



HABARI NEWS

NAIROBI PRIORY

July-October 2011

From the Prioress' Desk



This coming Sunday October 23rd the Church celebrates Mission Sunday. A day

which is dear to all missionaries whether at home or abroad. A day to celebrate the Pentecostal mystery of the coming of the Holy Spirit.

A day to be reminded of our Christian calling to proclaim the Good News we ourselves have received. In the Sunday reading from St. Paul's letter to the Thessalonians he gives them words of praise and encouragement as he Writes, "We Know, brothers [sisters], that God loves you and that you have been chosen because when we brought the Good News to you, it came to you not only as words, but as power and as the Holy Spirit and as utter conviction. . . . and it was with the joy of the Holy Spirit that you took to the gospel, in spite of the great opposition all round you. This has made you the great example to all believers. . ." (I Thess 1:4,5,6b,7a)

Can this be said of you and me? Is our joy in the Holy Spirit so great that it spills over

in our lives even when we face troubles of any kind. Can we, and do we reflect this joyfulness just because God is with us and the Holy Spirit dwells with us?

We hope to share this mission calling and sending at our Sunday Eucharist by giving each member of the congregation a small "mission" cross, religious and lay alike, bringing to clear awareness that we like the Thessalonians are called to this awesome ministry.

United in the Power and Joy of the Holy Spirit.

Sr. Michael Marie Rottinghaus

Junior Sisters' Integration Month

August 2011, was a month with a difference. All the juniors from the four outstations arrived at the priory house on 31st July. Their joy and readiness to learn was evident on their faces. The theme for our gathering was "Praying with the Word of God." facilitated by the competent Sr. Isaac Bae, OSB from Daegu priory. The study month was opened with a conference by Sr. Cecilia

Munguti, OSB, Sub prioress. On the same day, Sr. Lynet Ohola, OSB presented a financial report which pointed out our financial status as a priory.

Our journey through the scriptures began on the 2nd of August. Sr. Isaac introduced us to the Pentateuch. She took us through the different events and characters in these books. We did a lot of readings, reflections and discussions.

After the Torah we started our journey through the New Testament. She made it clear to us that the New Testament completes the Old Testament. On the 6th day of our journey through the Bible we began 8 days of prayer – 6th to 15th - with the theme “Prayerful reading of the New Testament” Some novices and final professed sisters and joined the retreat. Each day we had a specific reading to do.

Sr. Isaac kept encouraging us to fall in love with the word of God. “You all have the seed of the word of God in you,” she said, “therefore; you need to nurture the tiny roots daily otherwise they will die.”

After the retreat, we embarked on the Psalms. From the 16th to 18th she took us through the order and how the psalms are organized, how to pray the psalms with an open heart and mind and lastly on some difficulties to understanding the psalms. From time to time we could watch some videos relevant to what we were learning.

We thank God, who inspired our prioress and junior directress to invite Sr. Isaac. Her love for the scriptures touched each one of us and re-awakened in us the love for the word of God.

On August 20th we had our excursion to Nakuru national park where we saw many wild animals including the lions and the cubs

On the 22nd we began our second retreat directed by Fr. James Gatua a priest from the diocese of Eldoret. He openly spoke about the challenges facing religious life in Kenya today. He kept reminding us to go back to our first love. The retreat ended with a thanksgiving mass on August 31st. We thank God and our sisters for this chance to be refreshed and be renewed. **Sr. Beata, OSB.**

Postulants’ Formative Activity’s Experiences

In April this year our five senior postulants left the priory house for four months formative activity. They returned to Karen at the end of August richer and wiser as expressed in their personal reflection.

When I left Karen for Endo community I was so happy though I did not have the slightest idea of how this place is but deep in my heart I very well understood that this was an opportunity and a challenge too. I was determined to give my best. When I got to Endo I was struck by the warm welcome from the sisters. This made me feel at home from the beginning. A few days later I started working in the Health Centre. While there, I interacted with many people young and old. Some old people could not speak Swahili therefore; I was challenged to learn some Marakwet to help me communicate with these warm-hearted people.

The commitment of the sisters to community life and service is one among many other things that I deeply appreciated and God’s blessings on the

sisters and their apostolate are evident. For example, when I was there, two dairy goats gave birth one after the other. This gives the sister in charge enough milk to feed the malnourished children that are brought to the health centre. Another blessing to be counted is that the much needed borehole has now been sunk and the storage tanks hoisted. This then means that there will be clean water running in the taps of the health centre and the sister's convent.

I thank God for gracing me so much during the four months. The experiences made me grow in faith and in character. I will forever cherish the memories.

Postulant Lydia

The four months of my formative experiences in Ruaraka will forever remain a great treasure. This was a God given time to learn more about myself, our congregation and life in a small community where I came face to face with the reality of trying to keep a balance between work and prayer.

In the first two months I was helping in the community kitchen and in the last two months I was assigned in the community farm. This gave me a lot of experiences in feeding the chickens and collecting the eggs. I thank God so much for this opportunity. The commitment of the sisters to spiritual exercises and apostolate so much inspired me. It often made me reflect on my vocation, on my desire and my spirit for service. May God bless all the sisters in Ruaraka community. Your example inspired and increased my desire of being a religious sister in this congregation.

Postulant Marietta

I had looked forward to being in Chesongoch, which is our first mission station in Kenya. I must say that I liked the place on arrival. After two days of rest I was introduced to my first assignment which was the community laundry. As time went on, I started helping in the kitchen, guest house and in the school. On Sundays I would join Sr. Justina for the small Christian community gatherings. Taking care of the guests gave me an opportunity to realize how grateful people are whenever they experience true hospitality.

I thank God for the four months that were rich in formative experiences. I came to know and appreciate more about myself, and life in a small community. Some of the things that I learnt are: to appreciate the goodness of God through others and to acknowledge the good in the other.

Postulant Peninnah

Formative Activity in Jinja Community

We left Jinja, Uganda a year ago for Nairobi to begin our journey in religious formation. We have learnt so much about ourselves and our congregation both in the formation house and in the inter-congregational postulants' program. It was with great joy and eagerness that we- postulants Rosette and Dorcas- left Nairobi for Jinja for the four months formative activity. The sisters were eagerly waiting for us. At first we had some difficulties adjusting to the heat in Jinja after a year of the cool and pleasant weather in Karen, Nairobi. I (postulant Dorcas) was assigned to help in the community kitchen where I learnt so many new things like baking and decorating a cake. Besides the kitchen duties I also helped out in the refectory

and in community chapel. Postulant Rosette was helping in the library. To both of us this time of exposure to a life outside the formation house aided us in our growth in faith and in knowledge of ourselves.

Before we left for Nairobi we had a day out on Lake Victoria. I thank all the sisters in Jinja community for their love and support to us.

Postulants Dorcas & Rosette

Initiation to the Postulate and the Novitiate



wonderful things that have happened in my life.

The journey began six months ago when we were received as aspirants. The lessons and the spiritual nourishment given by our formators had all along been preparing us for this great day.

The simple yet solemn ceremony in the Chapter room was preceded by five days of prayer directed by Sr. Paula, OSB. We joined three senior postulants who three days before had begun their eight days of prayer in preparation for admission to the novitiate. The prayer reflections included: God's promise and love for creating me, come as you are; give me a drink among others. All these led us to a deep and personal experience of God who promises to walk with us and to bring the good that He has begun in us to a good end.

At 5.15 pm on 17th September 2011, the whole community had assembled at the chapter

room. The four of us (Postulants Stella, Symphorosa, Mary and Virginia) were already in our blue dresses. The novices to be were also in their blue dresses. After the opening hymn we listened to our prioress' exhortation and then we were presented by our postulant directress to the prioress who interrogated us to ascertain our desire. She later on handed the Rule of St. benedict to each of us a sign that we are now postulants of the he Missionary Benedictine Sisters Tutzing, Nairobi Priory. This was followed by the rite of admission to the novitiate of novices: Sylvia, Esther and Consolata. Upon expressing their desire to continue together with the community the journey of discernment, the prioress presented to each a grey habit and a white veil and later on the constitutions of our congregation, "the law under which they want to live and serve" They were then pronounced novices of our congregation and handed over to Sr. Eva-Maria Zierl, OSB the novices' directress. The whole community then congratulated us just before we went to praise God in Vespers. We thank God for His faithful love to each us. We trust and believe that He will lead and uphold us on this new journey.

Postulant Symphorosa

First Monastic Profession and Silver Jubilee

Shouts of joy and jubilation filled the air on 23rd September on the occasion of first monastic profession of our four novices: Loice, now Sr. Loice, Lilian, now Sr. Milian, Ezna now, Sr. Ezna and Philomena, now Sr. Naume Philomena and the silver jubilee of Sr. Bernadette Nzuve, OSB. The brides accompanied by their parents joined the procession that marked the beginning of the

Eucharistic celebration presided over by Archbishop emeritus, John Njenga the former shepherd of the Catholic archdiocese of Mombasa.

In his homily He thanked the brides for their courage to say “yes”. He thanked their parents for letting their daughters go. He however, challenged the brides and all present to answer their call every day and to remember that we are not called to be social workers but co-workers with Christ. The homily was followed by the rite of monastic profession and silver jubilee. In the presence of all, the four novices pronounced their vows and sang the *suscipe*.

After Holy Communion the brides were missioned by the mother church through our congregation. Sr. Loice Kisang, OSB and Sr. Ezna Osano, OSB



to the priory house community, Sr. Milian Amwoka, OSB to St. Scholastica’s academy, Ruaraka and Sr. Naume Philomena Ajuno, OSB to Jinja, Uganda.

A festive lunch had been prepared for all. The guests thus gathered in the courtyard at the front door. The cake cutting and the entertainments were interrupted by rain a sign of God’s blessings but about an hour later the guests were able to entertain the brides with song and dance. We thank God for the gift of our Sr. Bernadette and the four junior sisters. Our prayer is that you may all bear

true witness to a life of true discipleship in all your endeavours.

Novice Christine

Final Professed Sisters’ Assembly

A day after the first profession the final professed members of our priory held an assembly. There were 25 members in attendance. On Saturday 24th, the feast of our foundation and the morning of 25th we had a talk by professor Fr. Clement Majawa, from the Catholic University of Eastern Africa on traditional beliefs and Catholic Charismatic Renewal. In the afternoon of Sunday 25th we addressed some of the matters arising in our priory.

We thank God, for these very informative and formative days. We pray that this will continue the work of transformation into Christ in the life of every individual sister.

Sr. Lucy, OSB

The 2011, Pan African Intensification Program in Nairobi

These grace filled days and months began on the 7th of October. Two days before, we had received Sr. Hannah Sattler, OSB and Sr. Katharina, OSB from Tutzing priory. In the morning of the 7th Sr. Rimolda and Sr. Christine arrived from India. These four junior sisters joined the other four sisters from Nairobi priory.



These are: Sr. Laurentia Kirop, Sr. Judy Muhoho, Sr. Beata Katuku and Sr. Annet Lufwalula. We

accompany them with our prayers during this time of deepening and preparation for their final commitment to their Spouse. **Sr. Lucy**

From the Vocation Animator's Desk

This year the Kenya National Vocation Animators Association (K.A.V.A), Nairobi unit, had organized various vocational promotion visits to different colleges, schools and parishes. The theme for the year was picked from Lk: 5:4. "Launch into the deep" this meant that the vocation animators had to come up with new methods of doing their ministry. The Nairobi unit decided to focus on youth formation besides sharing with the young people about our way of life. We agreed to address some particular concerns of the young people that we visit. For example in our visit to Kambui girls in the diocese of Nairobi we engaged the youth in a sharing about the Catholic Church understanding of salvation (being born again) and the sacrament of reconciliation. In Thika and Ruiru parishes, drug abuse was the area of concern that we talked about. In Kericho diocese where we met a group of 600 secondary and college students we talked about the "Art of making the right choices in life." These and other unmentioned visits were eye opening experiences for me to the challenges facing the young in our society today and the enormous apostolate that the Catholic Church in Kenya has among the young people. It was very clear that many of them have very little knowledge and understanding of their Catholic faith and catechesis and that is why our church in Kenya is losing many of them to the Pentecostal churches where they feel appreciated and understood.

Back to our priory, we have had two "Come and See" visits so far, in April and in July. The third one will be in the beginning of November. We thank God for touching and calling young women to the Missionary Benedictine way of life. **Sr. Lucy**

News from the Outstations

Chesongoch Community

Our Lord has in so many ways this year lavished our community with grace upon grace. At the beginning of the year, it was like a dream come true when the Japanese embassy of Kenya offered to fund the construction of the so much needed theatre in our health centre. The construction began in March and it is on its way to completion. This facility will serve the people in the Kerio Valley and beyond who had the daunting task of referring their sick relatives to Eldoret or Kapsowar.

In June, Sr. Jacinta Mwangangi, OSB was installed for the third term as the house superior. We appreciate her readiness and generosity to serve our community.

In the month of September, through the help of some donors we were able to purchase an ambulance (Toyota land cruiser). This strong vehicle will be of great help in the rough terrain when referring our patients to either Kapsowar or Eldoret for further medical treatment.

On 23rd September we had the joy of celebrating the silver jubilee of the first Kenyan sister in our congregation. Sr. Bernadette Nzube, OSB has been the administrator of the Chesongoch health centre. Her quality service to



the institution has built confidence in the patients who view the health facility as a referral center. Congratulations dear Sr. Bernadette. We thank God for and with you for His faithful and steadfast love. We pray that through His grace you will persevere in seeking and serving God with gladness. On the same day of the jubilee, the Chesongoch parish received yet another gift in the person of Sr. Loice Kisang, OSB. She is a fruit of the seed of faith sown 36 years ago by our pioneer fathers, brothers and sisters in this mission station.

One other blessing that we are counting is the opening of St. Scholastica Computer College within St. Scholastica's Academy compound. This small facility has been received with a lot of joy and excitement by the people in the Kerio Valley who had to travel to Eldoret to acquire these skills. Thanks to all those who help and support us in our mission, through their generosity we are able to respond to the needs our people. **Sr. Justina, OSB**



Priory Updates

- Nine junior sisters renewed their vows on 15th August 2011
- On 7th October, Sr. Agnes Mukumu, OSB, graduated with high honors at the Catholic University of Eastern Africa.

Transfers

- Sr. Lynet Ohola OSB from the priory house community to Endo community
- Sr. Hellen Museng'ya, OSB, from priory house community to Ruaraka
- Sr. Lucia Kanyonyi, OSB from Ruaraka community to Chesongoch community
- Sr. Justina Mateta, OSB, from Chesongoch community to the Priory house community

Formative Activity

- 30th October novice Christine left for three months formative activity in Jinja
- 2nd November, novice Rosalia will leave Karen for Chesongoch.

**Thanks to the editorial committee
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Sr. Maura Kisilu, OSB**