

MISSIONARIES OF AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

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My dear Friends,

Greetings! I hope you are fine!

This month, we are lucky to have an article from Eustache Bokonda, an aspirant who has already taken part in two *Come & See* in Cape Town. Enjoy reading it!

On Friday evening 3rd to Saturday evening 4th October, in Vosloorus, I have the chance to help in a Youth Retreat on the Theology of the Body; the theme was: YOUTH CALLED TO GOD'S LOVE. 45 youth from the Near East Deanery of Joburg Archdiocese take an active part and show a lot of interest. The subjects of Vocation and Mission are most prized! I am very humbled by their eagerness to love God more!

On Saturday 11th, with two seminarians of Merrivale, Alphonse Biyishimo (Rwandese) and Anthony Batioka (Ghanaan) and our stagiaire Martin Somda (Burkinabe), we spend the day at Mariannhill for a Youth Day with about 500 youths. We have a chance to exhibit and distribute our Vocation material. We always hope and pray that we will get some young men to be interested.

On Friday 17th, with Fr. Albert Chilufya (Zambian), we take part in the *Radio Veritas* programme *Youth Wise* from 7 to 8 pm (every Friday evening, repeated Saturday, same time); the topic is **MISSION MONTH**, especially the forthcoming **Missionary Congress**. We hope many youth were listening!

The most important event for this month in Johannesburg Archdiocese is surely the **MISSIONARY CONGRESS**. On Saturday 25th and Sunday 26th, more than 250 people came from most parishes of the archdiocese to reflect and pray on the theme *ENLARGE THE SPACE OF YOUR TENT!* These words from Isaiah 54:2 invite us to be a more open Church and **go out** to others, because, **Belonging to Christ, Committed to Mission**, we are convinced that **EVERY Christian is a Missionary!** We hear wonderful testimonies from people who have left everything to follow Jesus and help build His Kingdom; not only priests and religious, but also lay people like Beatrice who left a big job with BMW to care for abandoned and rejected children; she has now an orphanage of twenty children. Also like Dillon who left a promising acting career on TV (was playing on *Isidingo*) to become a missionary with *Couples for Christ* and *Youth for Christ*, also working at the Youth Office of the Archdiocese. Martin Somda promises to write an article on the Congress. So, next month we shall read more about this great event which gives us hope that in South Africa, there are still people who feel called to be missionaries! What about you?

God bless you all!

Fr. Michael

CAPE TOWN COME AND SEE: 26th to 28th September

My Vocation History into the Missionaries of Africa (White Fathers)

Dear readers, receive firstly my greetings in the Name of Jesus-Christ our Lord. I would like to give here in a few lines my thought regarding the Come and See that we had last month. Let me start by saying this: I started to get in touch with father Michael last year via my fellow brother Patrick who is currently in Malawi for his philosophy studies. Everything went well and this was my second Come and See. Basically, we discussed a lot of things; due to lack of space, I cannot talk about everything.

The main topic was about the VOCATION TO THE PRIESTHOOD. Besides that, we spoke about the PRIEST AND THE EUCHARIST, and we watched three to four movies concerning vocation. Father Michael was so brilliant in talking about the need for Priests in our modern Society.

The priest is like a bridge between God and the Christians, and he has the responsibility to guide God's people because the priest acts in Persona Christi. This means that when we see a priest we should see God through him. Modern society has a lot of issues (spiritual, moral and physical). So the priest must always be there to help solve some them.

The priest is also a sign of change. He's called to put justice where there's injustice, to make peace where there is misunderstanding, etc.

The most touching thing that captivated me was the video documentary of the M.Afr. After watching it, I kept the following points: as future Missionary of Africa, I should live a missionary life, which means to work out of my own country, live in humility, obedience, prayer and community life, living with others as brothers. We aim at being apostles, nothing else but apostles (cf Cardinal Lavignerie).

After a long moment of silent thinking, I really love my experience with the M.Afr. I encourage other young men to do so, especially young South Africans. I want to thank father Michael for his powerful work and for helping to discern my vocation to the M.Afr. United in prayer. Yours in Christ,
Eustache Bokonda

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Be apostles,
nothing but apostles!

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