

THE AFRICA REPORT

JOURNEY OF FAITH: REFLECTIONS FROM MANZESE PARISH IN TANZANIA

Father Barthelemy Bazemo, M.Afr.
President, Missionaries of Africa and Superior USA Sector

Before coming to the States, my first missionary assignment was in Tanzania at Manzese Parish in the Archdiocese of Dar es Salaam. Manzese Parish is an urban parish that serves a diverse community of over five thousand members, most of whom were either self-employed or held low or semi-skilled jobs. We had an excellent parish team that cared for the people. In addition to celebrating the sacraments, I was responsible for youth chaplaincy (as the youngest priest often is) along with other service-oriented initiatives, including parish committees, food pantries, volunteer and outreach programs.

Prior to taking up this assignment as a newly ordained minister, I was fortunate to spend time in Tanzania, where I acquired proficiency in Kiswahili, the national language, and became acquainted with the local customs. Tanzania is a peaceful and dynamic nation that has been greatly influenced by the legacy of Julius Nyerere, the country's founding president. This knowledge helped ease me into ordained ministry.

To succeed in ministry, it is essential to learn to comprehend people's customs. This entails cultivating an openness while demonstrating genuine respect for their way of life and culture. By adopting this approach, Missionaries of Africa have acquired valuable insights into different cultures and have come to appreciate the richness of their values.

Missionary learning always requires time. As a messenger of the Good News, a missionary must exhibit humility and recognize God's presence in all cultures. However, one of the most significant challenges a missionary faces is determining the most effective means of fostering that awareness of God's presence in every person's life and helping create transformative religious experiences. To overcome this challenge, I learned what matters most to people and assisted them in finding the most appropriate answers to their inquiries, especially their spiritual longings.



I have countless memories of the people. Tanzanians are renowned for their hospitality. Many families welcomed me into their homes and made me feel like a part of their families. I enjoyed the fervor of the community, which demonstrated a true sense of ownership. From the youth to the adults, I had very enriching encounters, which I continue to treasure today.

The Manzese Parish community enthusiastically embraced and nurtured me as a newly ordained priest. Through our faith-sharing and collaborative community development, I acquired a wealth of knowledge. I continue to appreciate their invaluable assistance in enabling me to fulfill my Christian vocation as a Missionary of Africa.



Father Bazemo, center, pictured with one of the youth groups at Manzese Parish in Tanzania shortly after his ordination.

KASULU, TANZANIA

CONTINUAL TRANSFORMATION OF SCHOOL BUILDING



Converting a garage into a shop classroom at the continually improving Youth Center in Kasulu, Tanzania.

In 2012, the Missionaries of Africa in Kasulu, Tanzania embarked on a mission to revive a closed school, transforming it into a vital Youth Center that provides both social services and education. Initially, aid was provided to restore the school building and make it functional once again. However, the community didn't stop there. Over the past decade, with the generous support of donors in the United States and Germany, we have been able to expand the services at the Youth Center, reaching a growing number of young people.

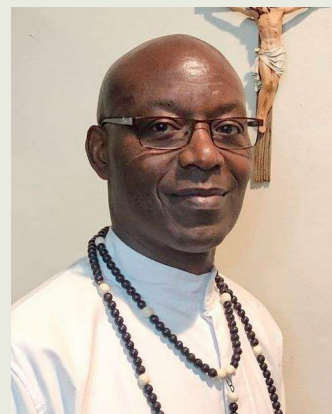
This year, we take pride in supporting the conversion of a garage into a new industrial art classroom. This endeavor exemplifies our commitment to the continual enhancement of facilities, ensuring that the Youth Center remains a dynamic and versatile hub for learning and growth.

The future of the young people in Kasulu is bright due to the educational opportunities offered by our ever-expanding Youth Center. Your ongoing support is crucial to making transformations like these possible, empowering communities and creating lasting positive impacts.

WELCOME TO FATHER HENRY!

Rev. Henry Byamukama, M.Afr., has joined the pastoral team at Our Lady of Light Parish in New York as a parochial vicar. Father Byamukama hails from Isingiro in western Uganda and first joined the Missionaries of Africa in 1990, taking his final vows in 2000, and being ordained in 2001. His prior assignments included serving in Canada, Zambia, Tanzania, Ireland, and Uganda.

Our Lady of Light Parish, established in 2008 in St. Albans, Queens, was formed by merging St. Catherine of Siena and St. Pascal Baylon into one parish. The Missionaries of Africa assumed responsibility for staffing the parish in 2020.



DAR ES SALAAM, TANZANIA

REFRESHING PARISH NEWS



On Tanzania's coast at Sts. Joachim and Ann Catholic Church, parishioners are already reaping the benefits of a recently drilled water well. The initiative, undertaken in November, has become a source of joy and sustainability for the community.

Under the leadership of their pastor, Fr. Venkateswarlu Stephen Esanapalli, the parish is delighted to share that the well is now providing ample water to meet the needs of the church, school and the rectory. In a spirit of generosity, surplus water is being shared with their neighbors as well.

Before the installation of the well, the parish faced the challenge of filling water tanks through costly water truck deliveries. With the newfound self-sufficiency brought by the well, these challenges are now in the past.

Well drillers diligently working at Sts. Joachim and Ann Catholic Church.

KOMBOLCHA, ETHIOPIA

REBUILDING AND PEACE



The freshly built basketball court signifies the transformative journey underway at the Selam Youth Centre.

The transformation of the Selam Youth Centre in Kombolcha stands as a testament to the resilience and unity of the community. This vital space, once marred by conflict, has been reborn, welcoming young minds from various backgrounds and beliefs to its rebuilt recreational facilities.

Previously, the Selam Youth Centre served as a hub for learning, providing a library, computer access, and recreational activities to the young adults attending colleges in Kombolcha. However, during the Tigray War, the center fell victim to chaos as rebel forces overran Kombolcha. The Selam Youth Centre was not spared; it was looted and turned into an armed camp. The basketball court, once a symbol of shared joy, became occupied by artillery, in stark contrast with its original purpose of fostering peace.

Last year, our missionaries returned to Kombolcha, aiming to resurrect the Selam Youth Centre as a place to foster peace. For the priests, restoring peace began with recreating normalcy and providing a healing space for the young people who had endured the trauma of war. It is with your invaluable support that we were able to rebuild the Selam Youth Centre, facilitating not just a physical transformation but also nurturing the emotional recovery of the community.

Your generosity has played a crucial role in this remarkable journey, enabling not only the revival of the Selam Youth Centre but also supporting similar transformations across Africa in the past year. Together, we are sowing the seeds of hope, compassion, and unity, honoring the people of Kombolcha and fostering a brighter future for the entire continent.

OUAGADOUGOU, BURKINA FASO

SAFE SPACE RENEWED

The Centre d'Etudes, le Pelican (Center for Study, The Pelican) in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, has undergone a remarkable transformation, thanks to the generous support of donors of the Missionaries of Africa in the U.S.

Director Augustine Rotshak Gonsum is delighted to announce the completion of extensive renovations, breathing new life into the computer room and other areas of The Pelican. The refurbishments included repairs to exterior and interior walls, rejuvenating floors, and refreshing paint throughout the building's wing. Additionally, funds provided facilitated the acquisition of 25 new chairs and the upgrade of 10 tables, and the enhancement of the facility's infrastructure, including an improved internet connection.

Founded in 1992, The Pelican serves as a vital study space in a neighborhood of Ouagadougou rich with schools. Its premises provide students with a secure and tranquil environment, offering respite and safety after school hours and on weekends. Over the years, the institution has evolved, expanding programs to cater to young individuals beyond the formal school setting.

This renewal not only revitalizes the physical space but also reinforces The Pelican's commitment to fostering education, community, and safety for Ouagadougou's youth. The Missionaries of Africa extend heartfelt gratitude to the dedicated donor whose support significantly contributed to The Pelican's positive transformation.



At the Centre d'Etudes, le Pelican in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, new floors and furniture elevate the computer room's transformation.

THE BEST PART OF MY JOB

Christopher Anderson
Director of Development

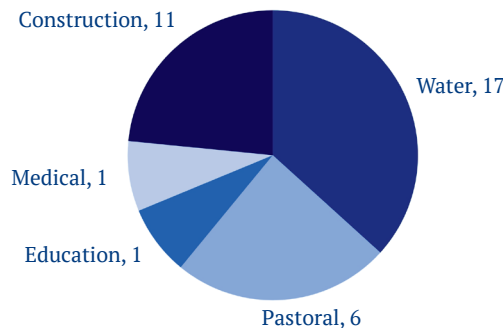
In December, thanks to your unwavering support, I had the privilege of informing thirty-seven project leaders in Africa that they would be receiving grant funds from the United States. Personally, delivering the news to hardworking missionaries about our assistance in providing clean water or fixing a leaky roof is always a source of joy for me.

While space limitations prevent most of these projects from being featured in our newsletters and appeal letters, each one stands as a testament to the profound impact of your generosity. Although we can only offer a glimpse of the work made possible by your contributions, we are excited to share a sampling of the diverse projects we've committed to supporting, as showcased in the simple chart categorizing the projects by type.

Upon sharing this positive news with our contacts for various projects, Father Delphin Mabaka, a dedicated Missionary of Africa serving in Nigeria, responded with heartfelt gratitude: "Good evening Mr. Anderson, thank you so much for this information. We thank all of you. God bless your benefactors!" Thanks to your support, we will enhance the safety of Father Mabaka and the other missionaries at our formation house in Nigeria by installing new lighting powered by solar panels.

The ongoing commitment of our donors is truly a blessing, making a significant impact on the lives of many in Africa. We eagerly anticipate keeping you posted by featuring some of the transformative projects that your generosity continues to support.

DECEMBER'S PROJECTS BY TYPE



WAYS TO SUPPORT OUR MISSION . . .

- Join our Friends of Hope monthly giving plan.
- Make a Memorial Gift in memory of a loved one.
- Celebrate a birthday, wedding or anniversary with a donation to our works in Africa.
- Donations of stock, securities, bonds or annuities provide the same benefit as a cash gift.
- Life Insurance: consider naming the Missionaries of Africa as a beneficiary.
- Bequests: an estate gift to support the ongoing work of the Missionaries of Africa.

Charitable IRA Transfers

Donors age 70 1/2 or older can transfer a contribution each year directly from a traditional IRA account. This may satisfy a portion or all of the annual required minimum distribution (RMD) and serve as a qualified charitable distribution for your IRA, which can decrease your tax burden even if you are no longer itemizing deductions.

** Always consult your tax preparer for your state regulations.*

How to make a Charitable Gift?

Donors should contact their IRA bank or broker/administrator to request an IRA distribution transfer to the Missionaries of Africa. Instruct your administrator to issue a check to:

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Development Office
1622 21st Street, NW
Washington, DC 20009-1003

For more information, call us at: 877-523-4662

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