



# Word Aflame

Botswana Province Newsletter

July-August 2010

## Word from the Provincial

Dear Confreres,



### Don't Doubt the Octopus!

*Paul the octopus at the Aquarium Sea Life in Oberhausen in Germany chose Spain as the victor over Germany in Wednesday's World Cup semifinal match. And Spain beat Germany 1-0 to advance to their first World Cup final. That makes Paul seven for seven in picking the outcome of Germany's matches.*

*What would the octopus pick for our province to navigate ourselves? As a province what we need today is a shared vision. Our districts have been asked to rework / recreate a shared vision-mission-action plan as a guiding star for greater effectiveness and direction. Shared vision cannot exist without personal vision. A shared vision is not an amalgamation of mere personal visions either. Rather it emerges from the intersection of personal visions, helping us to create a sense of commitment to the long term.*

*If asked, the oracle octopus would pick for us a sense of connection and community with respect to the vision we would co-create for our districts and province in general. Shared vision takes time to emerge. It requires the same spirit led discernment through on-going dialogue that continually shape that shared vision. We have the both individual and collective power to birth it, for we have the life force deep within. Along the way of our intercultural missionary life and living let us discover more energy and creativity in being and doing anchored in the life force within us - the Incarnate Word. It elicits the true shared vision!*

*Shiju Paul .*

### RETREAT AT MATER DEI PASTORAL CENTRE



In the month of June when the whole country was in the festive mood of FIFA World Cup, some people thought that this is the best time to spend a few days in prayer and reflection. The retreat was from 13-19 June, attended by 25 people. There were priests, brothers, sisters and lay people from Zambia, Botswana and South Africa for this retreat. It was preached by our confrere Fr. Sunny John!



### ON-GOING FORMATION FOR THE MIDDLE AGERS



Fr. Sunny John, Mission Secretary of the Province organized a 2 day workshop for brothers and priests who made their final vows between 1990-2004 from 3-4 June in the provincial House, Francistown. It was attended by 13 confreres from Zambia, Botswana and South Africa districts. Sr. Patricia, coordinator of Catechetical Commission for SABC, was the facilitator. On the first day of the workshop we reflected on various aspects of our life as

religious brothers and priests. The input on community and evangelical counsels was followed by a group sharing. The group sharing was enriching. We came to know what is happening to each one of us through sharing of life experiences. One of the things that have been lessening the religious missionary flavour in our lives was the lack of consistent prayer life. Another point brought out was that the internet has become the new ‘companion’ in our lives. The initial enthusiasm as religious priests and brothers are fading away. Though not for the sake of collection, there is a tendency to acquire latest technological gadgets. The day was concluded with the celebration of the Eucharist. On the Second day we reflected on our role in the evangelizing mission of the Church. The facilitator emphasized the need for a ‘New Evangelization’ which is a call to genuine pastoral renewal motivated by a burning love for Christ and his Church. A priest is a teacher of the Word, minister of the Sacraments and leader of the community. In the group sharing which followed, we shared the successes and difficulties encountered in our various pastoral contexts.

### Fr. Ariel in Rome to Celebrate Conclusion of Year of the Priests



“We have the biggest number of priest delegates to Rome in all of Southern African dioceses”. This was the proud statement of Bishop Valentine Seane during our last priests’ meeting in Gaborone. And indeed, it is very true. I was there. On June 6, 2010, eight priests from Gaborone Diocese departed from the new Sir Seretse Khama Airport. They were bound for Rome to heed the

invitation of Pope Benedict XVI to be with him and with all other priests from all over the world during the closing celebration for the “Year of Priests”.

Our journey was organized for us by Micasa Tours of South Africa which covers our plane ticket, accommodation, food and tours around the city. There were forty five priests from the whole of Southern Africa which included delegates from South Africa, Botswana, Malawi, and Lesotho. Our journey started with a tour of the city of Rome the day after our arrival in Rome. And again on the last day of our stay, we had the chance to visit the place of St Francis and St Claire in Assisi. On the third day, the International Meeting of Priests officially started. We were divided into two groups since there were more than 10,000 participants. Our group was assigned to meet at the Basilica of St Paul Outside the Walls, and the other group had to gather at the Basilica of St John Lateran. The first and second day of the Priests’ Meeting



started with a reflection by a cardinal, followed by the adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and the sacrament of reconciliation, then ended with the Holy Eucharist. On the second evening, we gathered at St Peter's Square for the vigil together with our Pope. The last day of the Meeting was our mass and audience with the Pope

The first cardinal who shared his reflection was Cardinal John Meisner, archbishop of Colon. The theme was "Conversion and Mission". We were so touched by his reflection when he likened our conversion as priests with that of St Paul's fall from the horse. As priests, we had also our experience of many fall, failures or even scandals, but like St Paul we must not remain there. This experience should lead us to CONVERSION and ultimately to MISSION.

On the second day, Cardinal Marcus Ouellet, archbishop of Quebec, shared his reflection. The theme focused on "Cenacle: Invocation of the Holy Spirit with Mary, in fraternal Communion". He showed to us how our Blessed Mother can help us and become a model for priests in prayer and fraternal communion. The last day was our con-celebration with our Pope at St Peter's Square where more than 15,000 priests con-celebrated with him. It was the biggest number of priests con-celebrating in the history of the Church according to some observers. Indeed, my visit to Rome was a very meaningful one. Not only that it was my first time to be there, it was more of the first hand experience to be with so many of my brothers on the journey. We may have different colours and races, but that brotherhood of priests assured me that we can be together in our longing to serve Christ and his Church.

### Mogoditshane Parish Celebrates KK's Silver Jubilee



The Holy Cross Parish Mogoditshane, celebrated the Silver Jubilee of Fr. Kuriakose's ordination on June 26, 2010 with a beautiful Eucharistic celebration presided over by his Lordship Bp. Valentine Seane, the Bishop of Gaborone. Fr. Kuriakose, vested in his Syrian liturgical vestments shared with the congregation the humble beginning of his missionary journey in Mukuni village near Victoria Water Falls in Zambia. Apart from the parish, Zambian and Kerala communities

felicitated KK in a special way. An elderly woman from the parish compared KK to a coconut, hard looking externally, but so tender and sweet deep within! The parish community shared a sumptuous lunch prepared by various small Christian communities.

**New Resident Permits/Renewals:** Uncertainty continues over the issue of new resident permits for missionaries in Botswana. The bishops are slowly making frantic efforts to sort out the problems, but with very little results! At the moment all churches operating in Botswana have been clustered together under same set of operational rules and regulations by the government. Prior to the submission of applications for missionary permits the desired job must be advertised first, and if no local citizen qualifies only requests for expatriates are considered. It applies for all priests and sisters coming in to the country. Copy of the job vacancy advertisement is submitted together with the application forms for either new permits or renewals of existing permit holders.





### Bishop Joao Rodrigues Meets SVDs



On 16<sup>th</sup> June 2010, Bishop Joao Rodrigues met our confreres serving in Tzaneen Diocese. The meeting took place in Giyani parish. Over the years SVDs have contributed extensively in the areas of Catechetical Programs, HIV and AIDS Ministry, Pastoral Biblical Ministry, and in forming self sustaining missionary communities who initiate evangelization outreach programs to unattended communities. The Bishop challenged us to promote local vocations for diocesan clergy.

### AFB Meeting CNG 2010



The AFRAM Formation Board met in Kinshasa, D.R. Congo from June 13-19, 2010 for its tri-annual meeting. All the AFRAM provinces/region was represented. The mission of MOZ also sent its representative. Fifteen confreres participated in the meeting. The major point on the agenda was the revision of the handbook of the CFCs in the light of the document published by the Generalate entitled “*Re-imagining the Pathways of Our Common Vocational Journey*”. Given the fluctuations in the number of

vocations, personnel and economic constraints, the board recommends our formandi be sent to the already existing novitiates in Angola, Congo, and Ghana. The lack of personnel in our formation houses in general, and CFCs in particular was assessed. The board has proposed a list of confreres from the Zone who can possibly work in formation.

#### **Appointments/Transfers:** Fr. Ariel Tampus- Parish Priest, Kopong Mission

Fr. George Varghese – Diocesan Development Coordinator, Gaborone (Residence at Mogoditshane)

Fr. Isaac Muimui – Philosophy House Lusaka

Fr. Aldus – Gumare Mission

**Welcome:** Frt. Alex from Nairobi for his pastorals in Mwandu, Deacon Chibale from Ghana

**Probationary Year:** Kelvin Banda at Dambwa Parish, Livingstone

#### **Travel Abroad**

Frs. Gabriel and Simon are in Sudan to facilitate a pastoral planning seminar

Fr. Godfrey Manunga will attend the International Association of Catholic Missiologists' Conference at Tagaytay, Philippines from 26 June to 6 August, 2010 to present a paper on Indigenous People of Southern Africa

**Home Leave:** Fr. Maciej Niezychowski, Fr. Klemens Amaunut

**Transfers:** Fr. Theophan has been transferred to our province from Togo. He is on his well deserved home leave at the moment

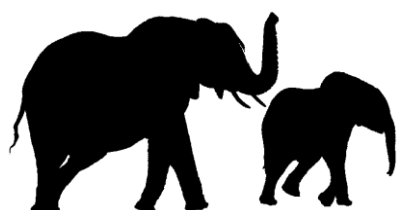


**Recuperation:** Br. Lutwin was operated in Saarburg hospital for his thyroid gland related problems on 2 July. He was discharged on 6 July, and now he is recuperating until he flies back possibly by 14 July!

Br. Yoseph Pai underwent minor operations for urinal infection in Chipata

### Birthdays

| July                   |    | August             |    |                 |    |
|------------------------|----|--------------------|----|-----------------|----|
| Vincent Mwiya          | 04 | Marichu            | 05 | Biju            | 20 |
| Aldus                  | 06 | <i>Petroneldis</i> | 10 | Donatus         | 21 |
| Frt.Edson              | 16 | Natun              | 11 | Maciej          | 23 |
| <i>Maria Gasparina</i> | 27 | Charles            | 17 | <i>Karolina</i> | 24 |



## *Bana Ba Ditlou*

A response of the Catholic Community to the growing problem of orphaned, hungry, neglected, malnourished, abused HIV infected, dying of AIDS and otherwise vulnerable children of the town of Kasane-Kazungula.

**Feeding centre** - for hungry and malnourished children. In order to protect the project from abuse, the staff will provide the screening and assessment of every child involved. In this way we will help those who really need it most.

**Socio-Psychological support** - this component will be provided by the OVC project. This includes: screening and assessment of children in need connected with the family background and school performance evaluation, assistance to the sick and HIV positive children, medication monitoring and several other related services.

**Recreational, game and sport activities** - integral part of the programme provided by Bana Ba Ditlou. Some organised activities might take place outside of facilities of the project, but always under supervision.

**Cultural and creative activities** - these activities may include traditional music: dance, songs and instruments, drumming; performing arts, choir, marimba band, flute & guitar group, theatre group, other arts like carving, drawing, painting, sculpture, pottery, basketry and other skills.

**Educational activities** - We plan to initiate some hobby clubs to teach children about many things and perhaps some of them will become fascinated and later could follow this passion as a life career. We would like to have a birding club, mammals club, fishing club and likewise; safari and conservation club; bush skills-survival, bush food & medicine, tracking and safari skills; cooking and backing for girls. We might also have a history and archaeology inputs.

**Moral & Spiritual support** - we would like to provide our children with the system of values that would protect them in life (HIV-AIDS, crime, prostitution, trafficking and pornography), that would guide them and make them responsible, self-controlled, disciplined, industrious and happy.

**Conservation** - Conservation component will be an integral part of many activities: some recreational, some cultural and often educational. This component is very vital for the future sustainable conservation efforts. Our children are the future guardians and stewards of creation.

Although it is a social project the Evangelisation is implied. Some children are already visiting the mission, and we hope that more will become interested and join our community. If you are interested to know more about Bana ba Ditlou (Children of the elephants) project visit our website:

<http://banabaditlou.homestead.com>