

Catholic TRADITION *in* Africa



2014 - N°13

Quarterly bulletin of the District of Africa of the Priestly Society of Saint Pius X



Photo: Our Lady of Providence School. Gabon

You will find in this issue :



A full day in Our Lady of Providence School

by a Society Sister at St Pius' Mission

The mission bell tower clock tells us that it is 8:30 am. Eighteen small green and white scarves line up. The "Mwanas" of Our Lady of Providence School always start their day with a prayer in the church: it is their "Good Morning" to their Heavenly Father and the offering of their day which is just beginning. Work, play, school lunches... everything is placed in the hands of their Heavenly Mother and already acquire an eternal value. These little souls next receive their essential food: their catechism, to enlighten their mind and gives momentum to their will power. When they have to behave well, to learn their ABC, to write neatly... the efforts made by these beautiful children of God will no longer be surprising.

When we say "children of God" we say "children full of joy". There are sometimes a few tears, but they are quickly wiped away and the smile returns to their faces. To all their faces? Yes, to all those sweet little angels. Now comes the time for recreation. Just the right time for a few little games unless they decide to make some sand-cakes. Our budding little cooks have forgotten neither the salt nor the spices. But do not be too hasty: it takes a while to bake in their imaginary ovens! Our Mwanas will one day become housewives and calculating the time it takes, is essential. But now the school bells rings. So off they go to learn and improve their knowledge of prime numbers, with the help

of Providence in Africa.

p.4 A full day in Our Lady of Providence School by a Society Sister

Saint John the Baptist School. South Africa

Saint John the Baptist School Rooodepoort - South Africa

It was on Tuesday January 29, 1996 that St. John the Baptist Catholic School was born. The Society's priory in the Johannesburg had already existed since 1986, at first in Randburg, then from 1992 in Rooodepoort, where the town school had been purchased and converted into a church and priory. However, there were still several classrooms available. Some of the families had dreamt of a school. In fact it happened very rapidly, and was put together by Father Sebastian Wall in the period of one week, starting with one trained teacher and nine students.

From first to fifth grade. The Priory, Father Gerspacher, tells of how he came back from two weeks in Cape Town to find out that his quiet priory had been transformed into a busy school, but was delighted with it.



Over the years from 2007 until 2013, the school went through an unplanned but gradual metamorphosis to become much more of a missionary school. In fact, the first black children entered the school in 2007, and their number has increased as the number of white children has diminished, so that in 2013, when Father MacDonald was the Principal, out of 35 enrolled children in grades Kindergarten - 7, there remained only one family of European origin, a handful of children who are colored, and all the rest were black. It has become a missionary school since the African children, although frequently Catholic by tradition or attraction, on arriving were in great part uninitiated in the Faith, and had not even received the

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Editorial

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Dear Friends and Benefactors,

Wherever it may be, the opening of a school is always difficult, but an essential part of our combat - difficult in modern western countries, difficult also in Africa. Today's youth and their education are at stake in the tremendous struggle between the City of God and the City of Satan.

This combat is a current issue, as shown clearly by various comments made recently by the French Education

already have celebrated 20 years each and two others opened this past year. The oldest schools are the "Institut de Saint-Croix" in Gabon and "Saint John the Baptist School" at Rooodepoort, South Africa. The newly opened schools are "Holy Cross Academy" in Kenya (a mixed Primary school) and "Notre Dame de la Providence" in Gabon (a girls-only primary school).

They are our four educational centres which we present to

p.3 Editorial by Rev. Fr. Loïc Duverger District Superior

Holy Cross Academy

The Society of Saint Pius X was established in Nairobi more than ten years ago. Father Anthony Eposito opened the Priory on September 3rd 2002.

Kenya is a young country, as are all the countries on the African Continent: 42% of the population is below 15 years of age. Since the beginning, our apostolate has been directed towards the children via catechism, tutoring students and outings.

However all these activities are limited since school-life takes a very large place in the daily activities of the children in the parish. They go to school from Monday to Friday and often they have private tutoring classes (which they must pay for) on Saturdays and throughout the school holidays.

These tutoring classes are illegal because they make the children overtired, but many classes are held, but not declared as tutoring classes, as such.

Public Schools are nearly all without proper resources. The classrooms are also heavily overcrowded. Many parents try to find good private schools. But many of them only prepare students for the KCPE (Kenyan Certificate of Primary Education). So that they can fill their classrooms, they need a good reputation which they gain



faithful. They gave catechism classes in the school and saw how a Kenyan School functions. Finally in 2012 a missionary team of the USA allowed us to present the project of opening our own school to various SSPX priories and chapels and thanks to the positive response we were finally able to open the school.

Thus in January 2013, "Holy Cross Academy" officially opened its doors. Two teachers and a cook look after the children, who are divided into two preschool classes and two primary school classes.

In April 2013, the Missionary Sisters of Jesus and Mary also started coming to the school two days per week to teach catechism and music and also to develop the catholic atmosphere of the school.

The children start school at 8 am with a prayer and the National Anthem sung on Mondays and

p.6 Holy Cross Academy by Rev. Fr. Nouveau

Sacred-Heart Juvénat. Gabon



Sacred-Heart Juvénat: The beginning of a school day

You already know the Juvénat by its photos, by its history and by the novices that we have already sent out. Today we would like to offer you a guided tour "from the inside" with the start of a school day at the Juvénat. But first, a word of warning: if you do not like getting up early, skin down to the middle of this article since

the school shop where they can purchase the meal tickets for a proper lunch and any school items they will need during the day.

7:25 am - A flurry of activity follows the school bell screaming out to anybody who wants to listen that it is now the time to urgently set into line before the flagpole - and it

p.7 & 8 The beginning of a school day



Dear Friends and Benefactors,

Wherever it may be, the opening of a school is always difficult, but an essential part of our combat - difficult in modern western countries, difficult also in Africa. Today's youth and their education are at stake in the tremendous struggle between the City of God and the City of Satan.

This combat is a current issue, as shown clearly by various comments made recently by the French Education Minister: "The Catholic imprint which does not adapt itself to the Republic must be uprooted and we must find, outside of traditional religious settings, a substitute religion which will penetrate the republican spirit into their habits, hearts and bodies. [...] For that, we need a universal religion: this will be secularism. It will need its temples or churches: that will be the schoolroom. It will also need a new clergy: they will be the cavalry of the Republic (the professors and teachers). [...] It will be the progression from one religion to another: from a theocratic revealed religion to a secular and liberal religion".

This combat is also the same in Africa. The Missionary Schools instructed the first social and political elite of Africa. This immensely good work would have spread and taken root throughout Africa, if the Council and its "spirit" had not ruined the efforts of our predecessors. Today "catholic schools" are only Catholic in name. Too often they are financed by the state and are therefore silenced and subjected to a secular school programme and no longer teach Catholic faith and morals. In some countries the results are not yet overly apparent, but in a very short time the deadly poison of secularism and liberalism, sown in the minds of children, will produce their ugly fruits of atheism, indifferentism and revolution.

To fight against this "new religion", we are trying the best we can – with our limited resources – to open schools in each of the countries in which the Society is based. For the moment we have four schools. Two

already have celebrated 20 years each and two others opened this past year. The oldest schools are the "Juvenat du Sacré Coeur" in Gabon and "Saint John the Baptist School" at Roodepoort, South Africa. The newly opened schools are "Holy Cross Academy" in Kenya (a mixed Primary school) and "Notre Dame de la Providence" in Gabon (a girls-only primary school).

They are our four educational centres which we present to you today. Admittedly, only a drop in the ocean, but at least it is a start. In reading these few pages, you will notice the universal character of Catholic Education. Spreading through a great variety of countries, customs, habits and manners, you will find the same Catholic Principals which we work to install into the children's souls. Throughout our schools there is the same desire to have Our Lord Jesus Christ and his grace reign in their hearts, their families and in society. In a nutshell, the same enthusiasm for the triumph of the City of God in the world.

In this enormous struggle, we very much need your help. Your invaluable help – through your prayers and donations – allows us to build new schools, expand existing ones and to plan ahead to provide other schools in the future.

On behalf of all these children and their families, we thank you most sincerely.





A full day in Our Lady of Providence School

by a Society Sister at St Pius' Mission

The mission bell tower clock tells us that it is 8:30 am. Eighteen small green and white scarves line up. The “Mwanas” of Our Lady of Providence School always start their day with a prayer in the church: it is their “Good Morning” to their Heavenly Father and the offering of their day which is just beginning. Work, play, school lunches, ... everything is placed in the hands of their Heavenly Mother and already acquire an eternal value.

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Now comes the time for recreation. Just the right time for a few little games unless they decide to make some sand-cakes. Our budding little cooks have forgotten neither the salt nor the spices. But do not be too hasty: it takes a while to bake in their imaginary ovens! Our Mwanas will one day become housewives and calculating the time it takes, is essential. But now the school bells rings. So off they go to learn and improve their knowledge of prime numbers, with the help of beads or blocks.

Already lunchtime! How time flies and our merry band must renew their strength. The good food of “Mamie



Marie-Jeanne” is always welcome. We must learn to ask politely, wait ones turn and sit properly... so much to remember! Thank-you appears here very often. Now they can all return to the classrooms, but such a silent classroom. The many braids of multicoloured beads no longer move: it is time for a nap. Some even extend it into craft-time rather than learning to use scissors, brushes and sewing needles. But everybody is up and about for the recreation,

before starting the afternoon classes which build on what they learnt in the morning...

The classroom now vibrates with everybody reciting or singing together: “there once was a little boat on the Ogooué...”

But silence returns quickly to the room and the school bags are packed up, aprons are folded away and everybody sits quietly, with their arms crossed, ready for story time – unless it is the day for the puppeteers, which everybody always looks forward to.

And the day finishes with a short prayer. Kneeling down to say thank-you to God, followed by a short examination of conscience: regretting things which went wrong and making a firm resolution for tomorrow. Everybody in line and out we go with our hands waving: “Goodbye! Goodbye! See you tomorrow!”



Saint John the Baptist School Roodepoort - South Africa

by Rev. Fr. Peter Scott.

It was on Tuesday January 29, 1996 that St. John the Baptist Catholic School was born. The Society's priory in the Johannesburg had already existed since 1986, at first in Randburg, then from 1992 in Roodepoort, where the town school had been purchased and converted into a church and priory. However, there were still several classrooms available. Some of the families had dreamt of a school. In fact it happened very rapidly, and was put together by Father Sebastian Wall in the period of one week, starting with one trained teacher and nine students,



from first to fifth grade. The Prior, Father Gerspacher, tells of how he came back from two weeks in Cape Town to find out that his quiet priory had been transformed into a busy school, but was delighted with it. Thus was accomplished the

mission contained in the Society's statutes: "Schools, truly free and unfettered, able to bestow on youth a thoroughly Christian education, shall be fostered and, if need be, founded by the members of the Society. From these will come vocations and Christian homes" (Statutes III, 4).

The school continued over the years, but through many vicissitudes. Many of the original families lived a long distance from the school, and could only get to school through lift clubs organized amongst the parents. Furthermore, there were the usual difficulties that are a part and parcel of the foundation of all the Society's schools. Parents of a more liberal tendency object to certain aspects of school discipline, and taking offense at some point withdraw their children from the school. Then there was the particularly South African problem of the emigration of white families out of South Africa, due to the falling economic standards, and lack of future for their children. These children all found that their education at St. John Baptist was at a high level and prepared them well to continue in the Society's schools in England and Australia. Consequently, the enrolment did not increase greatly with the succession of principals, Father Suresh following Father Wall, and then Father Esposito, and Father Thomas taking over from him. In October 2010, with the visit of the relics of St. Therese of the Child Jesus, there were still only nineteen children. But the miracle is that the school did continue.



Over the years from 2007 until 2013, the school went through an unplanned but gradual metamorphosis to become much more of a missionary school. In fact, the first black children entered the school in 2007, and their number has increased as the number of white children has diminished, so that in 2013, when Father MacDonald was the Principal, out of 35 enrolled children in grades Kindergarten – 7, there remained only one family of European origin, a handful of children who are colored, and all the rest were black. It has become a missionary school since the African children, although frequently Catholic by tradition or attraction, on arriving were in great part uninstructed in the Faith, and had not even received the sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion. In school, they learn to love their Faith and to receive the sacraments with the correct preparation, at the same time as they receive an excellent education. Although the official school Mass is only once a week, many in fact choose to arrive early at school in order to assist at daily Mass. The challenge has been to maintain high academic levels, and yet at the same time to give an education to children whose mother tongue is frequently not English. The school is determined not to compromise on this, not to allow the low level of education in South African government schools to undermine its own demands on its students.

The enrolment of students for 2014 is forty-five. On January 15 a boys' high school opens, starting with eighth grade, and thereafter continuing through the end of high school, with students preparing their examinations for O and A levels with Cambridge International Examinations.



Holy Cross Academy



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However all these activities are limited since school-life takes a very large place in the daily activities of the children in the parish. They go to school from Monday to Friday and often they have private tutoring classes (which they must pay for) on Saturdays and throughout the school holidays. These tutoring classes are illegal because they make the children overtired, but many classes are held, but not declared as tutoring classes, as such.

Public Schools are nearly all without proper resources. The classrooms are also heavily overcrowded. Many parents try to find good private schools. But many of them only prepare students for the KCPE (Kenyan Certificate of Primary Education). So that they can fill their classrooms, they need a good reputation which they gain via the KCPE examination results. This "good reputation" is also obtained by study cramming to prepare their students solely for the exams – at the expense of a true and balanced education. Catholic Schools have lost their previously excellent level of education and at the same time are becoming more and more expensive. All these reasons together are encouraging us to open a school so that we can give a solid catholic education and train future generations on Kenyans.

The foundation of our school progressed in several stages. The first stage was offering tutoring classes to our children, which also allowed us to become familiar with the Kenyan Education System. "Stage two" saw regular visits by the priests to a school, which had been founded by one of the

faithful. They gave catechism classes in the school and saw how a Kenyan School functions. Finally in 2012 a missionary tour of the USA allowed us to present the project of opening our own school to various SSPX priories and chapels and thanks to the positive response we were finally able to open the school.

Thus in January 2013, "Holy Cross Academy" officially opened its doors. Two teachers and a cook look after the children, who are divided into two preschool classes and two primary school classes.

In April 2013, the Missionary Sisters of Jesus and Mary also started coming to the school two days per week to teach catechism and music and also to develop the catholic atmosphere of the school.

The children start school at 8 am with a prayer and the National Anthem sung on Mondays and Fridays. On Wednesday morning the children assist at Holy Mass and naturally, catechism is taught during the week.

We particularly insist on a good standard of reading and writing. Amongst themselves, the children speak in English. Kenya has two national languages: Kiswahili, which the children normally already speak at home; and English, which is practiced at school. The lunch meal is at 1 pm and the preschool children finish the day at 2:50 pm, while the primary school finishes at 3:10 pm. The school week is five days, from Monday to Friday, and the school year stretches from January to mid-November. The National Education Department requires national exams three times a year, which allow an objective look at the standard of education being given. Thus for our first year,

our students gained an average of 400 points (out of 500 points). It is already a good result, but we are looking to improve it, striving for Excellency, not only looking at the state exam system, but more importantly looking towards a truly balanced Catholic Education, which will produce strong Catholics for the Kenyan community.

Father Christophe Nouveau



Sacred-Heart Juvénat: The begining of a school day



You already know the Juvénat by its photos, by its history and by the newsletters that we have already sent out. Today we would like to offer you a guided tour “from the inside” with the start of a school day at the Juvenat. But first, a word of warning: if you do not like getting up early, skip down to the middle of this article since we start the day at... 5:45 am!

The first hours of the day.

5:45 am – the house bell rings to inform the priests and brothers of the Juvenat that sleep is now over. The day has started: they rise, wash and dress before heading to the chapel. Some will immediately start their breviary, others a short meditation while the brother prepares the altars for Holy Mass.

6:30 am – the first community activity is the recitation of the office of Prime, followed by the meditation. During this time, the first students are arriving and are waiting patiently at the entrance to the Juvenat, about 10 metres from the chapel. Many of them also rise early: 5:30 am or even 4:30 am. At that time of the day the streets of Libreville are empty and it is easy to get around. Those who want to drive after 7 am, will need a large dose of patience before they get to their destination.

The students arrive inside the courtyard.

6:55 am – as the Angelus Bell rings out its soft but resonant voice, like the voices of the Apostles, the students are allowed into the courtyard. There the Secretary/Monitor is waiting for them. One of the priests joins them, while another heads off to the school shop. The other priests during this time celebrate their morning Masses.

7:00 am – the courtyard is more or less peaceful. The students are seated, which is the only way for them to start their day quietly. Two lines are quickly formed, under the watchful eye of the Monitor. One line will head off to the school refectory to fill their hungry stomachs with some bread and chocolate milk. The other line goes off towards

the school shop where they can purchase the meal tickets for a proper lunch and any school items they will need during the day.

7:25 am - A flurry of activity follows the school bell screeching out to anybody who wants to listen that it is now the time to urgently get into line before the flagpole – and it will be bad luck if anybody chooses not to listen to this command. Those who are running late start to run even faster, the last at table almost choke themselves as they try to swallow quickly a final piece of bread. The class lines are drawn up quickly, all in the correct order from the most junior primary class right the way up to the most senior secondary class. The teachers are calling out to make sure





need to practice. In their hearts they promise to make an effort – which will probably last for two or three minutes at least. The teachers will remind them of their promise during the day so that a more lasting result may be seen before the end of the day. At 8:20 am it will be the students from the Secondary School's turn, to come and adore Our Blessed Lord in the Tabernacle. Their morning prayer finishes with the invocations to the School's Patron Saints, the saint of the day and a prayer for the souls in Purgatory. They leave the chapel under the watchful eye of their Heavenly Father, to continue a day which they have begun well.

that their class line is perfectly straight. Still a few seconds left before silence is called – just the time to prod the classmate in front, push out of line anybody who seems to close from next class line, or to make a quick joke with the classmate behind. But suddenly a loud voice calls all 200 students to attention. Silence is immediate and their arms and hands beat a single sound along their body as, to a man, they all stand perfectly to attention, military style. The Gabonese national flag is raised into the sky and on Mondays the National Hymn is also sung. Once the flag is secured, the students turn and move off in silence to their classrooms for their first lesson of the day.

8:00 am – A hundred or so primary school students dressed in their white shirts and brown shorts enter into the school chapel with is much too small for all of them. Together they raise their voices towards Heaven: "O my God, I adore Thee, ...". The priest who has come with them to the chapel uses this moment to add a few spiritual words of encouragement, concerning this or that virtue which they



The Priestly Society of Saint Pius X in Africa

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St. Michael's Priory

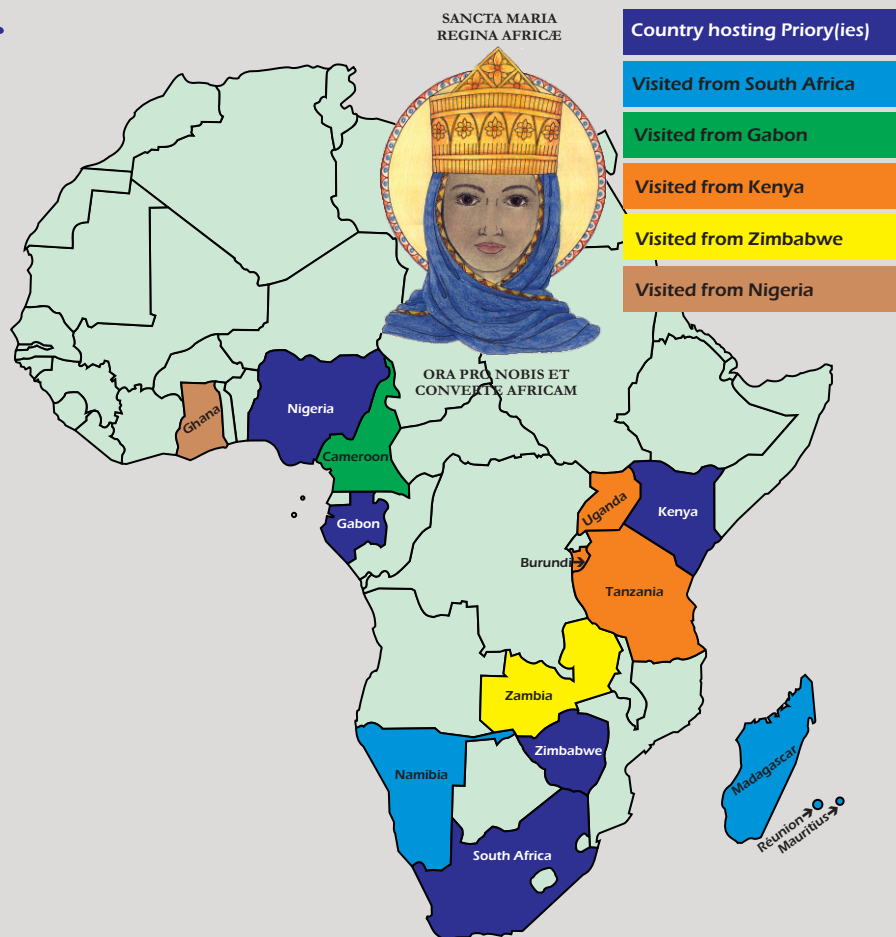
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How to help us:

In American Dollars (US \$), by cheque,

payable to: «SSPX-Foreign Missions Trust»
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Great Britain

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AUS – Rockdale NSW 2216, Australia

Other currencies:

Please contact: **SSPX District of Africa,**
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If you wish your donation to be used for a particular house or work, please specify in an accompanying note. If not, we will use your gift for the Missionary work most in need at the time.

May God bless you for your generosity!