love to be able to repeat it. But, unfortunately, the truth of my situation makes me qualify his certitude with a hopeful "maybe".

Charles Timoney, M.Afr.