

RELAF NEWSLETTER N°32

Brothers of the Christian Schools



Lasallian Region of Africa

November 2019

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EDITORIAL

The Lasallian Reflection 5, with the theme "Great Things are Possible", was recently published. In this issue, the Superior General and his Council present the theme for the pastoral year 2019-2020. You may recall that the previous themes were "An Evangelical Adventure" (2015-2016); "One call, many voices" 2017-2018; "Lasallians with hearts on fire" (2018-2019). This last issue, based on the story of Joseph, the icon of the "great dreamer", tells us that another world is possible for those who believe. In one way or another, all these themes evoke our dreams, which is first and foremost that of God, a dream that is our strength, a dream of a fraternal world. May this Newsletter inspire us to be more zealous and creative about what we can do, personally and as a community, for a more fraternal world.

Here is a short story about our dream told by Brother Timothy during the annual retreat of the General Council.

Two brothers shared a farm. The younger brother was married and had seven children. The older brother was single. They worked hard on land that was good. So for many years the harvests were abundant, and each year the brothers split the wealth of the land evenly. Thanking God for their prosperity, they gathered the grain into separate barns.

After one harvest time, the older, single brother thought to himself: "It is not right that we should divide the grain evenly. My brother has many mouths to feed, and he needs more. I have only myself to look after. I can certainly get by with less." So each night he would take grain from his barn and secretly transfer it to the married brother's barn. That same night, the married brother thought to himself: "It is not right that we should divide the grain evenly. I have many children who will look after me in my old age. My brother has only himself. Surely he will need to save more for the future." So each night the married brother would take grain from his barn and secretly transfer it to his older brother's barn.

So, as it happened, each night the brothers gave away their grain; yet each morning they found their supply mysteriously replenished. Neither brother told the other about this miraculous happening.

Then one night, the brothers met each other halfway between the barns. They realized at once what was happening. They embraced one another with laughter and tears. And on that spot they built a temple in which to worship God (Adapted from *An Experience Named Spirit*, John Shea).

"Education and fraternity" are two key words of Pope Francis' message of September 12, 2019. Through this message, Pope launches his initiative for a meeting, "Signing a new educational pact", scheduled for May 14, 2020 in Rome. This is a kind of twinkling of the eye of Providence to us as we celebrate the Tercentenary of our Founder, St. John Baptist De La Salle. Great things become possible when educating the poorest and the weakest. Happy are you my Brother, Sister and dear Lasallian, you that believe in the call of God.

Br Pierre Ouattara

REGIONAL CIL 2019

"Association for the Educational Service of the Poor; What steps? What formation?" This was the theme of our first session of the regional CIL program this year. This CIL took place in Abidjan in the community of Saint Miguel scholasticate, from July 27 to August 9, 2019. Its objective was to reflect with our collaborators the criteria of a Lasallian education and the meaning of the association for the educational service of the poor in the African context. In addition, the definition of the profile of a Lasallian educator and the promotion of youth ministry and Lasallian vocations was targeted.

In a fraternal atmosphere, these objectives were achieved through the sharing and discussions between the Brothers and the collaborators from all the RELAF Districts. These discussions were focused on De La Salle's Evangelical itinerary, the Didactic of catechesis and the Virtue of a good Lasallian teacher.

The last point was the meeting of the RELAF delegates to AIMEL 2020. Accompanied by the three members of CIAMEL, who are at the same time members of the preparatory commission, Brothers Ferdinand BIZIYAREMYE and Nestor ANAYA and Mrs. Rose NANEMA, the future delegates in collaboration with the Brothers responsible for the MEL

in the Districts and the Delegation, evaluated AIMEL 2013 and came up with some proposals for the next assembly. It was a time of sharing of experiences and realities of the Districts. During these two weeks of intense work, we had also leisure time. In addition to the community socials, participants were able to have a visit and rest time at Grand Bassam beach during the weekend.

After only a week' interval, another session began. Its theme was "Formation to Creative Fidelity: Vocation of the Brother/Sister and mission." This session was also held in Saint Miguel scholasticate

from August 18 to September 1, 2019. It was meant for the young Brothers and Sisters who have just made their perpetual profession (not more than three years ago). Each District and the Delegation and the Guadaloupana De La Salle Sisters had to send three representatives.



This session was organized by RELAF with the support of the Centre of the Institute to promote a holistic formation of Lasallians in order to foster a greater understanding and a broader sense of the Lasallian mission in line with of the celebration of the Tricentenary of the death of John Baptist De La Salle. This integral formation cannot take place without:

- Consolidating and strengthening the Brother/Sister in his or her vocation and identity.
- Preparing the Brother/Sister for the renewal of the sense of community and mission.
- Preparing the Brother/Sister for his or her mission as catechist.
- Stimulating and

accompanying new vocational animation initiatives in the Districts and Delegation.



These were the objectives of our session. In order to achieve them, creative fidelity has been associated with community life, which is our first association, prayer life, mission, perseverance in the institute and the pastoral ministry of vocations.



It was a great joy for the participating Brothers and Sisters to rekindle their enthusiasm for the mission.

In the closing message, Brother Ferdinand stressed that creative fidelity is possible as a gift from God, a creative work and a fight. Fidelity is a gift from God because it is an effect of God's grace in us, a fruit of His love. We can be faithful because God himself is faithful and supports our own fidelity.



Far from being a

paralysing
nostalgia that would
make
us

prisoners of the past, fidelity is a creative work that

lives in the present and turns us to the future. It does not lock itself in conservatism or the repetition of the identical. But it is continuously lived to creates something new. It is not enough, for example, to repeat in the apostolate environment: service, faith and fraternity. Fidelity to these values requires us to ask ourselves these questions: what does it mean to serve today? How is faith lived in our multicultural society and of several religions? What fights are to be fought? How to live the fraternity? What solidarity is important today to develop? Yes, fidelity is creative.

Fidelity however, is not a long, and a quiet river. It is also a spiritual fight. Today, with everything that is happening in the world that has become a village, the temptation can sometimes be strong to leave the source of the living water to go drinking at other water points. Let us not hesitate to say to the Lord with the psalmist: "Be the rock that shelters me, the fortified house that saves me. For the honour of your name, you guide me and lead me. »



Brother Ferdinand BIZIYAREMYE

Coordinator AMEL /RELAF

DISTRICT OF CENTRAL AFRICA: VOCATIONAL CAMP

The District of Central Africa organized a Vocational Camp for young boys who wish to become Brothers of the Christian Schools. The camp took place from 22 to 28 July 2019 in the town of Lomié in Cameroon (a place located at 340 km from Yaounde); more precisely in the Community of St. John the Baptist De La Salle where Brothers and lay people are committed to the education of Baka children.

The solemn opening of the activities of the Camp was declared by the Brother Visitor Anatole DIRETENADJI. Thirteen (13) young people participated in this camp.



They came from Saint Miguel Febres Cordero community in Kélo, Chad (2); Saint Solomon Leclercq in Bertoua (1); Saint John the Baptist De La Salle in Lomié (1); De La Salle in Equatorial Guinea (2); Our Lady of Lourdes in Talba (2); Aurélien Deschênes in Douala (3) and Notre-Dame de l'Etoile in Yaounde (2). These young people were supervised and accompanied by eight (8) Brothers with respective responsibilities for the smooth running of the Camp. They were Brothers Alain Parfait FANDAKA, Bertrand ONDOUA ABANDA, Debasco MIAMADINGAR,

Emmanuel Philibert MBONDO, Emile ONANA, Gislhain WAKOUM, Jean-Pierre NGUELENG and Jean Marie FOUQUERAY. The general theme that served for the reflection and meditation was formulated in these terms: "Young people, faith and vocational discernment." This theme has been subdivided into topics as follows: What is a Vocational Camp and its objectives? Who is Saint John the Baptist De La Salle? The Institute of Brothers of Christian Schools in the world today (Institute, Regions, Districts, Delegations). "Young people embracing life: To whom shall we go to? (Jn. 6, 68) ». How can you be a Brother? Together, let us be audacious in the mission: Young people, Jesus calls you for the mission.



These topics were animated in turn for three (3) days by the Brothers mentioned above. According to the programme established in advance by the Commission for the pastoral ministry of vocations and youth ministry of the District of Central Africa, were included in this week of vocational adventure; namely: personal interviews, celebrations of the Word with integrated with

morning prayers from the breviary, evening prayers, adoration, mass in the parish according to the availability of the parish priest, manual work and the repair of the straw roof and walls of the two accommodation for the teachers of the Basic Education Centre De La Salle (CEB-DLS) of the Baka camp in BINGONGOL located at 5 km from the Community of the Brothers of Lomié. In addition, Brothers Anatole DIRETENADJI (Visitor) and Martin SONNEMANS (oldest Brother of the District at the age of 84 with 40 years of presence in the District) respectively presented their vocational itinerary to young campers. These were amazing testimonies!



On Saturday, July 27, 2019 at 3:30 p.m., the vocational camp has been evaluated. Begun on Monday, July 23, 2019, ended on Sunday, July 28,

2019 with a Eucharistic celebration at the parish and with a copious and fraternal meal.

At 2 p.m., the campers returned to their respective communities, joyful and convinced to announce what they have seen and heard. It was a special and an international vocational camp since it was the first time that such a meeting could bring together the three (3) countries (Cameroon, Chad and Equatorial Guinea) that of the District of Central Africa.

It was a special camp because it had been six (6) years since 2013 in Diang when the District last organized a vocational camp. Moreover, what makes this Vocational Camp special is that, among the 13 young participants, 8 of them have applied for admission either for the Pre-postulancy; or for the Postulancy. The Lord wrought marvels for us!



May each Brother continue to work more to reach out to the young and to be with them.

Brother Emile ONANA
District of Central Africa

LEBANON: FRATELLI PROJECT, BEYOND THE BORDERS



The Fratelli project, by its very nature, is meant to be a work that lies "beyond the borders". The heart and originality of Fratelli are reflected in the fact that it is a project that works with and for children and people who have left their country, living far from their countries (Syria, Iraq, Palestine...). Always mindful to translate into reality, the various recommendations of our institutions (Church, Society of the Little Brothers of Mary (Marists), Brothers of the Christian Schools (Lasallians)), us, the local actors of the Project, we have also agreed to go out of our established borders, outside our usual range of action to "go to the periphery, to go beyond the borders."

For this reason, the school year that is coming to an end has allowed us to take direct action in three new shelters (camps). New because we had never intervened directly, on the spot, with the inhabitants of the shelters. We sought to provide answers to three shelters, each with different needs, with the support of parents, and also and above all to better take care of the children living in these three shelters. These are shelters from Abra, Pepsi and Zahranie.



- Abra: it is a shelter located north of the city of Sidon (Saida). More than sixty-five families (from Syrian city of Hama) share the different compartments of an unfinished building that should have been used as a hospital. The families and the head of the Shelter have granted us to occupy one of the large rooms on the ground floor free of charge. We have set it up to accommodate 26 to 30 children between the ages of 4 and 6 for a preschool program.



One of our female teachers goes there in the afternoon, Monday to Friday, to teach them. She is assisted by a kindergarten assistant who is a Franciscan Sister (Missionary of Mary)

living in her community near the neighbourhood of Abra.

- Pepsi: shelter located south of the city of Sidon, not far from Sarepta (Sharfane). More than a hundred and twenty families (mainly from Aleppo) occupy a large parking lot in the basement of a building used as a soft drink store, hence the name Pepsi. Although it is very far from our place of more than 18 km, we have taken it upon ourselves to support children aged 7 to 13 who are enrolled in official schools. From Monday to Friday, a van transports 22 to 26 of these children so that they can learn within our premises.



Thus, they can do there their homework and exercises. These students benefit from an appropriate space for study and, above all, support from our afternoon teachers to better understand and assimilate lessons taught to them in the morning in the public schools.

- Zaharanie: this is the last shelter we discovered last January. Located five kilometres before Pepsi, this shelter is close to an oil depot. It is located between the Mediterranean Sea and a stream (mainly the city's sewage); the living conditions in this shelter are highly awful. The children (Syrian, Palestinian and Lebanese without documents) who live in this shelter are left to themselves.

But through our various initiatives, we try to bring a consoling presence to children living in this shelter: sports, football

for teenagers, various fun activities, distribution of clothes and shoes, presence to young women by teaching them sewing and English classes.... The last initiative was the Summer School throughout The month of July. Through the latter, we tried to supervise some 80 children between the ages of 8 and 14. Unfortunately, the last week of our program, the police ordered us to stop our activities because this refugee camp would be illegal, and in addition, we had set up a tent under which we use to gather the children, which is forbidden in the Lebanon. What can we do in

the weeks and months ahead for all these children living in Zaharania? The question deserves serious reflection.

These are the three new places where Fratelli Project has been willing to "export" its activities in addition to its usual annual programme. To go out so as to go beyond borders, crossing the physical and concrete periphery of our usual environment to reach



out to children displaced by war and refugees in Lebanon where they live on a daily basis, this is the practical effort

experienced during the school year 2018-2019 at Fratelli Project. All the programs for the 2018-2019 school year ended on 28 August with the traditional big summer camp, which brought together more than 740 children aged 6 to 14 in two rounds (morning and afternoon). Happy holidays, as we wait for October 2019 for the reopening of our programs for the year 2019-2020.

Brother Gilbert OUILABEGUE

Member of the Fratelli Project community

SHARING: YOUNG LASALLIAN INTERNATIONAL CAMP IN BURKINA FASO

On Saturday, August 29, 2019, I had a privilege of addressing the Young Lasallians (JL) of the Districts of West Africa and the Gulf of Benin, gathered in camp in Toussiana from August 27 to September 4 for a camp. The topic of my sharing was: "The celebration of the Tricentenary of the entry into heaven of the Holy Founder". In order to develop

centuries in the Father's house, having fought the good fight of faith, without being spared from tribulations and attacks of the adversary. The founding event of the tricentenary was the death of Saint John Baptist De La Salle on April 7, 1719 in Rouen.

To celebrate this tercentenary, Brother Superior General made an announcement by video in



it, I first made a clarification of terminology, then I did a review of the founding event, and finally discussed the practical organization of the tricentenary. Before concluding with a personal message to the YL, I talked about the fruits of the tricentenary.

The celebration of the tricentenary is a duty of filial recognition to St. John the Baptist De La Salle. He worked, from commitment to commitment, to ensure that Christian schools were created for the benefit of the children of artisans and poor people. And he has been resting for three

November 2017, drawing our attention on:

- **The motto:** one heart, one commitment, one life.
- **The approach:** "Deepening our motivations as Lasallians and strengthening our service to the poor and vulnerable".
- **The objective:** To express our global unity and "strengthen us to work for the well-being of humanity".

He also stressed that this anniversary is an opportunity to promote all Lasallian vocations and, in particular, to support young people who discern a call to Brother's life. He also encouraged the

creativity of the Districts and invited them to create their own activities and share them with the entire Institute. For this reason, he used the communication service to facilitate the sharing of material.



For the success of the organization, the Brother Superior and his Council created an ad hoc committee for the organization and appointed Brother Gustavo Ramirez, General Counsellor, coordinator of that committee. The mission of the committee was to:

1. Motivate the Institute for the celebration of the Tricentenary;
2. Propose to the General Council actions to be taken in/from the Centre of the Institute;
3. Coordinate with the Regions the actions programmed from the Centre of the Institute;
4. Organize these actions by relying on others who may be involved in their implementation.

Solemn Eucharistic celebrations and sporting and cultural events punctuated this Jubilee year. As part of the solemn Masses, we can mention, among other things, the opening Mass of the tricentenary at the Sanctuary of St. John the Baptist De La Salle at the General house in Rome, November 16, 2019; 07 April Mass in Rouen; 30 April Mass in Reims;

May 15 in Rome; May 11 in Kongoussi, Burkina Faso.

As for the other events and activities, we had the papal audience on May 16 at the Clementine Hall of the Vatican. During this private audience where the Holy Father received three hundred members of the Lasallian family led by Brother Superior General, he qualified Saint John Baptist De La Salle of being a brilliant and creative inventor in his vision for the school, in his teaching conception and pedagogy. We can also mention the organization of the workshop on creative fidelity which brought together Lasallian Brothers, lay people and Sisters from all over the world in Rome, to reflect on the new creative educational and pastoral responses of Lasallians to the needs of today's young people and children.

There is also the launching of the "Beyond The Borders" (BTB) initiatives, which are:

- Rumbek, South Sudan
- Moleenbeek, Belgium
- Tabatinga, Brazil
- Hohola, Papua New Guinea
- Bamboo School, Thailand
- Issa, Ghana.

As part of the fruits of the Tricentenary, one can distinguish:

Spiritual fruits (Indulgences, great solemn Eucharistic celebrations, Lasallian Pilgrimages, the promotion of Lasallian Vocations, the spiritual renewal of the Brothers and lay people, and spiritual graces); community fruits (international meetings, great institutional communication, the

strengthening of the sense of belonging to the Lasallian family, the revaluation of Lasallian heritage), and pastoral fruits (the stimulation of the Lasallian creativity, the new dynamism of the YL movement and Lasallian volunteering, the influence of the lasallian educational mission through BTB initiatives).

I also took the opportunity to present the project of La Salle University of Africa, a response from the conference of Brother Visitors of RELAF to the call of the 45th General Chapter that considered a university as a place of dialogue between faith and culture, a place of lasallian formation and research on lasallian pedagogy and spirituality. It is also a response to a challenge by Brother Superior general to the RELAF Visitors. Indeed, he had noticed that the results of our primary and secondary schools are excellent, but a continuation of this excellency was missing at the higher level. And this looks more like an unfinished symphony. Today, there are six lasallian higher education centres, that together are called upon to form La Salle University of Africa, without mentioning the ones to come. These include the CPGE of Ouagadougou, EST of Douala, the Catholic University of Ethiopia in Addis Ababa, the ISSIG of Antananarivo, the CELAF-Institute in Abidjan and CTIE in Kenya.



Finally, I invited the YL to be:

- Themselves: by loving oneself, valuing one's talents, relying on one's own strengths and being optimistic about the future. Africa has great potential that its sons and daughters must develop, rather than expose themselves to hunger, thirst, death and slavery on the roads of migration.
- Men and women of Faith: God created the world and entrusted it to us. As stewards of the creation, we must develop the relationship to God to whom we have to give an account of our management and ask him for the grace to love his creation (human beings, lively and lifeless beings), to use it rationally and to promote the well-being of all.
- Missionaries: we belong to an international institute that carries out its mission in an intercultural, interreligious and even inter-congregational context. It is important that we think global and act local. Lasallian volunteering, the missionary spirit must not be the exclusive

realm of Westerners. It is time for Africa to enrich other regions with its wonders as well.

- Leaders: "I have a dream" said Martin Luther King. The leader is the one who allows his people threatened with despair, to dream and to believe that his dream can come true. And it is then that its action energized by the intrinsic force, once put under the bushel of fear, discouragement, self-satisfaction and dependence, is deployed without hatred or revenge, to break the yokes, these bonds of death, and to give life; a life full of meaning, freedom and dignity.

- Innovators/ Entrepreneurs: Joseph Ki-Zerbo, an eminent historian from Burkina Faso, said: "We do not develop, we develop ourselves". He added: "If we lie down, we will die." Innovation and entrepreneurship are not just political and economic concepts. They must inspire our daily action. By observing the pain of the people around us, we must create innovative solutions to lighten their suffering. Young people have this incredible spirit of creativity, so don't be shy about innovative solutions from elsewhere. Create your own solutions. You have the right to imitate, to copy. But you have absolutely no right to do nothing.

- Actors of Change: a Brother jokingly said: "To change, let's do as usual". Change is above all a state of mind that rejects the status quo, the "We have always done it like this"; "Leave it like this, it's good like that." To change is to take the risk of bringing in new things, to get out of one's comfort zone; it is taking the risk of following the

inspiration of the Spirit. It's taking the risk of adventure.

- Patriots: during the revolution time in Burkina Faso, the country's motto was: "The Fatherland or death, we shall overcome!". To be patriotic is to live so that each of our actions honours our nation, our family, our friends. It is our integrity, which must not be circumstantial or accidental, but essential, that will keep us standing regardless of the violence of the headwinds. It is in this sense that we must not allow, under any reason or pretext, that anyone should enjoy the pleasure of obtaining our silence or cooperation in exchange for money or material goods. The song "Young Soldier on Henry IV' the Bridge " is more than eloquent.

F. Téfio Raoul TRAORÉ

District of West Africa

REFLECTION: BEING LASALLIAN TODAY



I would like to set out on a short journey with all those who might have the opportunity to read this little work of reflection, so that they discover, with me, the identity of the disciple of Saint John Baptist De La Salle yesterday and today and of the Lasallian family. It was around the 1680s, in Reims, around a young theologian priest named John Baptist De La Salle, that a community was born: the institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools. Its project and its purpose towards a free human and Christian education of the children of artisans of its time. Three centuries after the death of John Baptist De La Salle, this project is still relevant and takes on today plural forms. To make it a reality, De La Salle and the first Brothers gave themselves wholly to Christ.

They thus became ambassadors and representatives of Christ to the poor children and young people of their time. They are teachers and selflessly take care of the Christian and human education of their students. Through this noble ministry, they are at the service of God and the students. The Lasallians are members of Mr. De La Salle's new family; they embody his spirit of faith and zeal, a spirit that is at the service of the salvation of the children and young people deprived of means of education. John Baptist De La Salle, with his new vision of education, gives an identity to his teachers and all his disciples. He offers them an identity inspired by the style of interpersonal relationships recommended by Christ in the Gospel. For de La Salle, they will no longer call themselves teachers, but Brothers, for they are Brothers among

themselves and elder brothers for their students. They are called to cooperate with Christ, receiving from him the light that will allow them to enlighten those entrusted to them. John Baptist De La Salle, led by divine providence, offered to the world and to the Church a new vision of education and men capable of rekindling the flame of hope for children seeking for salvation (MD 39,2).

The great Lasallian family today consists not only of the religious Brothers, but also of the religious women and especially of lay people: Signum Fidei; Guadalupana De La Salle Sisters; the Secular Union of Catechists of Jesus crucified and of Mary Immaculate; the lasallian Sisters of Vietnam; Lasallian volunteers, young Lasallians...



De La Salle has died three centuries ago; however, his work remains and challenges us every day. It stimulates us and invites us to remain faithful to our lasallian identity; to be Lasallian today is to live with great commitment our vocation as an

educator in total abandonment. Being Lasallian today is nothing more than answering God's call, to Christ's immeasurable and unconditional love for children and young people, who expect something more special from us. To be Lasallien today is to get out of your tribal and selfish world and experience the real encounter. To be Lasallien today is to offer to the poor through our authentic witness the coherent and stimulating values and guidelines. To be Lasallien today is to help young people to develop their virtuosities. To be Lasallien today is to give a new dimension in the transmission of knowledge. To be Lasallien today is to live close to those entrusted to our care. To be lasallien today is to sow in the hearts of children and young people the treasures of the Gospel, of faith and hope, of life and of God's presence. Finally, to be Lasallien today is to have a look of hope and confidence on young people in the manner of Saint John Baptist De La Salle.

In short, dear and Lasallians, we understand here that De La Salle's work is endless. Today we cannot repeat exactly the same thing as Mr. De La Salle and our predecessors because the needs have changed. In reference to the founding intuitions of John Baptist De La Salle, it is our duty to embody them with humility, in a multicultural world and of religious plurality. Lasallians, together, we are called to keep the candle of Lasallian charism lit for the greater good of poor children and young people.

Brother Michel PHANZU de l'étoile
St. Miguel's Scholasticate

DISTRICT OF WEST AFRICA: CLEF 2019



From 8th to 20th July 2019, was held at Charles Lwanga College in Nouna, Kossi province the sixth edition of the Lasallian Community of Fraternal Education (CLEF). It was attended by 285 children aged between 6 to 12, under the care of 50 instructors.

The day of 8th July was marked by the welcoming of children, the opening ceremony and the selection of the children into families (groups), and then the formation of workshops, done in consideration of their ages.

The major points of the daily program were essentially the meeting of the team, that is the instructors, 30 minutes before the children were welcomed. The purpose of this meeting was to give and get news of one another, and to make the necessary adjustments for the day. What is remarkable is that some children come even before this meeting. It is a sign that the need is real! The official time to welcome the children is 8am. It opens with animation (songs, games, stories...), then workshop work, snack breaks, lesson of the day, lunch, siesta, sports and finally, the evaluation of the day by the children. After they leave at 5:30

p.m., it is the instructors' turn to do a brief evaluation, taking into consideration that of the children. Other activities during the CLEF 2019 were also tasks of common interest. These included filling water supplies, cleaning the premises, washing dishes and properly storing the equipment used. July 20th was a complex day. It was marked with joy and sorrow. Indeed, it was the day of the closing party. With joyful hearts, the children performed many activities: playback, ballets, modern dances and sketch, to name but a few



In addition, this closing ceremony was honoured by the presence of His Excellency Bishop Joseph SAMA, the bishop of the diocese. He congratulated and encouraged the initiators of the CLEF to continue this formation work that fosters community life. Brother Julien DIARRA, Visitor of DAO was represented by Brother François KIENOU, Promoter of lasallian vocations.



The least gratifying part is that this same activity also marked the end of the 2019 edition of the CLEF. It was with a bit of sadness that the



children as well as the instructors waved goodbye to each other, until they meet again for the 2020 edition!

On the day of 21 July, Brother Josué, Director of the CLEF, summoned the instructors for a general clean up and evaluation.

Long live the CLEF, looking forward to see you next year!

Brother Gérard OUEDRAOGO,
De La Salle Scholasticate, Nairobi

ABIDJAN: THE 2019-2020 ACADEMIC INTAKE AT CELAF-INSTITUTE

After two or even three months of holydays, students, lecturers and the administration staff met this Thursday, September 12th to experience another promising academic year. In a good atmosphere, it was a great pleasure for the old students to meet and the joy of welcoming the new members, students as well as lecturers.



From the morning of Thursday, September 12 at 9 am the students and guests were well received and installed in the big hall. After a few minutes of waiting, we had a beautiful opening prayer led by Sister Christelle Euphrasie AVLE, Deputy Director-General of CELAF-Institute. After the prayer, we had the welcoming word to the students and guests, said by Brother Simon ALPHONSE General secretary of the CELAF-Institute. In the same mood, Brother Valère ADONSOU took the opportunity to address his occasional speech for the opening of the academic year. In his words, the general director, Brother Valère ADONSOU first welcomed everybody and most especially the new members of the staff and the new students. He invited them to consider this training house that is the CELAF-Institut as theirs. After that, he shared his expectations and wishes in five points of attention that students will be able to integrate into their personal formation projects.

In the first place the educator is a deep-rooted being. Faced with a pluralistic world with many solicitations, an invitation was made to all students:

that of seizing the grace of this time of formation for an intellectual, ethical and spiritual equipment capable of making everyone excellent shepherd and educator among children and young people. Secondly Brother Valère invited each student to be responsible of their own formation.

Thirdly, students were invited to consider their formation as an experience and an experiences as a mean of formation. According to his words, "there is need of getting oneself out of the immediacy of all that is undertaken and, through analysis and reflection, to give it a content of self-construction." In the fourth point, he stated that students should have a passion for the taste of knowledge.

The fifth point was an invitation to have a spirit of solidarity in the commitment.

In conclusion, the Brother Director-General expressed his best wishes saying: "May this academic year be for each and every one a true and rich laboratory for building up a human identity that conveys the perfume of intellectual and spiritual solidity, vitalizing and constructing relationships and selfless commitment. A year of capitalizing resources that will generate a fine sense of the spirit of sense in a complex and crisis-ridden world."

At the end of this speech, there was a PowerPoint presentation of the school project and introduction of the new lecturers by the Brother Director-General. Brother Simon ALPHONSE then gave some points of attention for the smooth running of the "House".

This first day ended up with discussions between students and their respective deputy-directors. All the activities ended at around 11:30 a.m. The next day, Friday, September 13, was dedicated to the opening lesson with the following heading: Challenges of modern education in Africa.

Brother Elisha Pokanam Lare,
Saint Miguel Scholasticate

MADAGASCAR: POPE FRANCIS' VISIT




PRESIDENCE DE MADAGASCAR
IVATO | 2019

Theme: Pope Francis “Sower of peace and hope”

After sending a message to the Mozambicans, Pope Francis addressed the Malagasy people he met as part of his 31st Apostolic Journey. The Malagasy awaited



the successor of the Saint Peter with great joy, 30 years after the visit of St. John Paul II

The Holy Father arrived in the capital city Antananarivo on Saturday, September 07.

He held various meetings, including the one with the President of the Republic Andry Nirina Rajoelina at 9:30 a.m. at the State house; with the authorities, civil society and the diplomatic body in the early morning. For his first apostolic steps in Madagascar, Pope Francis called upon a fundamental value of Malagasy culture, which even appears in the Constitution, the "Fihavanana": a concept that evokes the spirit of sharing, mutual aid, solidarity. He then delivered a homily during the midday prayer at the Discalced Carmelite



monastery at 11:15 a.m., before having lunch at the apostolic nuncio's house. Then he met the bishops of the country at 4 p.m. at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, also called Andohalo Cathedral (from the name of the neighbourhood in which the cathedral is located). At 5 p.m. he visited the tomb of Blessed Victory Rasoamanarivo, then concluded the day at 6 p.m. with a vigil with the youths in the diocesan field of Soamandrakizay. On Sunday, September 8, in front of hundreds of thousands of faithful gathered in the diocesan field of Soamandrakizay, Pope Francis presided over Mass at 10 a.m. in the same place where he will then recite the Angelus prayer. In his homily, he reminded the demands of commitment to follow Jesus, based on personal detachment and openness to God's gift. It is in a calm and family atmosphere that this mass took place on a huge site of about 60 hectares. After lunch, at 3:10 p.m., His Holiness visited the "City of Friendship", the village of Akamasoa of Father Pedro.



At 4 p.m., in the midst of the village's stone quarry, a prayer was said for the workers. This second day on the big island ended at 5:10 p.m. with the meeting with priests, nuns and religious, consecrated persons and seminarians at St. Michael's College.

This 31st apostolic journey of the Holy Father ended on 10 September after the visit to Mauritius Island during the day of September 09.



Sister Ramarovisy Ianta Viviannica,
Gouadalupana De La Salle Sisters



The traditional inaugural lesson was held at the CELAF-Institute on Friday, September 13 in the main hall. This second day of the academic year was marked by this inaugural lesson which turned into an inaugural conference in the words of the lecturer, Professor Ignace BIAKA. He is a professor at the University of Felix Houphouet Boigny. The theme of the conference was the challenges of modern education in Africa.

From the beginning of his speech, the eminent Professor BIAKA wished that this inaugural lesson would be perceived in terms of discussion between him and the audience. The lesson, as a recitation of received content, in its Greek sense means a song in relation to a religious celebration.

He invited his audience to live this inaugural lesson as our faith in education, in Africa; should drive the black man to become better compared to himself. Professor BIAKA also said that we are in religion to meditate on the challenges of modern education in Africa.

On the basis of this reality, two certainties emerge. First of all, the word “modern” that wants to refer to modern era which is a questioning of feudalism. In these modern era there is a hostile relationship of man with the natural environment. This environment in which Thomas HOBBS says that "man is a wolf for man." By natural environment we can understand all raw materials, the development of knowledge, techniques. The operability of knowledge gives us the opportunity to transform the world through education. The environment that one would like natural becomes a work created by man for the satisfaction of his needs.

Continuing his presentation, Professor BIAKA asked himself this question: why do we want to meditate on the challenges of modern education in Africa? For him we come to think of it only when we think by ourselves. In this perspective, we must strive towards the divine, the values that underpin human beings. In this sense thinking something else than the divine is only materialism. In the same perspective he insinuates that between

modern education and Africa there is slavery, exploitation in all its forms.

If we think about the challenges of education in Africa, it is because we have become modern men and women, and we must not go back to the conservative past. We are essentially made up of the past and the present. "We must accept to live the present, in this present without having nostalgia for the past that handicaps progress," he said.

Indeed, the past is conservative and does not give room to change, to progress.

According to professor BIAKA, we were educated in the occidental way. Moreover, education comes from the Latin "educere" which means to lead, to guide; a term that refers to the connection to the land, the fact of giving to the crops the care it needs for a better harvest. To educate is also to take a man out of himself so that he becomes what he must become, to reach his identity. He therefore drew the parallel between cultivating the land and

producing a man or a woman who are the two sides of a man's life.

Because we become a man, how do we regain this culture of man, he wondered?

Thus, for him, it is important to

meet the challenge of Africa's historical determination. In this order of ideas, this question

should be asked: how does Africa come into the world? according to Professor BIAKA, Africa comes into the world with the modern era. Western conquests helped create African territories.

How can we conduct an education so that Africa does not think of an education of dominated people? Here is the challenge of economic domination. Since the West has economic domination, economic exploitation, it has been easy for it to create colonies in Africa. Indeed, in order to educate man to be a man, we must educate in such a way that the economy will no longer be an economy of domination, the basis of conflicts, a tug-of-war between the dominant and the dominated.

The other challenge is the reappropriation of sovereignty as accession to democracy. How can we bring, educate the child to freedom, an authentic freedom? It is essential to educate human

beings to be vigilant in relation to the consciousness of the other.

As the ultimate challenge of modern education in Africa, it is that of the restoration of religiosity, the return of the

divine to oneself. Nelson Mandela said that



"education is the most powerful weapon to change the world." Convinced of this reality, the eminent Professor Ignace BIAKA called for a return to the religious phenomenon in African societies, a crucial condition for meeting the other three challenges. But our world is hostile when we want to turn to the divine.

To close his speech, Professor BIAKA quoted Cheick Hamidou Kane by saying that the colonisers destroyed with the cannons but they also knew how to construct with the school. Education at that time was part of the nature of the cannon and the magnetic body. The new school sets up peace. To educate to modernity is to lead man not to be as an employee, an instrument, but a man who, with the necessary instruments, builds another world with his faith.

At the end of this first part, time was given to the series of questions.

For Sister Lucie Emmanuelle, if the past is conservative then what happens to our identity as Africans? On this question, Professor BIAKA invited the Sister and his audience to come up with synthesis between the past and the present. The world of the eternal yesterday is conservative, it refuses temporality.

The second person, Pascaline, asked if there is no longer any natural thing, since everything is technical. The professor invited the person to think in the sense that not everything is technical but depends on the technique. Nature is no longer

natural itself but it is the product of what we want of it to be.

Brother Emile KIUSI perceives that Africa has lost its tradition, hence his question to know how to return to this tradition? For the professor it is necessary to think of Africa in terms of present, in terms of our being today and not tribal. Thinking about our current situation, not our nostalgia.

Professor Denis raised up the question on the challenge of religiosity by bringing into our minds the death of DJ Arafat.

To this concern, Professor BIAKA responded with the following assertion that no one can defy time which is another name of God. Religiosity is the reactualisation of the human dimension.

Technology wants to destroy, to make suspicious of what gives shape and values to our actions. The principle of this new religiosity is efficiency. Effective God, technician; and that is why we are in a society of immediacy.

In conclusion, the return to the divine must be the return to ourselves.

Brother Elisée Pokanam Lare,

Saint Miguel Scholasticate



Salle''

The Young Lasallian movement is an initiative of the Brothers of the Christian Schools (FEC). This movement aims to be a means of consultation and exchange of experiences among young people from the Brothers' schools. To maintain a spirit of fraternity, solidarity and friendship relation among the young Lasallians, the Brothers of the Christian Schools organized this year an international camp of young Lasallians from August 27th to September 4th, 2019 in Toussiana.

60 Young Lasallians and 6 instructors, 3 brothers and 3 lay people attended this camp. The Young Lasallians came from Burkina Faso and Togo. The theme was: **"The place of the young Lasallian in the world in the light of the tricentenary of the birth in heaven of Saint John the Baptist De La**



The Young Lasallians (YL), during their stay in Toussiana, had training sessions on leadership, entrepreneurship, first aid. Discovery and sharing meetings. Sport, outings and socials, tree plantation in a Brothers' School, prayers, two painting sessions, games, a conference on the holy founder: "the celebration of the birth in heaven of the holy Founder" and another communication on the theme: "The Place of the Young Lasallian in the World Today", sharing of experiences from the

various sections of the YL from different schools and universities, an evaluation of the session and suggestions for the better animation of YL groups and YL summer camps. These formations and other activities have allowed the YL not only to get to know each other better but also to create good relationship, friendship and fraternity. It should be noted that this summer camp was animated by the youth themselves through a small coordination group. The good atmosphere and the joy of being together made it possible to spend a good time in Toussiana. The tears at the end of both the YL and the instructors tell of the fraternity and the good atmosphere during the time spent there in Toussiana.



Brother Denis TRAORE,

coordinator of the Young Lasallians Movement of
the District of West Africa

BROTHER GENERAL COUNCILLOR'S CALENDAR

October	
2 nd Sept. - 11 th Oct.	16 th session of the general Council. Rome
8 th - 6 th Oct.	Tutti Fratelli
12 th - 29 th Oct.	Formation / association
13 rd Oct.	Back from Rome to Abidjan
29 th - 31 st Oct.	Formation of archivists
23 rd - 30 th Oct.	Formation of formators
November	
4 th -6 th Nov.	Brother Visitors conference, Nairobi
24 th -25 th Nov.	Abidjan-Rome
27 th -29 th Nov.	Board meeting Solidarity South Sudan. Rome
December	
26 th - 31 st Dec.	West Africa District' Chapter