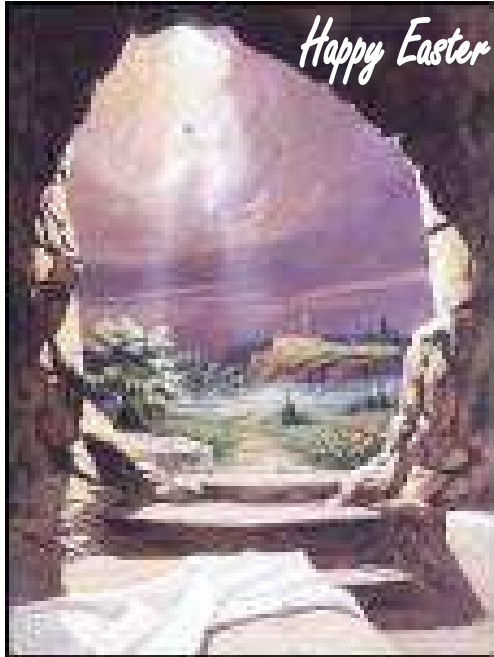




Brothers of the Christian Schools

RELAF NEWSLETTER



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Editorial

Slowly and surely, the Institute moves towards the 45th General Chapter of its history. Inexorably, the inter capitular period is coming to an end. This is the stage that makes us think about assessments; readjustments, reorientations in order to do things in a better way.

Specifically, we can ask ourselves what we have been able to achieve since the last General Chapter and what we have not as in accordance with our plans. What positive changes have we noticed in the functioning of the current form of Government in the Institute and particularly in the functioning of our RELAF Region? These reflections can serve as guidelines for our delegates to the next General Chapter whose focal point will be the revision of the Rule as directed by the last General Chapter. These reflections can also help redefine the profile of the General Councillor who will be in charge of the Region.

This issue gives great importance to the Assemblies that will soon take place in preparation for the General Chapter: MEL International Assembly, International Young

Brothers' Assembly, Symposium of Young Lasallian and Signum Fidei International Assembly... Our Region is represented in these meetings and we are invited to support our Delegates to have meaningful participation. That support begins with good preparation and a close connection with them before, during and after the Assemblies.

In this issue, we provide you a list of all our Delegates at two International Assemblies this year: the MEL International Assembly in Rome and the International Assembly of Young Brothers in Manila.

Brother Michel, the brain behind the production of the newsletter will be involved in an academic internship program for three months in Antananarivo. Then, he will attend the International Young Brothers' Assembly in Manila before going for home leave. However, he remains available to receive articles for the next issue of Relaf Newsletter in June. Happy Easter!

Brother Gabriel SOME
General Councillor for RELAF

25th year of Perpetual Vows



Brothers, Priests, Sisters and Lay faithful came together to celebrate the thanksgiving of NAKIELE Family. Yes, on Friday, December 28, 2012, Feast of the Holy Innocents, Brother Gabriel SOME, General Councillor for RELAF, celebrated his twenty-five years in anticipation of perpetual vows in the village Kassaora the Diocese of Diébougou in southwestern Burkina Faso, where he hails from.

Thanks to Brother Janvier DEMBELE, Visitor of District of West Africa, for having changed the location of the Young Brothers 'meeting to enable them join in the celebration. Brother Valère ADONSSOU, Novitiate Director also sent a delegation of three 3 Formators and six novices. During the festive and fervent celebration led by Father Jean Charles SOME, each Brother present was introduced individually. Through the inspiration of Brother Sylvain CONSIMBO, we sang "Ta parole, Seigneur Dieu, l'a brûlé comme un feu....» Note that Father Jean Charles delivered a vibrant tribute to Brother Gabriel SOME for his 24 years of fidelity to God in the education of young people and living the evangelical counsels. Commenting on the Word of God, he noted

that light and truth are the basic materials of fraternal life, and in his life, Brother Gabriel SOME taught the truth and spread the light. He then stressed the urgency to be true for a real development, and pointed out that even the liar educates his children on the significance of truth.

After the thanksgiving song, Brother Gabriel SOME thanked all the participants in the celebration, including the clergy of Diébougou headed by Bishop Raphael DABIRE present at the mass. He also expressed his hope to see the community of the District celebrate the Silver Jubilee of Brother Gabriel and his group mates, Brother Pierre OUATTARA and Jean-Baptiste COULIBALY next year.

The final blessing was given after blessing the tomb of Brother Gabriel's father and the family home. We were treated to delicious meals and refreshment, courtesy of Sister Patricia and her team. In summary, the celebration was festive, simple and fervent; and the meal, fraternal, friendly and inviting. We then, made our return trip under the protection of the Lord.

Brother Raoul Téfio TRAORE
District of West Africa



DWA: Young Brothers' Meeting

The annual meeting of the Young Brothers of the District of West Africa (DWA) took place on 26th and 27th December 2012 in Diébougou.



Eleven Young Brothers were present at this meeting. Facilitators were Brothers Jovite Diarra and Traore Raoul. Their reflections focused on the preparation for the International Meeting of Young Brothers in Manila (Philippines) from 29 July to 9 August 2013. The meeting will be preceded by a meeting of RELAF delegates from 25 to 27 July 2013 at the same place. This meeting of African delegates whose theme is inspiring: "... *That they may be One as You, Father, are in me and I in you ...*" (Jn 17:21) sought to harmonize reflections of the continent so that Africa speaks with one voice and has a single vision. For the District, Brother Raoul TRAORE will represent the Young Brothers at the International Assembly in Manila. It is in this context that the reflections of the young Brothers in District were oriented. represent the Young Brothers at the International Assembly in Manila. It is in this context that the reflections of the young Brothers in District were oriented.

represent the Young Brothers at the International Assembly in Manila. It is in this context that the reflections of the young Brothers in District were oriented. Some documents of the Institute have been made available to the Brothers for consultation. These are:

1. Circular 455 : *The Documents of 44th General Chapter*
2. Circular 456 : *Towards the Year 2014*
3. Circular 461 : *Associated for the Lasallian Mission ... an act of Hope*



The presence of Brother Visitor at the end of the meeting was welcomed by all the Young Brothers. This was seen by all as a sign of consideration for the Young Brothers. He encouraged the Young Brothers to be united together because it is in unity and brotherhood that we can build a vibrant and prosperous District.

*Brother Raoul Téfio TRAORE
District of West Africa*

Note: You will find the full report of the meetings of the RELAF Young Brothers (compiled by the Young Brothers, delegates of RELAF at the International Assembly in Manila) in a forthcoming special issue as it was intended by the Conference RELAF in November 2012.

Chronicle N°2: Sanctuary Bsed. Rafiringa

A year ago we published a chronicle of the Sanctuary Blessed Rafiringa on our RELAF Newsletter No. 03. Big thanks to Brother Hilaire RAHARILALAO, Vice Postulator for this 2nd issue.

Some events have marked the life of the Vice-Postulation whose main objective today is the Cause of Canonization of Blessed Brother Raphael Louis Rafiringa. However, this column is particularly interested in showing the statistics and animation groups of pilgrims at the Sanctuary in the year 2012.

Eucharistic Celebration

The Sanctuary has no chaplain. Groups usually come with their priest for interventions and Eucharistic celebrations. However, since 2012, in regard to the Sacrament of Reconciliation and the Eucharist on Saturday afternoons, we have regular services from Priests of the Mission (Vincentians) who are our neighbors. They appreciate the presence of the Sanctuary Blessed Rafiringa which is very close to them. *Year of Faith at the Sanctuary*

With the celebration of the Year of Faith, new arrangements have been made to help the pilgrims in their journey of faith. Thus, regardless of the groups, a prayer is held every day at noon:

Angelus for the Canonization of Blessed Rafiringa followed by another prayer according to the days of the week:

Monday: Litany of the Saints

Tuesday: Midday prayer

Wednesday: Rosary recitation

Thursday: Adoration

Friday: The way of the Cross

Saturday: Prayer for the Year of Faith

Sunday: Prayer for the Year of Faith

The theme of Animation for the Year of Faith at the Sanctuary is written on a large colored banner affixed to the balcony of Rafiringa House in these terms: «**2013: A year of Faith. Brother Raphaël-Louis Rafiringa, a man of faith and a Christian Educator**»

A trip to Rome

In October 2012, on the Canonization of Blessed Jacques Berthieu, a Jesuit priest, martyred in Madagascar in 1898, Brother Vice-Postulator travelled with Malagasy pilgrims to Rome. He met Brother Superior, General Postulator and others Responsible for general services in the Institute for the Activity Report. He also visited the offices of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints at the Vatican. The study of a presumed miracle among others is encouraged for an initial phase of investigation.

New façade and entrance gate at the Sanctuary

To allow a greater visibility of the space Rafiringa Sanctuary, to regulate access and ensure safety on the large hill of Soavimba-hoaka, we built a 6.20 m metal gate slatted with two side doors, decorated with two stars at the center, extended on both sides by facade balusters, with bright assorted colours. Thank you to Brother Superior for his supports.

Rafiringa Animation and the Média

The year 2012 saw the issue on two occasions by a private TV Channel of the Capital: a report on the website of the Sanctuary Rafiringa and its dependencies on Soavimbahoaka, which was conducted in collaboration with the Vice-Postulator Brother and presented to the Sunday TV religious program. The objective was to raise awareness about Blessed Rafiringa beyond retreats, conferences and appearances on Catholic radio in Dioceses.

A valuable piece of Archives

The Archive room in House Rafiringa Soavimbahoaka has just acquired an important document in the history of Missionary establishment of the Institute of De La Salle Brothers in Madagascar and that of the first Native Brother in Madagascar, Raphael Louis Rafiringa. The document is a PhD in Missiology (206 pages) presented at the Pontifical University of Rome Urbanium in 1954 by Brother Leon Marie Aroz Aragon Zaragoza.

Banned from consultation for decades by the will of the author, the very valuable document has become a property of the Institute whose exploitation unexpectedly and exceptionally enriched the Cause of Blessed Rafiringa.

Reshuffle in animation group

After two years of operation and better animation of faithful and pilgrims, the Vice-Postulator reorganized animation at the Sanctuary involving more people including devotees groups to Blessed Rafiringa, or placed under his protection, and also entities of the Lasallian family, replacing one animation group whose limits did not allowed to have a bigger vision and meets the requirements of the Cause.

Thank you for your different forms of cooperation at all levels for the advancement for the Cause of Canonization of Blessed Brother Raphael Louis Rafiringa in Madagascar and in the Church.

Vice-Postulator
Brother Hilaire RAHARILALAO



Thesis Defense of Brother Joseph Kibwimana



On Friday 18th February 2013, Brother Joseph KIBWIMANA defended his PhD thesis in Science Education on the topic: " *Psycho affective Problems and School Performance: Case Study of a few High Schools in the district of Abidjan and its suburbs.*" The defense took place in CELAF in the presence of Professors from Felix Houphouët Boigny and Alassane Ouattara Universities, who formed the Jury. Friends, Priests, Religious Brothers and Sisters, CELAF staff, and numerous guests attended. After his brilliant

PowerPoint presentation, the discussion phase and of course the deliberation, the President of the Jury awarded Brother Joseph, ***summa cum laude distinction.*** Some family photos were taken in the grounds of CELAF prior to sharing and celebrating together the success of our Brother Joseph, now Doctor.

Brother Michel TOLOJANAHARY



Initial Formation: Lwanga District

During my recent visits to the Sectors of the Charles Lwanga District of Africa and to the International Formation Houses in Nairobi I noticed that the implementation of the 6 positive aspects of the formation process transforms little by little Brothers' Communities INTO HOMES where the Brothers feel really AT HOME.

In these Communities the Brothers have been willing to establish, implement and evaluate their Community Annual Programme (1) and their Community Annual Budget (2), to experience Participative Management (3) and Team Work (4) in mutual trust and accountability in their Communities and Ministries, to nurture their interior life (5) and the human dimension of their beings (6) in appreciating positive experiences in their own lives and in correcting each other in a fraternal spirit whenever needed.

What an encouragement to all of us in knowing that with God's grace and with our good will we are able to transform together our Communities into real HOMES.

Charles Lwanga District of Africa is really blessed with young, dynamic, creative and energised Brothers. The only huge challenge to be faced is to channel wisely all these energy in planning well these human resources such as for Ministries, Leadership, Formation, Studies, and Accompaniment.

The Novitiate in Nairobi with its 11 first year Novices from Nigeria (6), Kenya (3) and Ethiopia (2) started very well at the beginning of the year 2013 under the leadership of Bro Godwin Biin, Director from Nigeria, and Bro Anthony Gitahi, Sub-Director from Kenya.

The Scholasticate in Nairobi with its 16 Brother Scholastics from Rwanda (5), Nigeria (3), Ethiopia (3), Kenya (2), Burkina Faso (2) and Madagascar (1) has really become a HOME where universal Brotherhood is experienced and where the Brothers enjoy peace of mind and heart in their studies. The new leadership of Bro Taddele Negash, Director from Ethiopia, Bro Michael Kimotho, Sub-Director from Kenya, and Bro Jean Protais Hategekimana, Formator from Rwanda, are very well appreciated by all the Community Members.

*Brother Marc HOFER
Formation Director and Coordinator*



Congo: 16th Chapter

From 18th to 23rd December 2012, Congo Kinshasa District celebrated the 16th Chapter of its history. 25 elected Capitulants including members by right and three substitutes took part in the meeting, along with two invited Brothers: Br. Alberto Gomez, General Councillor from Rome and Br. Anatole Diretenadji of RELAF Team, from Abidjan

The theme that was carefully chosen served as the thread of all the work in both committees and in plenary: ***Strategies to improve the wellbeing of Brothers***. At the beginning, Brother Visitor Masamba Roger clarified that *"we should not just include the wellbeing of a Brother on the only economic aspect or material, but it must be understood on the entire life of a Brother: religious, moral, intellectual and economic."*

To facilitate the beginning, the Preparatory Commission led brilliantly works startup before handing over to the elected officers of the Chapter.

The main issues to be discussed included the different reports, from Brother Visitor, the bursar, those communities and works, a total of nearly thirty reports in addition to the presentation of Brother Bursar on strategies to achieve self-sufficiency by 2020.

While Brother Visitor and Bursar presented their reports, the communities shared their experiences on self- Sufficiency.

So was it for works and production units. These reports would be the real issues of the very fruitful discussion and reflection ***in five committees set up with clear instructions: "Each committee must consider the theme when making orientations. We need to raise revenue to address the issue as the theme suggested. However, the spiritual life of the Brothers should not be diluted in the search for money"***

It emerged from the work of these commissions several lines of action that the next Visitor and his Council will have a heavy responsibility to implement by the 17th chapter. [...]

The acts of the Chapter and lines of action sent to Rome have already been approved by the Superior General and his Council with encouragements to implement the lines of action enacted to the wellbeing of Brothers and Mission.

Brother Anatole DIRETENADJI

Note:

Brother Superior General has appointed Brother FIRMIN PHAMBU, Visitor of the District of Congo Kinshasa, and Brother Edouard N'LANDU, Axiliary Visitor



Feast of St Miguel: Scholasticate



Like every year, the International Scholasticate Community for the RELAF Francophone Zone celebrated the feast of its Patron Saint, St Miguel Febres Cordero. On the occasion, the three Brothers' Communities (Akwaba, Bon Pasteur and the Regional community) were invited to a Thanksgiving Mass held on Sunday, February 10. After the Eucharistic celebration, all invited guests had the joy of sharing together a festive and fraternal meal. For the Brothers of that

community, Saint Miguel is not only their patron saint but also a role model. May God hear their prayer:

Almighty and everlasting God, you have given to your Church, in the person of St. Miguel, a remarkable Teacher in the education of young people. Give us the grace to imitate his example and zeal to kindly welcome young people and eagerly lead them to you. Through Jesus our Lord, amen



1A MEL: RELAF Delegates



The International Assembly (IA) of MEL will be held from May 5 to 17 in Rome. On this occasion, some 151 delegates coming from all the Regions of which fifteen are RELAF.

Mr Vitalis Ndikum is the Coordinator of our delegates and over several months, he has been in contact with them and especially with the thematic group leaders responsible for leading each local group who should organize themselves to assess in the light of the report of International Assembly of 2006, the work which was done at different levels.

The coordinator wanted an intensive and interactive work among the various delegates and thematic groups to build a common vision to represent duly RELAF. Visitors were invited to encourage delegates to participate actively in the preparation of this important meeting.

The International Assembly is at the corner. We trust that the delegates chosen by the Visitors did participate in the process. We provide below the list of all our delegates and invite ourselves to pray for each of them so that they can, with delegates from other Regions, make creative responses to the new challenges facing the Mission today in the Regions and the Institute in general.

Brother Anatole DIRETENADJI

List of RELAF Delegates

District/Delegation	Name and Firstname	Country
Afrique de l'Ouest	Brother Marc SOME	Burkina Faso
	Mrs Rose NANEMA DALLA	Burkina Faso
Antananarivo	Brother Julien RATSIMBAZAFY	Madagascar
	Mrs Chantal RAHARIMAMONJY	Madagascar
	Sister Odette MUKAYIGIRE	Rwanda
	Brother Gabriel GRIFFIN	South Africa
Charles Lwanga of Africa	Mrs Leanne TE BRAKE	South Africa
	Brother Paulos WELDAY	Eritrea
	Brother Belayneh Medhanit	Ethiopie
Congo Kinshasa	Frère Vincent MANUKA	Congo Kinshasa
	Me. Jean Pierre ISSEKOSOMBO	Congo Kinshasa
	Brother Jean Léopold DEK	Cameroun
Douala	Mrs Roberte YOUKOUTOUO	Cameroun
	Mr. ESSAMA MANGA André	Cameroun
	Mr. Vitalis NDIKUM	Cameroun
Golfe du Benin	Miss TOUVI Kokovi Afiwa Edith	Togo
	Mr. Issa KONE	Côte d'Ivoire

TYBA: RELAF Delegates

List of Young Brothers representatives of RELAF

District/Delegation	Name and Firstname	Country
Antananarivo	TOANDRO Maximilien	Madagascar
Douala	MBAIGUEDEM Bertin	Chad
Charles Lwanga	OBAM Patrick	Nigeria
Charles Lwanga	OLOO Antone	Kenya
Afrique de l'Ouest	TRAORE Raul Téfió	Burkina Faso
Golfe du Bénin	YAME Guillaume	Togo
Congo Kinshasa	MVANGI Louis Marie	Congo
Rwanda	HABIMANA François Xavier	Rwanda

IYBA 2013, Dasmariñas, Philippines



*"...I came that they may have life,
and have it more abundantly."
-John 10:10*

As part of the preparation for the International Assembly of Young Brothers, the Preparatory Commission invites all Lasallians to pray for this important event in our Institute. The prayer prior to the Assembly will be available very soon and can be downloaded from the website of the assembly: <http://iyba.lasalle.org>

The website will also provide more detailed information related to the Assembly.



A partial view of De La Salle Retreat Center, Dasmariñas

Lasallian Association: South Africa

Making the Lasallian History

On Thursday the 7th of February, Mr Brendan O'Connor became the second South African to be affiliated to the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools.

In a moving ceremony, held in the chapel of La Salle College, Discovery, Johannesburg, Bro Gabriel Griffin, Auxiliary Visitor, handed over the Letter of Affiliation to Mr Brendan.

Mr Brendan is the Chairman of the School Boards in La Salle College, Discovery and De La Salle Holy Cross College, Victory Park, Johannesburg.

In January 2013 an important Assembly has launched the Lasallian Association in the Sector of South Africa. After a Eucharistic Celebration the Assembly gave the opportunity to Bro Tom Sheehy, Sector Coordinator, to Bro Patrick Letswalo, the only South African De La Salle Brother, and to Bro Timothy to tell their stories of Association to the audience of more or less 120 Lasallians.



Mrs Susan Chapple, Mrs Mary Hyam and Mrs Leanne te Brake, in the above photo with Brother Tom Sheehy shared their personal stories of Association, too. Finally, Mrs Mary Hyam gave an informative and insightful PowerPoint presentation on the history and purpose of Lasallian Association.

After having broken up into groups to discuss on what principles Association should be built on and how we go forward to ensure Association continues to grow, it was suggested that the two Lasallian Education Institutions in Johannesburg will meet at least twice a year to build and strengthen this newly born Lasallian Association.

*Bro Tom SHEEHY
Sector Coordinator*



De La Salle Academy - Byumba



De La Salle Academy is a private Catholic school founded by the Brothers of the Christian Schools to meet the needs of young people through quality education. It includes kindergarten, primary and secondary (first cycle of three years). It is located in northern Rwanda in the district of Gicumbi thirty kilometers from the borders with Uganda. Since its opening in 2007, the first class of primary came to the end of cycle. After six years of intensive work the administrative body, faculty, students and parents are delighted with the results in national examinations.

With the percentage of 85, the school occupies the first place at the district level. This is the result of combined efforts of the administration, teachers, students and parents of students. As to the first cycle of secondary the school is in its fourth class with a percentage of 77. From Its opening to the present day, the school won the confidence of parents because the numbers increase significantly from year to year. It opened with 98 students in 2007. It currently has 469 students: 64 students in kindergarten, 259 elementary students and 146 students in junior secondary. This is very encouraging especially now that the school is in the process of expansion to accommodate a large number of students. The School perspective in its plans is to open a science section. But the question of infrastructure remains crucial.

*Brother Maurice BURASA
Delegation of Rwanda*



In God's Glory...

EMMANUEL

Foyer AKWABA / Foyer DE LA SALLE

July 10, 2012 – February 18, 2013

Foyer AKWABA is one of the busiest "Lasallian destinations" in Côte d'Ivoire. The center, managed by the Brothers of the District of Golf of Benin, takes care of children with difficulties, mostly street children. It continually hosts about 60 children in difficult situations.

Emmanuel was one of those children. I used the past because Emmanuel passed away on February 18, 2013. He spent almost seven

months at the Center. On March 2nd, 2013, we joined the Brothers of the community, children, educators and others in a mass for the repose of his soul. Here is what Brother Director of the Centre said about him:



"Good Morning,

We are gathered today here at the Parish of Our Lady of Cana to pray for Emmanuel.

Emmanuel was a child found by Caritas. No one knows about his origin. Just his name Emmanuel, which means God with us.

Emmanuel was the image of God who walks and lives with men who mingled and made way with men.

Emmanuel was sick, he was different. A long illness that has prevailed, but these difficulties have enriched us and taught us to be tolerant, to excel in service, to seek new ways of living and approaching others.

Emmanuel loved to laugh and play, dance and joke. Emmanuel was happy to learn, write and count. "Emmanuel, you are strong" he said to himself.

Saint Paul tells us that "nothing can separate us from the love of God" (Rom 8:39) and Emmanuel showed it to us during his short stay among us. He prayed, he prayed for all of us, he often said, "God bless you." He knew that God listens to children, those who are like children are the greatest in the Kingdom. Here we took care of you Emmanuel, with God where you are, take care of us.

To you all, thank you."

Through this testimony, we pay tribute once again to Emmanuel, and let us learn to appreciate and enjoy the time that God gives us to live with the people we love. Somewhere outside, children, men and women suffer because they are not loved and accepted. Pray that God sends people to show them the true face of God –Love, why not us.

Emmanuel may your soul rest in peace!

*Brother Louis MJALLI,
Saint Miguel Scholasticate*

Brief info and Calendar

Arrival of Brother Gabriel Onwu

Brother Gabriel Onwu Charles Lwanga District arrived in Abidjan on December 27th, 2012. He is a member of the Regional Team (RELAF) in charge of MEL and Association in the Region. For the time being, he is currently perfecting his French Language Centre at Abraham Lincoln Language Institute. We wish him good apostolate in the animation of the Region.

Dates to remember

Date	Events	Place
April 3 – 5, 2013	Antananarivo District Chapter	Antananarivo
April 8 – 12, 2013	Conference Zone Francophone	Bobo Dioulasso
May 5 – 17, 2013	MEL International Assembly	Rome
July 1 st – 12, 2013	Signum Fidei International Assembly	Rome
July 24 – 27, 2013	Rencontre des Jeunes Frères de la RELAF	Manila
July 29 – August 7, 2013	International Young Brothers' Assembly	Manila
February 2014	3 rd Symposium of Young Lasallian	Rome

Brother General Councillor

March 7 – 19	Noviciat InterAfricain – Bobo Dioulasso
March 20 – April 6	Antananarivo District
April 8 – 12	Conference ZF – Bobo Dioulasso
April 14 – 21	Regional Office – Abidjan
April 22 – May 4	Rwanda Delegation
May 5 – June 24	Rome

Brother Regional Bursar

April 6 - 10	Conference ZF – Bobo Dioulasso
April 13 - 17	Rome
April 18 - 25	Paris
April 27 -	Regional Office - Abidjan

Brother Regional Secretary

April 6 – April 12	Conference ZF – Bobo Dioulasso
April 20 – July 20	Internship Program– Antananarivo
July 23– August 11	Young Brothers' Assembly- Manila
August 12– September 15	Home Leave
September 16	Regional Office - Abidjan

Brother Regional Secretary, MEL

April 6 – 12	Conference ZF – Bobo Dioulasso
April 14 -	Regional Office - Abidjan