

Brothers of the Christian Schools
RELAFF NEWSLETTER





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Editorial



ear Brothers, dear Lasallians

I felt happiness going through the articles of this Newsletter N°21. They have easily found echo in me because they are all grounded in the framework of our beautiful mission of educators. During the pastoral visit in Rwanda, Equatorial Guinea, Chad and then in Madagascar, Robert Schieler, our General Superior, never ceased to remind that as Brothers of the Christian Schools, we are made to teach and that our primary role is to teach. What does it then mean for us to teach? It is up to each Brother, each Lasallian, to ask themselves this question and to look for an answer. What do we teach? The answer seems obvious everywhere: there are different "subjects", also called "disciplines", laid down by the formal programs... But beyond these specific subjects, or let us say through them, and regardless of the one that we teach, what do we teach, fundamentally and transversely? While teaching inculcates subjects, education makes a person to mature. In fact, both are complementary such that it is not possible to completely separate them ...

If the word of God became flesh and **dwelt** among us, he teaches us in this way something essential to our condition of human beings. The role of the Lasallian educator, Brother or lay, isn't it precisely to teach children to dwell? Today we are becoming more and more aware of how human beings dwell badly, have difficulty to dwell in harmony with nature, to dwell among themselves, to dwell together as brothers and sisters with the others... Human beings need to learn to dwell. Do we teach children entrusted to our care to dwell? To know how to dwell is a matter of science, knowledge of the natural and social environment. It is also a question of languages and history, faith and reason... but this implies also the sense of justice, equity... Do we teach our pupils and students to be attentive to all those who have difficulty finding hospitality in the world?

The educator, in order to teach children and young people how to dwell, cannot stick only to be a pedagogue. He must become a witness... it is in giving hospitality to the other, not only in one's house but in one's heart that we show that we know how to dwell or not. Behold is the Child Jesus who comes and he neither wants other crib, nor other palace than our heart. Has he found hospitality, a condition so that we can give him to the world?

Live Jesus in our hearts. Forever!

Your Brother, Pierre OUATTARA.

Kenya : Spanish Volunteers at St La Salle School Karameno

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Five Spanish volunteers arrived at St. La Salle School Karameno on Monday, 18th July 2016 just some few minutes past 6:00pm. This was the first group of volunteers from Spain to visit the new apostolate of the Brothers in Lwanga District of Africa.

The five were involved in refurbishing one of the old buildings in the school premises, in order to convert it into girls' dormitory in preparation for next year form one intake. According to the Director, Bro. Stephen Mwaura, renovation was going to help a great deal. "We haven't gotten any funds to put up a new dormitory." he added.

The volunteers were sent by PROYDE and they stayed in Karameno for one month. They were involved in serious renovation work in the morning while in the afternoon they were joining students for games.

The leader of the group was a teacher in one of the Brothers' Schools in Spain while the rest were students in different universities. It is important to note that the five volunteers were all alumni of Lasallian schools in Spain and their visit created a special brotherly bond between Brothers' Schools in Spain and those in Kenya.



"The presence of these volunteers brought a big difference in the school and in the local community at large", Bro. Stephen said. He further added that the students were so excited and were cooperating and working well with the volunteers.

The five together with Bro. Stephen stopped for lunch at Golden Gate Hotel on their way to Karameno. It is interesting to note that for the five, this was their first meal ever in the African continent. "We can't take this for granted", one of the volunteers said.

Meanwhile, St. La Salle School Karameno was officially opened on Saturday 2nd July 2016. The new school is located in Karameno some few kilometers from Nyeri town in central Kenya. It is currently under the able stewardship of Bro. Stephen Mwaura.

Brother Michael Otieno

District of Charles Lwanga



Burkina Faso : The beginning of the school year 2016-2017 at la Salle Badenya

Coming from all corners, the students found themselves again in the school compound this Monday, October 3, 2016.

The senior students narrate **adventures experienced** during the holidays and the new comers clinging tight to the parents, observe their comrades with much attention.

When the bell rung, senior students, new comers, and the educator team gathered around the flag to listen to the word of welcome of the Director, Brother Anicet PODA; then a prayer was said to entrust the school year to the Lord and the raising of the flag **put an** end to the ceremony.

Accompanied by their parents, students joined **their** respective classes to answer the call of their name.



To mark the opening of the month of the rosary, this same Monday October 3, 2016, all students from class one to form four gathered around the statue of Our Lady of Badenya to implore the Marian protection on the students, educators and parents.

Wish you all well!

Mrs. NANEMA DALLA Rose

La Salle Badenya's Primary School Headmistress



Rome: CIL on the Lasallian Formation for the mission

Aware of the indelible link between formation and mission that prepare and support those who are engaged in the mission, the Secretariat for the mission organized a CIL on the lasallian formation for the mission.



This CIL began in October 16, 2016 with a participation in the Canonization Mass of Brother Salomon Leclercq. The formation gathered about fifty Lasallians from all the regions of the Institute. The RELAF was represented by a Brother and a lay partner, both from the District of West Africa, and Brother Ferdinand, the AMEL Coordinator for the region.

Where are we to plan for the future? The answer to this question was given through the sharing of experiences and some good practices across the Institute during the first two days of the formation.

We are in-between modernity and tradition; the educational tradition according to Saint John Baptist De La Salle and the current practice of education. Speaking of the "*evangelical itinerary of De La Salle: an inspiration for today*", Brother André Pierre Gauthier invited us to know how to read the events of our time alike De La Salle who saw the events of His time and which led him to found the school for the poor.

For the smooth running of the *Lasallian Mission today*, we should know the link existing between the *Gospel and the Lasallian Spirituality*. These topics presented to the CIL participants, comprising of lay people, men and women; Religious Brothers and Priests, showed us that the Lasallian formation for the mission is a culture. Therefore, a *common frame of reference*, *MEL book 51* has been presented so that this culture of formation for the mission may be ours.

Brother Ferdinand BIZIAREMYE
Coordinator of AMEL/RELAF

Lomié - Cameroon : « I am a Baka, I have my first certificate »

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My name is NDAKOWE Gérard, I am thirteen years old. NDAKOWE means "the house with too many problems". I come from the village of Kungulu which is 40 km far from Lomié.

It was last year, in September 2015, that I have decided to come to the Brothers' Foyer in Lomié. One of my classmates, EKOUASSI Oscar was already a student in Lomié and he was good. I therefore wanted to join him in the Foyer. I had to walk on foot from Kungulu up to Lomié. When I arrived in the city, I did not know where to find the newly Foyer built by the Brothers. It is the district head of Madouma who took me to the Brothers.

I had just passed in middle class 2 and I wanted at all cost succeed in a formal examination. The Brothers welcomed me (especially Brother Narcisse). The latter asked me if I had come to Lomié to play or to attend seriously school. I replied that it is to attend school because in the village, it is difficult to attend school. It also happens that parents do not find the money necessary to pay for your tuition and the examination fees. So you swiftly drop out of school. Relationships with girls may also prevent you from going to school. Yet, it is through school that you will become a great and good person in future.

To prepare seriously for my primary school certificate examination, I had to make a lot of efforts: like going to school every day, accepting the severe discipline imposed by the teachers, doing rehearsals during the Easter vacation while the other comrades are hanging around in the neighbourhood and in the village. In addition, we did three times the mock exam to prepare ourselves well.

Before taking the examination in June 2016, we sat for the technical school first year entry exam in the month of May. As soon as I saw my name on the board, I told myself that I must do everything to succeed also my primary school certificate before going to the secondary school.

On 5 June 2016, I was ready to face my exam with a lot of fear in the stomach. When we arrived in the examination centre where we were to write, a thorough check is carried out by the female teacher before entering the examination class. I only remained with my pen and my other writing tools. The first exam was the dictation which focused on malaria. I found it fair. The following exams seemed to me easier because I took time to read each question before writing down the answers. The mathematics and English exams were complicated for me, but I tried to do the best I could.

It is at the end of the month of July that I learned through Brother Gilbert that my name has been read on the radio. I succeeded in my primary school certificate!!! I was particularly pleased with this good news, my mum too. She gave me the same day one thousand CFA francs to congratulate me on my success. She danced and sang the whole night because finally one of her sons got his certificate. I am therefore proud to have succeeded in my first certificate.

In the future, I am no longer worried because I can continue my studies at secondary school while staying in the Foyer and hope to get other certificates to earn worthily a decent life as a grown person.

I am NDAKOWE Gérard, now in first year carpentry in the Technical School of Lomié. I thank all the people who help us, we the Baka people, to be students. I say thank you and I pray dearly for all the Brothers of the Christian Schools and their partners who support us with their efforts. See you soon.

*Interview realized by Brother Gilbert OUILABEGUE
District of Central Africa*

Bobo Dioulasso : Entry rite in the Noviciate Our Lady of Graces

Dear readers of RELAF Newsletter, great is our joy to share with you the atmosphere the Inter-African Noviciate Our Lady of Grace of Bobo-Dioulasso (Burkina Faso) experienced on November 1, 2016, on the Solemnity of All Saints Day.

That day, at 6:00 pm, seventeen (17) postulants coming from six districts and delegation of Africa made their entry in the noviciate during a ceremony presided over by Brother Julien Diarra, Visitor of the District of West Africa, in the presence of Brothers, collaborators and friends, as well as a few religious communities nearby.

"How beautiful it is to give one's life to the Lord!"

Therefore, François Urbain, Jean-Baptiste, Jean Solo and Modeste from the district of Antananarivo, Jean and Jean Paul from the district of Gulf of Benin, Jean-Luc, Joël, Emile, Giresse, Franck and Dieu Merci from the district of Congo-Kinshasa, Boniface from the District of Central Africa, Faustin and Jean-Pierre from the Delegation of Rwanda, Gérard and Judes from the District of West Africa, left everything to be disciples of Christ following the example of Saint John- Baptist de La Salle.

The orientation proposed to them by the formators is to "Live the noviciate in search of the unique treasure" because "where your treasure is, there too is your heart!"

They have embarked on the two-year-journey of noviciate, a privileged time of encounter and experience of authentic life with the master of the harvest.

The peak of the ceremony was the reception of the religious habit, of the Rule and of the cross, signs of their membership to the Institute. In his exhortation, Brother Gabriel ZABRAMBA invited them to "let themselves be moulded in order to discover more the will of Christ, the unique treasure of the religious Brother".

May Mary, Queen and Mother of the Christian Schools and Saint Solomon patron of this set 2016-2018, obtain for them the grace to "work their motivations, to forge their attitudes, to orient their criteria of choice and action taking as the only reference the critical force and the fertility of the Gospel".

Courage to the celebrants of the day because the journey is long!

LIVE JESUS IN OUR HEARTS! FOREVER

Novice Brother Michel PHANZU

Inter-african Noviciate of Bobo Dioulasso



Madagascar : Arrival and settling of the Brother Principal of Saint Louis de Gonzague, Ambositra

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After five years of service as regional secretary for the RELAF, Brother TOLOJANAHARY Zo Michel has been sent in his District for another mission in the Diocese of Ambositra. He arrived in Madagascar the afternoon of October 16, 2016, on the day of the Canonization of Brother Solomon Leclercq in Rome.

He was welcomed at the provincial house and remained there 3 days to rest and meet the Brother Visitor before heading to the region of Amoron'ny mania for his new mission as the school Principal of Saint Louis de Gonzague of Ambositra.

Sometimes, when a student is late, if he does not come with the entry permit, he is accompanied by the parents; therefore, the same way on 20 October, Brother Michel, accompanied by the Brother Visitor, Brother Etienne (Director of Community of Andohalo) and Brother Jean Marc (the District Secretary) went to his community for his new mission. The group of Brothers arrived around 4.00 pm in the community. The Brothers of the community as well as the entire school were very impatient to welcome their new Principal.

On the same day of the arrival of the group of Brothers in the school, a meeting was organized by the Brother Visitor to introduce the new Principal to the teaching staff. The Brother Visitor encouraged the members of the educational community to genuinely collaborate for the success of the Lasallian mission in the school. As for the new leader, he is ready to work for a common association in the Lycée Saint Louis de Gonzague so that the challenge of education may be overcome at the end of the year.



Teachers who were teaching and surprised by the arrival of the car of the Brother Visitor went out in the compound; the students, with joyful faces, stood to look through the windows, curious to know their new Principal.

The following day, October 21, the introduction of the Brother Principal was made at 8.00 am before the 856 students, from pre-school to Form Four. The students did not know yet which, of the 3 Brothers present at the Assembly, the new Principal was. The Brother Visitor took the floor and unveiled the identity of the new Brother Director; an outstanding round of applause followed.

The welcoming of the new Principal was triumphant among the students and the teachers. After the first speech of Brother Zo Michel to the students and teachers, the students happily joined their respective classes.

Long live the Lasallian school of Ambositra !

Brother Jean Marc

District of Antananarivo



Abidjan: Celebration of the 150 years of Brothers' presence in Madagascar

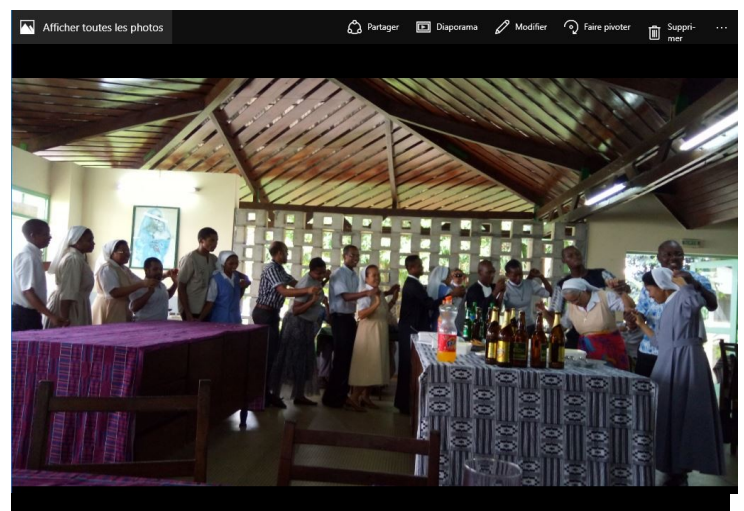
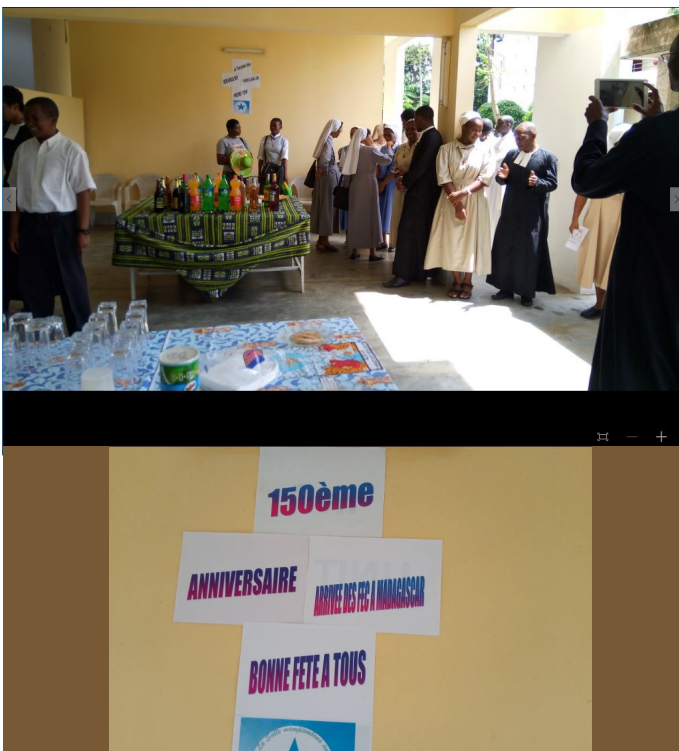


On Sunday, November 13, Saint Miguel Scholasticate celebrated in style the 150 years of Brothers' presence in Madagascar. The community has more than 7 Brothers from Madagascar. Therefore, it was right and just to be in communion with the Brothers in Madagascar and to celebrate with them 150 years of Human and Christian education of the youth, especially the poorest.

The celebration began with a beautiful and prayerful Eucharistic celebration at 11:00 am. Except one or two songs, the rest of the songs were in Malagasy language. Brothers and Sisters from the communities around, lay partners and Priests joined the Saint Miguel community to thank God and ask his favour for the dynamism and growth of the Institute in Madagascar.

At the end of the mass, all the guests were led to two different halls: an aperitif was offered in the first hall while delicious dishes were served in the second. The celebration ended with dances led by all the Malagasy present. We felt like we were in Madagascar for great was our joy.

Brother Bako Pierre Aymard
Regional Secretary



The Academic year started on 2nd January and ended on 4th November 2016. Lasallians in Rwanda are teaching the minds, touching the hearts and transforming the lives of their students. Therefore, throughout the year in Academie De La Salle, Brothers, and teachers have been teaching minds and touching hearts of pupils. Their attitude toward success encourages Brothers and partakers of the Lasallian mission to continue working together by association in order to teach Gospel values. We had a Thanksgiving Day to appraise together with the parents our victories and drawbacks for better improvement in the coming years.

It is a culture for Academie de LaSalle to recognize what God has done for the school throughout the year. Both parents and students gathered in the school compound for the important event. The celebration started with a thanksgiving mass celebrated by his Excellency Bishop from Byumba Diocese. He reminded people about the qualities of a good educator by saying that “an educator who fails to carry out his/her responsibility becomes a poison and should be taken away from the educational realm. After the mass, students and parents shared a meal in the school compound.

Pupils demonstrated their talents in their presentations and it was a wonderful moment for educators and parents to admire their efforts through these pupils' talents.



This made educators and parents realize how far they can go in participating in God's plan for these students who are entrusted to their care. Education is key to success. We want to make our school a place where we teach our students to become better persons in future. The students' parents' president comity recognized the effort made by the school in providing holistic education to the students. He especially stressed the efforts made in promoting the spoken language (English). At the end of this year, twenty eight pupils completed primary school education and sat for the primary leaver's examination. Thirty two students in secondary sat for the ordinary level examination. This is an exam that ushers them to advance in the secondary school level.

Brother Fabien HABIYAREMYE

Delegation of Rwanda



Cameroon : De La Salle School settles on the Western Mountains

Bafang, St Paul's Cathedral, it is 2:30 pm this Sunday, August 22, 2016. A renowned travel agency huge bus has just dropped seventy people at the entrance to the reception centre. Two other small cars do likewise; a van brought a dozen people scouting the day before.

In the big compound, strong boys collect the material and everything. Most of them are wearing a blue and white tracksuit. They look proud. They are confident. They are robust. They feel comfortable. It is free time this afternoon anyway, so they take advantage. Bafang streets will be their next victims. Some stood there admiring the landscape or benumbed by the cold from these hills of the West Cameroon. The temperature reads 19 degrees Celsius. But the majority of the group is cheering. Soon, no place in this corner of the province is a secret to them. What do you expect? They are used to long distances and the hectic traffic of Douala. Seeing the clusters easily noticeable they've formed, some people of the neighbourhood are left in wonder. What is happening today in Bafang? Who are these people? Others do not bother. They take advantage of the crowd and get closer. But gradually the news goes round. Ah, it is De La Salle... Ah, people from Douala, from the technical education... "The Canadians"!

In fact they are specific competitors who are getting prepared. The marathon they are preparing takes place is the academic setup. The start off is in two weeks. The school management decided that the internship would this time be away from the base. The Canadians? They have gone long ago. It is a native who currently leads the boat. He is the boss. Main characteristic: he does his best. A heavy week of work awaits this educational team. Everything has been planned. The necessary equipment has been carried. Two experts with so eloquent pedigrees have been hired.

It is in an awesome atmosphere that the night falls on the first day of these Lasallians in Bafang. At 7.00 pm the supper including varied dishes is served. After the supper, they clean and set the table in a family atmosphere where everyone participates. Slowly, silence gets back in the place. Tomorrow, the program will kick off. It will start with a recollection. Everywhere there is calm, the stillness progressively takes over.

The young priest who has been solicited to guide this first morning of recollection is one of these synthetic minds that rarely use written text. He is also an orator in the art of giving conferences. From the first words, the audience is conquered. The teaching is embedded of stories describing real-life situations. He draws extensively from the Biblical directory where the books of Luke, Mathew, Philippians, Tobit are revisited. The central theme is mercy. In the afternoon, Brothers Frédéric Douala and Louis Pierre Kouemeni relay each other on the podium. They grab general ideas which inevitably mash too wide to project them in the particular context of the Lasallian milieu. Their statements are clear and simple. They speak in a very calm tone, relying on anecdotes drawn from their own experiences. At the closing of this first day, the minds are ready.



Everyone has the feeling of being energized. A new light illuminates the gaze of the participants and it radiates on the outside as a joy to live. It was really needed because all minds turn gradually to what is to come tomorrow. This is the chunk of this session.

For a long time, education in our country forms employees and not entrepreneurs. Yet, no country can emerge with a flunkey spirit youth, formatted to carry out rather than to decide. That is why the School has decided to introduce entrepreneurship as a subject for the students in Form Four as from the start of the school year 2016-2017. KUTCHE, the Knight of God chosen to guide this part is a graduate from four universities including two abroad. This gentleman managed the feat of delivering 14 units in one day. The different units were living stories. All of us discovered within ourselves the entrepreneurial fibre.

Friday was half devoted to a pedagogical training and the other half for the review of our disciplinary device. A topic guided our reflections: TEACHER, A CRUCIAL LINK IN THE PEDAGOGICAL CHAIN. At the end of the day, we felt exhaustion coming. We had the next morning our traditional big assembly whereby everything is perfected, including the finance. And that is where we are witnesses of a real revolution. What really obliges the Brothers of the Christian Schools to give us the accounts yet we do not represent their administration board? Here is a new paradigm shift. The closing Mass presided over by the cathedral parish priest of Bafang did only consolidate the feeling to belong to a great family.

We had a free Saturday afternoon. The most courageous left the Centre and went to say goodbye and this was prolonged until late in the night. In the meantime in the centre, the evening social was in full swing. Teachers changed into artists showed off their talent. The most sensational was no doubt Father Thomas Mongo, through a comedy presentation which provoked the hilarity of the whole group. On Sunday morning, the feet were still in Bafang while heads were already at home. The bus arrived, we loaded everything, people and material, and start off. Before 4.00 pm, everybody was at home.

Samuel ETOUKE ELIMBY, teacher

District of Central Africa

Abidjan : Good bye to Br Michel, outgoing RELAF Secretary 12

Brother Michel's departure from Abidjan has been marked by two major events organized at the regional house.

The first event happened on Wednesday 12 October 2016. A thanksgiving mass was celebrated in the community chapel at 6:00 pm. Brother Pierre OUATTARA, general Councillor for RELAF, thanked the Brothers from Saint Miguel and Akwaba communities and the three lay partners who joined the regional community to celebrate this Eucharist. He briefly introduced the celebration by telling the congregation the reasons that led to this gathering. We want first of all to thank God for the last five years Brother Michel has been serving the Institute through the regional secretariat service, to entrust his new mission in his homeland into God's hands and to pray for all the Brothers who have been assigned to new missions at the regional level. Before the final blessing, Brother Pierre OUATTARA commissioned the Brothers who accepted to serve the region either as formators in the formation houses or as coordinators in the regional team. The congregants were then led to the dining hall for a fraternal meal to appreciate Brother Michel and the wonderful work he did for the RELAF. Brother Michel seized the opportunity to thank the community and all the Brothers and felt grateful for the journey of growth and maturity he experienced throughout his mission.

The second event was held on Saturday 15 October 2015, the day Brother Michel took off from Abidjan to land the next day in Madagascar. This event was emotional because it involved the neighbourhood children whom Brother Michel had been accompanying. A young girl read a speech written painstakingly and affectionately. This was a celebration full of joy in the beginning but tearful towards the end when the children were told that Brother Michel was leaving. All efforts to comfort some of these children were vain and some cried after the vehicle when we left the community fort the airport. Brothers Michel did touch their hearts!

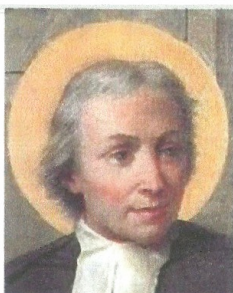
*Brother BAKO Pierre Aymard
Regional secretary*



1. Closing of the pastoral visit of the Brother general Superior in the RELAF : it will be held in Abidjan, in St Miguel Scholasticate on April 18,19 and 20, 2017.
2. Visit of general Councillors in the RELAF: Some general Councillors will visit RELAF Districts after the closing of the pastoral visit of the general Superior .
3. of the International Coordinator of Joung Lasallians in the RELAF: Mr. Antoine BELAND will visit Districts to meet existing groups. His visit is sheduled as from January 2017.

Calendar of the general Councillor

Dates	Venue	Event
November 30	South Sudan	Board Meeting Solidarity with South Sudan (SSDS)
December 1		General Assembly SSDS
December 2		Board Meeting SSDS
December 4 - 5	Abidjan	Travel Rome- Abidjan
December 6 to January 19	Abidjan	Regional Community
January 2017		
January 20 or 21	South Africa	Travel Abidjan - Johannesburg
January 22 to 25	South Africa	Pastoral Visit
January 26	Rome	Travel Johannesburg - Rome
January 29 to March 11	Rome	8th Session of the General Council
March 2017		
March 11 to 13	Mozambique	Pastoral Visit
March 14 to 18,	Kenya	Pastoral Visit
March 19 to 24	Ethiopia	Pastoral Visit
March 26 to 31	District of Gulf of Benin	Pastoral Visit
April 2017		
April 1	Nigeria	Pastoral Visit
April 2 to 8	Burkina Faso	Pastoral Visit
April 9		Palm Sunday
April 16		Easter Sunday
April 18, 19, 20	Abidjan	Closing of the pastoral visit of the general Superior with the entire General Council and the Conference of the Brother Visitors
April 21		Suggestion of an outing



Live Jesus in our hearts...
Forever!!!

Br. Pierre OUATTA-

Br. Anatole DIRETENADJI

Br. Ferdinand BIZIYAREMYE

Br. Pierre Aymard BAKO



The Regional Team wishes you

Merry Christmas



Happy New Year 2017

The word became flesh, and he
dwelt among us! Glory to God
and Peace on earth. Alleluia!
May the New Born King dwell
in our hearts and lead us in our
journey "One call, many voices"



La Salle
RELAF

Merry Christmas



Happy New Year 2017