

IN THIS ISSUE

EDITORIAL

The Redoubtable Archbishop Paul Verdzekov.....2

SEMINARY AFFAIRS

STAMS Feast day: local Solemnity of St. Thomas Aquinas.....3
Meeting with the National Director of the Pontifical Missionary Societies in Cameroon.....3
Seminar on Communication.....3
Visits.....3
Seminar on Safeguarding Against Child Abuse.....4
Names of Priests Ordained in the Course of the 2019/2020 Formation Year.....4
Notices.....5
A Plea for Mass Intentions5
A Plea from the STAMS Library5
STAMS Golden Jubilee.....5
Autobiographies.....6

CHURCH

The Man: Archbishop Paul Verdzekov.....15
Archbishop Paul Verdzekov's Vision of the Priesthood and Pastoral Ministry.....17

Vox Pop.....19
Adverts.....20
Gratitude and Courage to Our Proprietors Retired and Active.....21

CHURCH / SOCIETY

Did Bishop Pius Awa achieve anything Worthwhile in Buea?.....22

SOCIETY

Violence, Torture and the Quest for Social Justice: The Insights of Archbishop Paul Verdzekov.....29

CHURCH / SOCIETY

Marriage and Family life in the Insights of Archbishop Paul Verdzekov.....31

EDUCATION

The Insights of Archbishop Paul Verdzekov on Education.....33

MUSIC CORNER

Ways of Encouraging Talents in our Choirs.....36

THEOLOGY

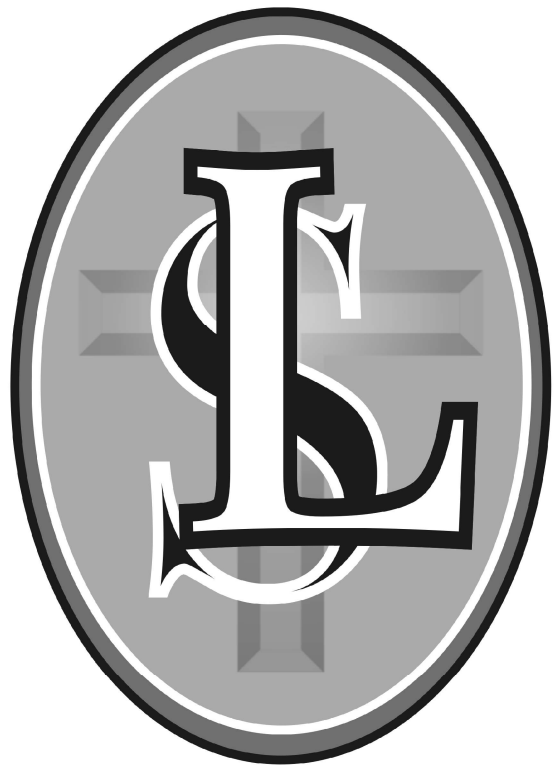
« Il est vraiment ressuscite ! »37

VOCATIONS CORNER

Discussion with the Former Vocations Director of the Archdiocese of Bamenda.....38

KNOW YOUR DOCTRINE/POETRY

The Precepts of the Church.....40
Archbishop Paul!.....40



THE EDITOR,
SEARCHLIGHT OFFICE,
ST. THOMAS AQUINAS MAJOR
SEMINARY, BAMBUI,
P.O. BOX 56, BAMENDA
CAMEROON.

Email: searchlightstams@gmail.com

ADVERTISE WITH SEARCHLIGHT

SEARCHLIGHT OFFERS GREAT OPPORTUNITIES!!!

Advertise your company, business, products etc. in the *SEARCHLIGHT* Magazine

**IT IS EASY!
IT IS CHEAP!
IT IS REWARDING!
AND YOU WON'T REGRET IT!**

THE REDOUBTABLE ARCHBISHOP PAUL VERDZEKOV

The Apostolic Bull that mandated the consecration of Rt. Rev. Paul Verdzekov, pioneer Bishop of Bamenda captures his undisputable personality in these words: “We are of the opinion that you, beloved son, endowed as you are with *knowledge, piety, zeal for souls and other virtues*, are capable of ruling this same diocese and of maintaining this high office” (Pope Paul VI, 13 August 1970). Archbishop Paul Verdzekov served as Chief Shepherd of the Archdiocese of Bamenda for 36 years and retired on 23 January 2006. Having discharged his duties faithfully in the Church, the memories of Archbishop Verdzekov are still very fresh in the minds of those who encountered him and heard of him. On the occasion of the eleventh anniversary of his death and with the cause of his beatification having been launched (January 2020), *Searchlight* recalls and immortalizes the memories of an eminent person of sterling virtues, one who though endowed with the plenitude of the priesthood, remained utterly humble. These memories remain evergreen 11 years after his death.

As we thank God for the gift of the priesthood, and present to you the newly ordained priests of STAMS – Bambui, we, at the same time, present Archbishop Verdzekov’s vision of the priesthood. *Searchlight* presents a pastor, who, though was an Archbishop of the Catholic Church, always wished to be seen, above all else, as a priest; one who taught his flock with unbounded dedication, and strove to prevent it from straying afield, in tandem with the demands of a Bishop as enshrined in *Christus Dominus*: “In exercising his office of father and pastor, the bishop should be with his people as one who serves, as a good shepherd who knows his sheep and whose sheep know him,...He should so unite and



service, unassuming presence and genuine poverty. communion of charity.” Archbishop Verdzekov’s insight about family life and the education of the young, presented in this issue, evince his concern for his flock.

In 1973, Dr. Bernard Fonlon wrote: “In a world that is rank and rotten with materialism, where hedonism is the principal philosophy, where luxury is the *summum bonum*, there is the crying need for dedicated souls who would go to the other extreme and espouse the spirit of genuine religion, the spirit of poverty, the spirit of austere abstemiousness, in order to wage war against the onslaught to materialist godlessness” (*An Open Letter to the Bishops of Buea and Bamenda on the Occasion of the Inauguration of the Major Seminary*, 16 September 1973). We present to you a pastor who rose above vices such as the insatiate lust for power, such unbridled stress for careerism, fame, imposing presence, which, like cancers, are gradually eating into the fabric of the Church and our society. Archbishop Verdzekov strove to be above all enticements and seductions of money, pleasure, worldliness, against the thirst and craving for power and glory. He is one who lived in the world with a spirit totally dead to the world, projecting the ideals of selfless

service, unassuming presence and genuine poverty.

Searchlight remembers a man of astonishing integrity, a man who was single-minded, and for whom the truth could not be compromised, as his episcopal motto articulates – “And the truth shall set you free” Jn. 8:32 – one who could not, and did not pay lip-service to injustice, terror, violence and stark barbarism. *Searchlight* also republishes Archbishop Verdzekov’s evaluation of Bishop Pius Awa’s Pastoral Ministry in the Diocese of Buea, which highlights clear paradigms, against secularistic models, for the evaluation of the Pastoral Ministry of any Bishop, and which can, as well, be used to evaluate his own Pastoral Ministry as Chief Shepherd of the flock in the Archdiocese of Bamenda.

It is worth mentioning that the present publication on the life and works of Archbishop Paul Verdzekov is the relentless and committed effort of the past editorial team under the guidance of my predecessor, Fr. Angu Niba. *Searchlight* is immensely grateful to them for painstakingly crafting what can be said to be an encomium of Archbishop Paul Verdzekov. Thus, what we have done is nothing more than an update of the content.

Finally, in these troubled times in English-speaking Cameroon and the seeming increase of the Coronavirus Pandemic, *Searchlight* looks to the risen Lord in hope, trusting in His reassuring words to us: “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you” (John 14:27). Happy Easter!

**Rev. Jessy
NKAMTCHOU
(Editor-in-Chief)**

HIGHLIGHTS OF ACTIVITIES IN THE SEMINARY DURING THE SECOND TERM OF THE 2020/2021 FORMATION YEAR

SEMINARY AFFAIRS OF THE SECOND TERM OF THE 2019/2020 FORMATION YEAR

STAMS FEAST DAY: LOCAL SOLEMNITY OF SAINT THOMAS AQUINAS

On Tuesday, 28th January, 2020, the seminary celebrated the Local Solemnity of its Patron Saint, Thomas Aquinas. The first part of this occasion began with the sacrifice of the Holy Mass which had Fr. Manfred Ejong, the National Director of Pontifical Mission Works in Cameroon, as the Main Celebrant. There were nine concelebrating Priests. The homily was preached by Fr. Edward Lukong, who gave a brief history of the seminary and exhorted the seminarians to followers in the footsteps of their patron saint. The second part of the celebration was characterized by a series of socio-cultural activities in the hall (*aula*) at 10:22 a.m. Thereafter, the seminarians and formators had a common meal at 12:30 p.m. The last part of the occasion was basketball competitions at 3:00 p.m. between the seminarians Fourth Theology and those of First Theology, followed by Third Theology and Second Theology. At the end of the first encounters, the victors – Fourth Theology and Third Theology faced themselves; the seminarians of Third Theology emerged the overall victors.

MEETING WITH THE NATIONAL DIRECTOR OF THE PONTIFICAL MISSION SOCIETIES IN CAMEROON

On Wednesday, 29th January, 2020, the seminarians had a meeting with the National Director of the Pontifical Missions Societies in Cameroon in the person of Fr. Manfred Ejong, an alumnus of STAMS and a priest of the Diocese of Mamfe. During this meeting, Fr. Ejong made a lucid presentation of the various branches of the Pontifical Missions Societies and their various aims.

SEMINAR ON COMMUNICATION

From 30th to 31st January 2020, the seminarians had a seminar on communication. It was facilitated by Fr. Joseph Tokoh, a priest of the Diocese of Nkongsamba and an alumnus of STAMS. During the seminar, Fr. Tokoh said among other things that the mission of the Church is to preach the Word of God, and that communication is the tool through which this Word is announced. Since the source of most of the problems in organizations spring from either the lack of communication or poor communication, he stated that it was the aim of the seminar that the seminarians be properly drilled in the use of the various means of communication.

VISITS

On Sunday, 15th December, 2019, the CWA of St. Charles Lwanga Mission Station, Ntaafi Quasi Parish, paid its maiden visit to the seminary. The branch President, Mrs. Wankwi Odilia, in her address to the

Three things are necessary for the salvation of man:
“To know what he ought to believe, to know what he ought to desire and to know what he ought to do.”
- St. Thomas Aquinas

seminarians urged them to guard their vocations jealously, and to develop a persevering spirit. This group offered the seminary some financial assistance and food items.

On Sunday, 12th October, 2020, the seminary received the members of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal (CCR) for the Archdiocese of Bamenda. Speaking on behalf of the members of the renewal, the coordinator, Mr. Veryeh Bernard and his vice, Mr. Tambe Thaddeus, called on the seminarians to consider seminary formation as an important

assignment from God which they must carry out diligently. The members of the CCR offered the seminary some financial assistance, as well as some foodstuffs.

The seminary community remains profoundly grateful to all her visitors, benefactors and men and women of goodwill, who contribute relentlessly and unreservedly to the well-being of the seminary. May God bless you abundantly.

SEMINARY AFFAIRS FOR THE SECOND TERM OF THE 2020/ 2021 FORMATION YEAR

SEMINARY FEAST DAY

On Thursday 28th January 2021, STAMS *Theologicum* celebrated the feast day of her patron saint, Thomas Aquinas. This occasion began with Holy Mass which was presided by Fr. Augustine Nkwain together with 10 Concelebrating priests.

In his homily during the Mass, Fr. Augustine Nkwain entreated the seminarians to be imitators of St. Thomas Aquinas who in his quest for wisdom, sought the Divine Wisdom, personified in Jesus Christ. To this end, he stressed on the importance of a proper intellectual formation in the life of a seminarian. As a man of virtuous living, the preacher exhorted the seminarians not only to emulate St. Thomas Aquinas' scholarship but also his holiness of life. At the end of the Eucharistic celebration, pictures were taken in front of the seminary chapel to immortalize the day.

The second part of the celebration took place in the hall (*aula*). It started off with an

opening prayer, which was closely followed by a welcome address from the Rector, Fr. Ignatius Waindim. In his opening address, the Rector described St. Thomas Aquinas as a man of spiritual and intellectual renown, who showed the relationship that existed between philosophy (reason) and theology (faith) in his quest for the Divine Truth. As an institution placed under his patronage, the Rector entreated the seminarians to follow in the footsteps of this great personality. The Rector's opening address was followed by thrilling performances from the Special Choir, Drama Club, Ogene Dance group, and Zion choir.

After the activities in the aula, the seminarians had a common meal with the formators. Later that afternoon, there was a basketball and football encounter among the seminarians.

SEMINAR ON SAFEGUARDING AGAINST CHILD ABUSE

On Monday 8th February 2021 and Tuesday 9th February 2021, the seminary community had a seminar on "Safeguarding against Child Abuse." The seminar was facilitated by Fr. James Ndifon, a priest for the diocese of Kumbo and an alumnus of STAMS –

If according to times and needs you should be obliged to make fresh rules and change certain things, do it with prudence and good advice

— St. Angela Merici

Bambui. In his opening remark during the seminar, Fr. Ndifon noted that the urgency of the call

to safeguard against child abuse comes from the backdrop of the recent increase in cases of child abuse in the Church. Faced with this crisis, the facilitator stated that the Church's commitment against this vice is summarized in the words "**ZERO TOLERANCE**" such that she can safeguard, report and prosecute cases of this nature. To fight against this cankerworm eating away the Church,

Fr. James Ndifon called on the seminarians to cultivate healthy boundaries for themselves in pastoral ministry, since each case of sexual abuse violates almost all conceivable boundaries of a human being. Hence, it was the aim of the seminar that seminarians be "safe guarders" against this ill.

NAMES OF PRIESTS ORDAINED IN THE COURSE OF THE 2019/2020 FORMATION YEAR

1. ARCHDIOCESE OF BAMENDA

Fr. Bertrand Zoum

Fr. Elvis Ngante

Fr. John Siewe

Fr. Joseph Awemo

Fr. Joseph Njong

Fr. Aloysius Chukwuka

Fr. Ambrose Saam

Fr. Arnold Tsayem

Fr. Colines Berinyuy

Fr. Linus Nkwale

Fr. Pancras Ngeh

Fr. Angu Niba

Fr. Paul Nkwain

Fr. Vitalis Ake Njang

2. DIOCESE OF BUEA

Fr. Florentin Awemo

Fr. Jude Njanto

Fr. Chrisantus Bemeri

Fr. James Teyo

Fr. Kenneth Mbinkar

Fr. Terence Ayuk

3. DIOCESE OF KUMBO

Fr. Leonard Zifac

Fr. Anthony Ngeh

Fr. Elvis Ngoran

Fr. Emile Vershiyi

Fr. Evans Bimela

Fr. Gaston Yuven

Fr. Hippolyte Javnyuy

Fr. Javis Laban

Fr. Raphael Safeh

4. DIOCESE OF MAMFE

Fr. Amos Lantang

Fr. Cyril Lobe

Fr. Barnabas Ashu

Fr. Frankline Obi

5. DIOCESE OF KUMBA

Fr. Paul Nkongho

Fr. Francis Esona

Fr. Roland Njume

Fr. Styve Killeng

Fr. Theodore Itoe

6. O.F.M CAPUCHINS

Fr. Andre Litika

Fr. Betrand Mbuh

Fr. James Abunaw

Fr. Calvin Mbiydenyuy

Fr. Cedric Verbe

Fr. Donatus Kum

Fr. Emil Nyuyki

Fr. Henry Kinyuy

NOTICE! NOTICE! NOTICE!

Information for the attention of Ex-seminarians and Priests alumni of Saint Thomas Aquinas' Major Seminary (STAM S *Theologicum*), Bambui.

If you wish to collect documents from the secretariat of the *Theologicum*, kindly make your request via the email address provided below:

bambuiseminary@yahoo.co.uk

Indicate clearly what kind of documents you wish to be prepared for your collection and leave a contact phone number by which you can be conveniently reached when the documents are ready for collection. Your appointment to collect documents should be on working days, that is, from Monday to Friday, during working hours, that is, from 9:00AM until Midday. Thank you for your understanding and collaboration.

Sister Secretary

NOTICE! NOTICE!

Dear brothers and sisters, we would like to remind all those who visit the Seminary, that whenever they come, they should dress decently.

NOTICE! NOTICE!

Dear Readers, we would like to inform you that **Subscription Forms** for the *Searchlight Magazine* are now available. To get the form, kindly get to any seminarian from STAMS Bambui and Subscribe for a year or more. Thanks.

A PLEA FOR MASS INTENTIONS

We use this opportunity to thank you who have been sending Mass Intentions to our Seminary.

We appeal for more intentions. Our Seminary has eleven resident Priests, and ten intentions could be exonerated everyday. Mass Intentions to STAMS could be sent through any Bishop's House or through any member of the STAMS family-Priest or Seminarian. Once the Mass is celebrated, the Mass Offering is used for the upkeep of the Seminary as a whole. Thus, when you send these intentions, besides reaping the assured Spiritual Benefits, you contribute to the upkeep of the Seminary materially. May God continue to bless and reward you for all your kindness towards our House of Formation for future Priests.

Rev. Ignatius WAINDIM
(Rector)

A PLEA FROM STAMS LIBRARY

We plead with Priests and Christians to send copies of Sunday Newsletters, Wedding cards, Funeral booklets, Wedding booklets, Invitation cards, Thank You cards, Souvenirs of Religious Professions, Papers, Magazines and any other souvenir cards for preservation in the *archive section* of the Seminary library. We also use this opportunity to acknowledge, with profound gratitude, having received a good number of these items. However, we remain open to receive even more. You could hand any of these to any member of the STAMS family (priest or seminarian) or, if possible, bring them yourself to the Seminary.

Rev. Fr. Charles BERINYUY SENGKA
(Father Librarian)

STAMS GOLDEN JUBILEE

In view of the Golden Jubilee of STAMS in 2023, we plead with the alumni of STAMS – Bambui who have any *photographs depicting the various stages of infrastructural development of the seminary* [e.g. the chapel (3 stages); the library (3/4 stages) etc] to kindly send them to the seminary, either in hard copy or in digital form. This can be done through any of the members of the STAMS family or via stamslibrary@gmail.com. We count on your usual collaboration and support.

Fr Henri PEETERS (MHM)

ARCHDIOECSE OF BAMENDA

REV LAMBERT ETIM

Born in Widikum into the family of Pa Etim Samuel and Ma Abiel Helen Oteh. He attended four primary schools and obtained his FSLC, that is, P.S. Widikum, C.S. Widikum, Ecole Publique Cnetre Ville Yaounde and Holy Infant Melen. He began his secondary education in St. Aloysius Minor Seminary Kitiwum and later continued in Chou Bilingual Comprehensive College Yaounde where he obtained the Ordinary Level in 2009. He returned to St. Aloysius Minor Seminary Kitiwum where he completed his high school studies in 2011. In 2012, he gained admission into St John Mary Vianney Spiritual Formation Center, Bafut. He did three years of Philosophical Studies in STAMS – Bambui beginning from 2012. Thereafter, he was sent on pastoral experience to Petit Seminaire St Paul de Guider in the Archdiocese of Garoua. In 2016, he returned to STAMS to begin theological studies. At the end of his studies, he was ordained a deacon on 12th August 2020 and was appointed to work in St. John Bosco Quasi Parish Elemighong, where he is currently serving a diaconal year.

REV. ALPHONSUS TEH

He was born and baptized in Jakiri in 1989. He began primary school in 1993 in Catholic School(CS) Ran in Nkar Parish and completed in CS New Town Bafmeng in the year 2000. He had his O/L and A/L certificates in GHS Bafmeng in 2006 and 2008 respectively. After his Advance Level, he assisted in the Emmaus Center where he cared for the mentally ill till January 2010 when he was admitted to begin formation in the Order of Friars Minor Capuchin. He did his first profession in 2012 and left for Benin Republic in 2013 where he did three years of Philosophy and Franciscanism. He came back to Cameroon in 2016 and began theology in STAMS Bambui. After two years of

Theology, he switched from the Capuchins to the Archdiocese of Bamenda. He completed theology in 2020 and was ordained deacon on the 12th August 2020. He has been serving in St. Patrick's Parish Babanki Tungo for his diaconal year. From his little experience he can only thank God for his love, and indeed affirms with Fulton Sheen that a Priest is not his own.

REV. STEPHEN EWANE

Rev Stephen Ewane Nchadze was born on 26th December 1989, of a natural bond between Mr Samuel Ebwala Ewane and Carine Bomki (RIP). He began elementary education at St John Bosco Primary School Mbveh. Later, he applied to continue his Secondary education at St Aloysius Minor Seminary, Kitiwum. He finally completed and applied to continue his formation to the Ministerial Priesthood under the Archdiocese of Bamenda. He began his formation in the St John Mary Vianney Spiritual Centre, Bafut and later continued with his Philosophical Studies at St Thomas Aquinas Major Seminary, Bambui. There, he obtained a Bachelor's Degree in Philosophy. He did his Pastoral Year at St. Benedict Comprehensive College, Widikum. He later applied to continue with his Theological Studies and finally completed in June 2020. He was ordained Deacon on 12th July 2020 by Mgr Andrew Fuanya Nkea, Archbishop of Bamenda. He was posted to St Theresia Parish, Bamessing

for his Diaconal Year. He enjoys listening to music, singing. He is at his best in football. While in the seminary he was assigned to the following posts of responsibility: Dormitory Manager, Animal Farm, Path Tending, Sports Department and Sacristan.

REV. EUGENE WOKIASHI POWOH

He hails from Awing, Santa sub-division of the North West Region of Cameroon. He is the fourth from a family of six, five boys and one girl. He went to Catholic Primary School in Achialum quarter, Awing. From there he moved to AFETA Comprehensive College (A.C.C.) Awing for secondary education where he studied for five years. afterwards he attended Longla Comprehensive College (L.C.C.), Mankon for a year, where he obtained his Ordinary Level Certificate. He then moved to Government Bilingual High. School (G.B.H.S) Bamenda, from 2007-2009 where he obtained his G. C. E. Advanced Level certificate. After his Advance Level, he spent one year preparing to enter into the seminary, that is from 2009-2010. During this year, he studied the art of playing the Guitar and other related skills in music. In September 2010, he was admitted into Bishop Rogan Minor Seminary (BIROCOL), Small Soppo, Buea, as a prospective seminarian. In September 2011, he continued his formation to the priesthood in St. John Mary Vianney Spiritual Centre, Bafut. In September 2012, he was admitted into St. Thomas Aquinas Major Seminary (STAMS), Bambui where he began his philosophical studies but could not complete the formation year due to poor health. In September 2013, he began anew

his philosophical studies in the same institution till 2016 when he obtained a Bachelor's Degree in Philosophy. He was sent on Pastoral Year to St. John Paul II College (JOPACC), Wum. Due to the Anglophone crisis he was later appointed to St. Theresia Parish, Bamessing, Ndop. From 22 September 2017, he started theological studies in STAMS, Bambui. He was ordained deacon on 12th August 2020.



REV. DICKSON ESAH

He was born in Pamol Hospital, Lobe Estate through the union of Pa Kum Henry Wung (RIP) and Ma Luciana Ekah in the year 1988. He started his primary education at GS Lobe Estate and completed at GS Bekora Barombi. From 2002-2008, he did secondary education in GHS Esu, where he obtained the GCE Ordinary Level Certificate in 2008. From 2008-2010, he did high school studies in the same school, obtaining the Advanced level certificate in 2010. From 2011-2012, Prospective year in Bishop Rogan College Small Soppo, Buea. 2012-2013, Propaedeutic year at the St. John Mary Vianney Spiritual Centre Bafut. In 2013, he entered the Major Seminary in Bambui and obtained a Bachelor's degree in philosophy in 2016. From 2016-2017, he did a year of pastoral experience at St. Paul College Nkwen and St. Paul Quasi Parish, Nkwen. In September 2017, he returned to the Major Seminary in Bambui to continue with theological studies. He has assisted in the following functions in STAMS: Dormitory Manager, Gardener, Lawn Manager, Dormitory Captain, Path Tender and as Photocopy Manager.



REV. EUGENE KUM CHU

He was born on May 8, 1989 of Pa Fabian Chu Bong and Ma Christina Chuo (all from

Esu). He is last of six siblings (5boys and 1girl). He started school at G.S Weneghi and was transferred to C.S Esu in class five, where he had F.S.L.C and Common Entrance in 2003. He continued in G.S.S Esu, where he obtained GCE O/L in 2008. He then proceeded to Wum and had his GCE A/L in the Sciences in 2010. He spent a year teaching in C.S Esu and at the same time obtained a certificate in Computer Studies and Secretarial duties. In 2011, he began formation to the Priesthood in Bishop Rogan Minor Seminary, Buea. After a year, preceded to St John Mary Vianney Spiritual Formation Centre, Bafut, where he spent a year. In 2013, he began Philosophical studies in St Thomas Aquinas' Major Seminary Bambui and in 2016, obtained a Bachelor's Degree in Philosophy. He did a year of Pastoral Experience in Christ the King Parish, Mbengwi and then returned to the seminary for Theological studies. He was ordained Deacon on 12th August 2020 by His Grace Andrew Fuanya Nkea at the St Joseph Metropolitan Cathedral, Bamenda. While in the seminary, he served as Dormitory Manager, Gardener, Class Room Manager, Singing Coordinator and Instrumentalist. His hobbies are reading, music composition, singing and playing of musical instruments.



REV. IVO SUH NGWA

He was born in Mambu, Bafut, into the family of Mr. Ambrose Ngwa Nabili & Mrs. Mary Numfor. He is the third child in a family of seven. He did his primary education in Government School Nsoh Bafut, secondary and High School in G.H.S. Bafut. In 2011, he was admitted into Bishop Rogan College Small Soppo, Buea as a Prospective Major Seminarian by the then Archbishop, Cornelius F. Esua.

The following year he was again admitted into St. John Mary Vianney Spiritual Formation Centre in Bafut for a year of Propaedeutic studies. From there, he was admitted into St. Thomas Aquinas' Major Seminary Bambui for Philosophical studies from 2013-2016. From 2016-2017 he had a year of pastoral experience in St. Benedict Catholic Comprehensive College Widikum and SS. Peter and Paul Parish, Ndop. He returned to STAMS in 2017 for Theological Studies. He was ordained Deacon for the Archdiocese of Bamenda on Wednesday 12 August 2020 by His Grace Andrew F. Nkea, Archbishop of Bamenda. While in the major seminary, Rev. Ivo Suh served as an Infirmarian, Member of the Technical Department, Key Tag Manager, Barber and Organist.



REV. VALERY BEMSII

He is the first of five sons, born to Ignatius BEMSII MAI (R.I.P) and Mary Candida KUO. He hails from St. Anthony's Parish Njinikom, North West Region. He was born on 18th May 1991. He did his nursery and primary education in Government Bilingual Nursery and Primary School, Foumban. He started his secondary education in the Sultan Ibrahim Njoya Bilingual High School, Foumban. He later on continued in St Peter's Catholic Comprehensive College, Kumbo, where he obtained the Ordinary and Advanced Levels Certificates of education in 2008 and 2010 respectively. A year later he was admitted to start formation to the ministerial priesthood by His Grace Cornelius F. Esua. Valery did a Year of Pastoral Experience in Petit Seminaire St. Paul de Guider, Archdiocese of Garoua. He was ordained a deacon on the 12th August 2020 by His Grace Andrew F. Nkea. While in formation, at St Thomas Aquinas' Major Seminary Bambui, he served at several functions: Class Coordinator, Gardener,

Classroom and Aula Manager, Canteen Manager, English Reading Master, Searchlight Editor and member of the STAMS Golden Jubilee Committee. He will be ordained a Catholic priest to serve in the Archdiocese of Bamenda.

REV. JOHN PAUL LIMNYUY

He was born on March 15, 1983 into the family of Pa Selamo Joseph and Ma Bernadette Wirndzerem at Shisong Kumbo Bui Division N.W. Region of Cameroon. He is the 6th child, three sisters and three brothers. He did his primary education at Catholic School Shisong. He did his Secondary and High School in GBHS Kumbo from 1994-2002 where he obtained his GCE O/A/ Levels Certificates. He later proceeded to ENS Annex Bambili where he obtained a DIPES I in Economics in 2005. He served as a Teacher for four years. He joined the OFM Capuchins, but later withdrew from the Novitiate before First Profession. After a year in Mbengwi, he was admitted into St. John Mary Vianney Spiritual Centre, Bafut in 2012. He began Philosophy at St. Augustine Major Seminary, Maroua (GESAM) in 2013. He finished the last two years of Philosophy in STAMS Bambui. After a year of Pastoral Experience in St. Clementine Anaurite Quasi Parish Yemgeh, he returned to STAMS Bambui and began Theological studies. He was ordained Deacon on July 12, 2020 by His Grace Andrew F. Nkea, Archbishop of Bamenda. He served the seminary community as Receptionist, Librarian, Photocopy Manager and Notary of the Marriage Tribunal. He will serve the People of God in the Archdiocese of Bamenda.

REV. ALDO KENNE

He hails from Bangang in Mbouda Division. He was born there of Mr. Manfo Etienne and Mrs. Dibakto Leonie, yet grew in Bamenda. Between 1997 and 2003, he did nursery and primary school in Ecole Publique Maternelle et Primaire du GMI. From there, he moved to GBHS Bamenda wherein he obtained BEPC, PROBATOIRE C, and BACCALAUREAT C in 2007, 2009 and 2010 respectively. After a year of

probation, he was sent in 2011 to Bishop Rogan College as a prospective Major Seminarian by Archbishop Emeritus Cornelius Esua and the following year to Vianney Centre, Bafut, for the Spiritual year. He began his philosophical studies in St. Augustine Major Seminary Maroua before proceeding to STAMS Bambui for the remaining two years. After a year of pastoral experience in Holy Trinity Quasi Parish Wum, he resumed studies in STAMS *Theologicum* and on August 12, 2020, was ordained a deacon by Archbishop Andrew Nkea. While in the seminary, he served as Organist, Receptionist and as Manager in the dormitory, classroom, canteen, aula and farm. He will minister as priest in the Archdiocese of Bamenda.

REV. ALEXISABEH

He was born on 7th January 1994, into the family of Mr. Joseph Abekh and Mrs. Aelfreda Komtangi and is the fifth of six children. He did his primary education in CS Njinikom, GS Njinikom and St. Therese Molyko-Buea; secondary education in GHS Bafut and St. Aloysius Minor Seminary Kitiwum, where he obtained his GCE Ordinary and Advanced levels in 2010 and 2012 respectively. He gained admission into St. John Mary Vianney Spiritual Centre, Bafut in 2013. He began philosophical studies in 2014 in St. Augustine Major Seminary Maroua. In September 2015, he was moved to St. Thomas Aquinas Major Seminary Bambui to continue his formation to the priesthood. In 2017, he was sent to do a year of pastoral experience in St. Paul Quasi-Parish Menka and upon

completion returned to STAMS in 2017 for Theological studies. On August 12, 2020 he was ordained Deacon by His Grace, Andrew F. Nkea at the Metropolitan Cathedral, Mankon. While in the seminary, he served the community as Sports Prefect, Photocopy Manager, Florist, Gardener, Animal Farm manager, member of the Social Committee, member of the Theology Commission, President of the Diaconal Committee, Dress Code Committee, Sports Committee and Theology Corner. He will serve in the Archdiocese of Bamenda.

REV. MAXELLUS KEYE

He was born on 29th September 1990 into the family of Mr. Abel Tiih Keye and Mrs. Regina Vushwege. He is last among three sisters and five brothers, one of whom is resting in the Lord. In 1996, he commenced his primary education in Government School, Abobong – Kedjom Keku where he spent four years. In August 2000, he traveled to Nkambe with his maternal uncle where he began class five during the academic year 2000/2001. In the course of that year, he then moved to Bamenda where he enrolled in C.B.C. Mile 3, Nkwen. Here, he completed his primary education in 2003, obtaining his FSLC. He proceeded to Saint Aloysius Minor Seminary Kitiwum in September 2003, where he did his secondary and high school studies. He obtained the Ordinary and Advanced Levels Certificates in 2008 and 2010 respectively. In September 2011, he was accepted by the then Archbishop of Bamenda, His Grace Cornelius Fontem Esua, to begin formation to the Catholic Priesthood. He spent a year of spiritual formation in

SEMINARY AFFAIRS

Saint John Mary Vianney Spiritual Centre, Bafut. In September 2012, he was admitted in Saint Thomas Aquinas Major Seminary, Bambui, where he did three years of Philosophical studies, obtaining a Bachelor of Philosophy in 2015. He was sent for a year of Pastoral experience in September to Saint Patrick Comprehensive and Technical College, Babanki-Tungo.

Thereafter, he requested for a year of probation and it was granted. He moved to Yaoundé and he taught in Bilingual Comprehensive College “Les Aiglons”, Akok-Ndoe during the academic year 2016/2017. September 2017 found him commencing Theological studies in Saint Thomas Aquinas Major Seminary –*Theologicum*,

Bambui. He was ordained deacon by His Grace, Andrew F. Nkea on 12th August 2020 at Saint Joseph Cathedral, Big Mankon. He is currently finishing the last year of Theology. He has served the Seminary community in the following ways: Animal Farmer, Path Tender, Refectorian, Dormitory Captain, Gardener and a member of the Diaconal Committee

DIOCESE OF BUEA

REV MARIO ARREY

Arrey Servintinyi was born on 29th December 1987, into the family of Mr. Peter Servintinyi and Mrs. Martina Servintinyi, and baptized as Mario. He is the third child in a family of seven (4boys and 3girls). He did his Primary Education in Government Primary School Batoke. He then proceeded to the then Government Secondary School (GSS) Batoke (now Government High School (GHS Batoke), where he obtained both his Ordinary Level and Advanced Level Certificates. In September 2011, He was admitted to Bishop Rogan Minor Seminary, Small Soppo – Buea as a Prospective Seminarian by Bishop Immanuel Bushu, Emeritus bishop of Buea Diocese. The following year, He was admitted for a year of Propaedeutic Formation in St. John Mary Vianney Spiritual Formation Centre Bafut. In 2013, He was admitted into Saint Thomas Aquinas Major Seminary – Bambui. After three years of Philosophical Studies, He was sent to Bishop Rogan Minor Seminary, for a year of Pastoral Experience. In 2017, He returned to STAMS – Bambui and began Theological Studies. He was ordained Deacon in 2020 by the then Apostolic Administrator of Buea Diocese, Bishop Michael M. Bibi, now Bishop of Buea Diocese. While in the seminary, he served as Classroom Manager, Call Box Manager, Social Committee President, Labor Coordinator and Refectorian.

REV. EMILE IKOME

He was born on 11th April 1992 in Tiko. He is the first out of four, three boys and a girl to Mr Samuel Njie Mokonya and Ako Agatha and Ida Mokonya. He did his primary education in Catholic School Small Soppo and Ekondo Titi, secondary school in St Pius X Ekondo Titi and later moved to GHS Bokwango and to Bishop Rogan Minor Seminary where he obtained his GCE Ordinary and Advance Levels respectively. After his Advanced level, he gained admission into St. John Mary Vianney Spiritual Centre Bafut in 2012. In 2013, he was recommended to start philosophical studies in St Thomas Aquinas Major Seminary Bambui. He was sent to do his pastoral year experience in Immaculate Conception Parish, Great Soppo Buea. In 2017, he was sent back to St Thomas Aquinas Major Seminary Bambui, where he did four years of Theological studies. In August 22, 2020 he was ordained deacon by his Lordship Micheal Bibi, Bishop of Buea. By the special grace of God, he will be serving the people of God in the diocese of Buea.

REV. STANLEY MONET CHILAVERT

He was born on February 18, to the family of late Mr.

Michael Beja and Mrs. Emilia Ngwebiteh in Tole. He is the last child in a family of seven. He started primary school at Regina Pacis Primary School, Small Soppo, where he obtained the First School Leaving Certificate. From 2000-2007 he attended Government High School Bonjongo where he obtained the GCE Ordinary Level and Advanced Level. In September 2011, he was admitted by Bishop Bushu as a Prospective Seminarian into Bishop Rogan College (BIROCOL). After the year spent in BIROCOL, he moved to Saint John Mary Vianney Spiritual Centre in Bafut. In 2013, he gained admission to study philosophy for three years at St. Thomas Aquinas Major Seminary, STAMS-Bambui. At the end of his philosophical studies, he was sent to St. Peter the Apostle Parish- Mudeka for a year of Pastoral Experience. During his stay in Mudeka, he taught Philosophy and Religious Studies at Government Bilingual High School Mudeka. He returned to STAMS in 2017 to begin theological studies and after three years he was ordained a deacon by Mgr. Michael Bibi, Bishop of Buea. While in the seminary he served as a Receptionist, Dormitory Captain, Infirmary and Sacristan. He is good at hand games: Volley ball, handball and Goalkeeping. He will serve the people of God in the Diocese of Buea.

REV. BERNARD EBULE

He was born in Muyuka on January 25, 1993 to Mr. Escellem Simon (RIP) and Mrs. Cecilia Ngum (RIP). He is the first of his Parents and first of his Father's two boys. He did Primary Education at St. Peter Clever Primary School Muyuka and Afro-American International Bilingual Nursery and Primary School, Buea from 1997-2005. From 2005-2012 he attended Bishop Rogan Minor Seminary, Small Soppo-Buea where he obtained GCE O/L (2010) and GCE A/L (2012) Certificates. Thereafter, he was admitted to St. John Mary Vianney Spiritual Centre, Bafut for a year of Spiritual Formation by Mgr. Immanuel Bushu, Bishop Emeritus of Buea. He then proceeded to St. Thomas Aquinas' Major Seminary (STAMS), Bambui in September 2013 where he studied Philosophy for three years. He did a year of Pastoral experience at St. Peter the Apostle Parish Mudeka. He returned after Pastoral Experience to STAMS-Bambui, now a *Theologicum*, where he has been studying Theology. He was ordained Deacon by Mgr. Michael Bibi at the Divine Mercy Co-Cathedral Molyko, Buea on August 22, 2020. While in STAMS, Rev. Ebule served the community as: Classroom Manager, Dormitory Manager, Florist, Gardener, and as prefect in Charge of Singing. He will serve the People of God in the Diocese of Buea.

his nursery and primary education at Social Insurance Nursery and Primary School Tiko (CNPS Tiko) where he obtained his First School Living Certificate. He later moved to Bishop Rogan Minor Seminary Small Soppo, where he obtained his Ordinary and Advanced Levels Certificates. He then applied to Bishop Immanuel Bushu to become a priest in the diocese of Buea. He began formation to the priesthood at St. John Mary Vianney Spiritual Centre, Bafut. He later moved to St Thomas Aquinas Major Seminary Bambui, where he did three years of philosophical studies and obtained a Bachelor's Degree in Philosophy. He did his pastoral year in St Joseph College Sasse. Due to the crisis, he left Sasse and continued his pastoral experience at St Peter the Apostle Parish Mudeka. Upon completion, he continued his formation in the Major Seminary in Bambui where he is currently finishing up his fourth year of theology. He was ordained deacon on 22 August 2020 by Rt. Rev. Michael Bibi, Bishop of Buea in Molyko. While in the seminary he served in these capacities: Sacristan, Internet Lab Manager, Dormitory Manager, and Sports Prefect. He enjoys playing basket ball, watching good movies and listening to good music, singing.

Catholic School Djichami, Belo Sub Division, where he attended classes One and Two from 1995-1997. Thereafter, he moved to Mahole, Tombel Sub Division where he did classes Three and Four from 1997-1999. Then, from 1999-2002, He completed his primary education in Government School Ngusi-Tombel Sub Division. That same year he began his secondary education in Government Secondary Ngusi where he obtained my G.C.E. O/L in 2008. He did study in G.B.H.S Belo and G.H.S Nyassoso where he obtained his A/L Certificate in 2010. In September 2011, he was admitted by His Lordship Immanuel Bushu to begin formation to the ministerial priesthood as a Prospective Seminarian. Later in September 2012, He continued formation in St. John Mary Vianney Spiritual Centre –Bafut. In September 2013, he proceeded to study philosophy for three years in St. Thomas Aquinas Major Seminary Bambui (2013-2016). At the end of His philosophical studies, He was sent to Holy Family Parish, New Town Limbe, for a year of pastoral experience. In September 2017, he returned to STAMS to begin Theological Studies, and after three years, he was ordained a deacon on 22nd August 2020 by Mgr. Michael Bibi, Bishop of Buea. He will serve the people of God in the Diocese of Buea. While in the seminary, he served as Farm Manager, Lawn Manager, Animal Farm Manager, Technical Department and Key Tag Manager.

REV. FRANKLINE JUA

He was born on 23rd April 1989, Mankon-Bamenda, into the family of Mr. Abongha Paul and Mrs Bridget Abongha. He is the first child in a family of four children (3 boys and 1 girl). He did part of his primary education in

REV. JOEL NGOLLO ELAKIE NDOMBO.

He was born a twin in Tiko on 5th March 1993 into the family of Mr Peter Elakie Ndombe and Mrs Kang Dorothy Elakie. He did

DIOCESE OF KUMBO

REV. JUDE TANLAKA BURINYUY

Born on September 18, 1990, in Jakiri. He did his Primary education in St Michael's Catholic Primary School Meluf and obtained his F.S.L.C in 2003. He obtained the

Cameroon G.C.E O' Level at G.B.H.S Kikaikom-Kumbo in 2008, and G.C.E A' Level in G.B.H.S Kumbo in 2010. He was sent to Bishop Rogan Minor Seminary Soppo, Buea, where he did his Prospective Year in 2010/ 2011.

He then proceeded for Spiritual Formation in St John Mary Vianney Spiritual Formation Centre, Bafut-Bamenda. After a year of experience, he was sent to the Major Seminary, precisely to St Thomas Aquinas

Major Seminary Bambui (STAMS), where he obtained a Bachelor's Degree in Philosophy within the formation year 2014/2015. He had his year of Pastoral Experience in Cardinal Tumi Catholic Comprehensive College Mantoum, Jakiri. He returned to STAMS Bambui in the formation year 2016/2017 for Theological studies. He was ordained deacon on July 06, 2019 and, by God's grace, will be ordained a Roman Catholic Priest on April 08, 2021 at the St Theresia Cathedral Parish Kumbo. While in STAMS he served the community in the following functions: Gardener, Staff Room Manager, Receptionist, Editor of Searchlight Magazine, and in the Golden Jubilee Preparation Team.

REV. JEAN ROBERT WIRSIY

He was born on 5th March 1987. He did his primary education at St John the Baptist Primary School Ngondzen and St Louis Catholic English Primary School Bonaberi Douala. He had his secondary education at G.B.H.S. Bonaberi Douala, Atlantic Bilingual College Bonaberi Douala and Regina Pacis Comprehensive College Nkar where he obtained his Ordinary Level Certificate. He then continued his high school education at G.B.H.S. Jakiri where he obtained his Advanced Level Certificate. He was admitted to the Seminary in 2011 as a prospective Seminarian where he spent a year in Bishop Rogan College. He did a year of Spiritual Formation at St. John Mary Vianney Spiritual Formation Centre, Bafut. He proceeded to do three years of philosophical studies at St. Thomas Aquinas Major Seminary, Bambui. After his philosophical studies, he was sent to have a pastoral year in St. John Bosco Ngarum. After the pastoral year, he had four years of Theological studies in St. Thomas Aquinas Major Seminary Bambui. While in the seminary, he served

in the following functions: Sacristan, Animal Farm Manager, Lawn Manager, Refectorian and as Poultry Farm Manager.

REV. JOSEPH TANGVEN WIRYU

He was born into the family of Mr/Mrs Oliver Wiryu on 31st March 1988 in Mbiame Mbven Sub-Division, Bui Division-N.W. Region of Cameroon. Mr Oliver Wiryu is of blessed memory. The family is made up of nine children, five boys and four girls. He is the eighth child in the family. He did his primary school education at G. S. Tanyar from 1994-2000 where he obtained his First School Leaving Certificate. From there he proceeded to G.H.S. Mbiame, (then G.S.S. Mbiame) from 2001-2004. He left from there to G.H.S. Kitiwum from 2005-2009 where he obtained his G.C.E. Ordinary and Advanced levels Certificates. In 2010, he was admitted to Bishop Rogan College Small Soppo, Buea as a prospective seminarian. In 2013, he proceeded to Saint John-Mary-Vianney Spiritual Centre, Bafut and later to Saint Thomas Aquinas Major Seminary Bambui (STAMS) from 2014- 2016 and he obtained a Bachelor's Degree in Philosophy from the Pontifical Urban University, Rome. He is currently completing his Theological studies in the same Institution.

REV. JOSEPH TATA

He was born on 13th February 1989 and baptised on 30th October 1989. He did his primary education in C.S Noi-Visombo and C.S. Wainamah from 1996 to 2003 where he obtained FSLC. From 2003 to 2010 he did secondary and high school studies in G.T.H.S. Kumbo where he obtained Baccalaureat Technique in 2010. In 2011, he served with Chalice Sponsorship Program in Mbiame as an accountant. In September that same year, he began formation for the Catholic priesthood in

Bishop Rogan College Buea as a prospective seminarian for the diocese of Kumbo. He then proceeded to St. John Mary Vianney Spiritual Formation Centre Bafut for a year of spiritual formation. He was admitted and began philosophical studies in St. Thomas Aquinas Major Seminary (STAMS) Bambui in 2013, and in 2016, obtained a Bachelor's Degree in Philosophy from the Urban University in Rome. He had a year of pastoral experience at St. Joseph Parish Ndzevru. In 2017, he returned to the seminary for theological studies, and was ordained deacon on 22nd August 2020 by Mgr. George Nkuo at St. Theresia's Cathedral Kumbo. While in the seminary, he served as Janitor, Gardener, Classroom Manager, Lawn Manager, and Librarian. He will serve the people of God in the Diocese of Kumbo.

REV. DESMUS KEMAN

He was born on 1st December 1991 at Kuvlu. His parents are Keman Charles and Eucharis Shalanyuy. He is the second in the family of six (three boys and three girls). He did his primary education in G.B.S Foumban, G.B.S Kumbo and G.S Kuvlu after which he went to Saint Aloysius Minor Seminary Kitiwum. He spent one year of discernment in Ngondzen Parish and later proceeded to St John Mary Vianney Spiritual Centre Bafut. In the year 2012/2013, he enrolled into St Thomas Aquinas Major Seminary where he did three years of Philosophical studies. After three years of philosophy he had a year of pastoral experience at Cardinal Tumi Catholic Comprehensive College, Mantum Jakiri, and in Christ the King Parish, Jakiri. After pastoral year, he continued his Theological studies in Saint Thomas Aquinas Major Seminary and was ordained a Deacon for the Diocese of Kumbo on 22 August 2020. While in the seminary he held the following functions:

SEMINARY AFFAIRS

Lawn Manager, Classroom Manager, Dormitory Manager, Dormitory Captain, Canteen Prefect, Farm Prefect, Refectory Prefect and Sports Prefect. He loves music, playing drums, playing football and dancing.

REV. LAMBERT SHANG BONGBIME

He was born on 12th October, 1993 in Tobin, Kumbo. He is the last of six children to Mr. Shang Ivo (R.I.P.) and Mrs. Shang Julie. He did his Nursery and primary education in Government Nursery School Tobin and Government Primary School Tobin respectively. After completing his primary education, he went to

Government Bilingual High School, Kumbo, where he obtained GCE Ordinary and Advanced levels Certificates in 2009 and 2011 respectively. He gained admission into Bishop Rogan Minor Seminary as a prospective seminarian in 2011 and later moved to Saint John Mary Vianney Spiritual Centre, Bafut in 2012. In 2013 he began his philosophical studies in Saint Thomas Aquinas Major Seminary, Bambui. After three years, he was sent to Saint Sylvester's Comprehensive College, Sop for a year of Pastoral Experience. That same year, he was transferred to Saint Theresa Parish, Sop because of

the Anglophone crisis which resulted in the shut down of schools. In 2017, he returned to the Major Seminary to begin studies in Theology. On August 22, 2020, he was ordained deacon by Msgr. George Nkuo, Bishop of Kumbo. While in the seminary, he served the community in the following capacities: Infirmarian, Farm Manager, Florist, Staff Room Manager, Aquinas Bookshop Manager, Receptionist, Editor of *Searchlight* Magazine and Ecclesiastical Marriage Tribunal. He will serve the people of God in the Diocese of Kumbo.

DIOCESE OF MAMFE

REV. PAULAJONG

Born on January 10, in Mary Health of Africa Hospital, Fontem to Mr Nkangu Gabriel Ajong and Mrs Ajong Patricia Be bongchu, Rev Paul is the last in a family of 8, with 4 elder brothers and 3 elder sisters. He started primary education at G.S Njontse and completed in Catholic School Menji where he had his FSLC. He did secondary school in GBHS Fontem where he had Ordinary Level Certificate. After that he moved to Bishop Rogan Minor Seminary Soppo, Buea where he obtained his Advance Level Certificate. Upon Graduation, applied to begin formation to the Catholic Priesthood and was admitted into the Diocese of Mamfe by Bishop Francis Teke Lysinge in 2011. He was among the first batch of students of the then John Henry Newman Spiritual Centre, Mamfe Diocese. After the Propaedeutic Year, he was sent to begin Philosophical Studies in Bertoua (Grand Séminaire Notre Dame de L'Espérance) in 2012. After three Years of Philosophy in Bertoua, [He went for a year of Pastoral Experience in Sacred Heart Parish Kajifu, Akwaya Sub-division. Upon a successful completion of Pastoral Year, he was admitted into St Thomas Aquinas

Major Seminary Bambui by Archbishop Andrew Nkea (then Bishop of Mamfe) in 2016. After 4 years of Theological studies in Bambui, he was ordained a Deacon on 12th August 2020 by Archbishop Andrew Nkea for the Diocese of Mamfe. He is presently serving a Diaconal Year as Vice Principal, Bursar and Teacher at St John's College Nchang in the Diocese of Mamfe. While in the Seminary (Bertoua and Bambui), He served as Refectorian, Poultry Farm Manager, Lawn Manager, Journalist, Librarian, Class Prefect and Singing Prefect. He loves reading, singing, playing the piano, football and volleyball, traveling and listening to music.

REV. PATRICK EKU TABOT

He was born on 28th September 1992 in Afap Village into the family of Mr. Tambe Pius Tabot (RIP) and Mrs. Egbe Mary Tabot. He attended his primary school at Catholic School Afap (1997-2004), where he obtained his FSLC. From there, he proceeded to GHS Mamfe where he obtained

his GCE O/L and A/L in 2009 and 2011 respectively. In September 2011, he was sent to Mbetta Parish to do his Prospective Year. Later, in the year 2012, he gained admission into Saint John Henry Newman Spiritual Centre Bachuo-Ntai. In September 2013, he was admitted into St. Thomas Aquinas' Major Seminary (STAMS) Bambui and after three years of Philosophical Studies, he obtained a Bachelor Degree in Philosophy. He was then sent to St. John XXIII Minor Seminary as a formator for a year of pastoral experience. He returned to STAMS in September 2017 and began Theological studies. He was raised to the Order of the Diaconate on 12 August 2020 by His Grace Andrew Fuanya Nkea, Archbishop of Bamenda and Apostolic Administrator of Mamfe. While in the Seminary he served as: Dormitory Manager, Gardener, Class room Manager, Aula, Audio Visual Manager, Dormitory Captain and Refectorian. He will serve the people of God in the Catholic Diocese of Mamfe.

REV. JOHN ETTA NDIFON

He hails from Ndebaya Village, in Eyumojock Sub Division of the Manyu Division, Cameroon. He was Born on 13th August 1991 to Mr. Fidelis NDIFON OBI and Mrs. MANYO Mary NDIFON, He was baptized as an infant and received First Holy Communion and Confirmation on 08th March 2001. He is the eight among ten Children, eight of whom are alive. After completing His Primary Education at Government School Ndebaya, he obtained his Ordinary and Advanced levels in 2009 and 2011 respectively at Government Bilingual High School Eyumojock. Having been accepted to begin Formation for the Catholic priesthood, He was sent for a Prospective year at Saint Joseph's Parish Akwaya. He did his Spiritual Year at the then Blessed Henry Newman Spiritual Center Bachuo- Ntai. He did his Philosophical Studies at Saint Thomas Aquinas Major Seminary Bambui for three years, after which he was sent for a year of Pastoral experience at Queen of Rosary College, Okoyong and Saints Peter and Paul Parish, Okoyong. He then continued His Theological Studies in Bambui and was ordained a deacon on 12th August 2020 By His Grace Andrew F. Nkea, Archbishop of Bamenda and Apostolic Administrator of Mamfe Diocese. While in Formation, he served the Seminary as Singing Prefect, Dormitory Manager, Refectorian, Farm Manager, and Path Tender. He Loves Good Music, Poetry and Dancing. He will be Priest for the Diocese of Mamfe.

REV. CAROLE TCHINDA

He was born on 28th September 1986, in Kumba into the family of Mr. Nguito Samuel (RIP) and Mrs. Mafouo Victorine(RIP). He is the second child in a family of four children

(1 girl and 3 boys, the first child a boy is of late). He did part of his primary education in Sacred Heart's Primary School Fiango-Kumba, where he attended classes one to three from 1990-1993 and in Ecole Annexe de Kika, Mouloudou sub-division, East-Cameroon where he attended CE1 to CE2 from 1993-1996 and in Ecole Annexe Marie Rurale Kamkop-Bafoussam, where he completed his primary education and obtained CEPE (Certificat d'Etude Primaires et Elementaires) from 1996-1999. he did secondary school in CES rural Kena, Bafoussam from 1999-2004 where he felt the call to become a priest, but because of lack of money to afford the fee of the minor seminary, he continued his high School studies in Lycée Classique Bafoussam where obtained Probatoire in 2007 and Baccalaureat in 2009. In 2010, he started the journey to the priesthood. He was sent to St Mary's Parish, Afap Diocese of Mamfe as prospective Major seminarian where he spent a year. At the start of formation year 2010/2011, he moved to Blessed John Henry Newman Spiritual Center Bachou-Tai, Mamfe where he was for a year of spiritual formation, after which he proceeded to the Major Seminary Notre Dame de l'Esperance de Bertoua for philosophical studies. Unfortunately, after the first year of philosophy he was given a year on probation to serve at the Divine Mercy Quasi Parish Nkongle, Diocese of Mamfe. After this, he continued philosophical studies in St Thomas Aquinas Major Seminary, Bambui. After his philosophical studies he was sent to Holy Eucharist Parish Tinto for a year of Pastoral Experience. In September 2017, he returned to St Thomas Aquinas Major Seminary

Bambui where he began theological studies. He was ordained deacon by Mgr. Andrew Fuanya Nkea, Archbishop of Bamenda and Apostolic Administrator of Mamfe Diocese on August 12, 2020. While in the seminary he served as Classroom Manager, Dormitory Manger, Librarian, French Language Master and Gardener.

REV. PETERATEM

He was born in Dadi village on 06 November 1988 into the family of Mr. Atem Okom George (RIP) and Mrs. Kajang Agnes Mbia. He is the last in the family of five- three boys and two girls. He did his elementary education in Government Primary School Dadi. Later he was admitted into Enownchung Memorial College Bisong-abang, Mamfe where he obtained both the G.C.E. O\L and A\L certificates in 2007 and 2009 respectively. Upon completion from EMC Bisong-abang in 2009, he applied to Mgr. Francis Teke Lysinge, the then bishop of Mamfe, to pursue his priestly vocation in view of serving the people of God in Mamfe Diocese. Once the application was accepted, he was then sent to Mbetta for prospective year and in 2011, he was sent to John Henry Newman Spiritual Centre, Bachuo-Ntai. In 2013, he was admitted in St. Joseph Major Seminay Ikot Epkene-Nigeria. After four years philosophical studies, he was sent for a pastoral year experience in Holy Cross Quasi Parish, Nzanchen. In 2017, he was admitted into St. Thomas Aquinas Major Seminary (STAMS), Bambui- Cameroon where he was ordained deacon in 2020, after three years of theological studies. While in the seminary, he served as classroom manager, Librarian and presently Infirmarian. He enjoys listening to news, watching and playing football. Rev. Peter Atem will serve the Church that is in the Diocese Mamfe.

DIOCESE OF KUMBA

REV. MATHIAS YUH

Born on 13 December 1989, he is the last of five children of Mr. Kesa Sylvanus (RIP) and Mrs. Kesa Euphrensia. He attended GBPS Group II, Kosala, Kumba, and completed in 2001. He enrolled at GSS (now GBHS) Kosala, where he obtained his OL in 2006. In 2008, he obtained his AL from CCAS Kumba. He studied Banking and Finance at the University of Buea from 2008-2011. He felt called to the priesthood, and applied to the Diocese of Buea. He was sent to Bishop Rogan Minor Seminary, Buea, as a prospective seminarian, after which he spent another year in St. John Mary Vianney Spiritual Formation Centre, Bafut. In 2013, he began a three-year course in philosophy at St. Thomas Aquinas' Major Seminary (STAMS), Bambui. He later applied to the newly-erected Diocese of Kumba, and was assigned to Ave Maria Parish, Bangem, for a year of pastoral experience. He returned to STAMS in 2016 to study Theology. After the third year, he was ordained deacon. He is now rounding off his theological studies. In STAMS, he served the community as Editor of *Searchlight* Magazine, Internet Manager, Website Manager, and Master of Ceremonies.

REV. MARCELLUS MBAH

Born on 31st March 1991 in Mutengene, he hails from a family of six children, among whom he is last, of Mr & Mrs Thomas Minjeh, and from Ashong – Moghamo. His complete primary education was at CS Mutengene after which he proceeded to GBHS Mutengene where he obtained his GCE O Level. He then proceeded to Bishop Rogan College in 2010 and obtained his A Level Certificate in 2012 and headed to the Vianney Spiritual Centre at the end of that year. God blessed and he gained admission into the St Thomas

Aquinas Major Seminary, Bambui where he has been studying since September 2013 till date. He obtained his Bachelor of Philosophy in 2016 from the *Urbaniana Universitas*, Rome and took a year of pastoral experience at SS Peter and Paul Parish, Ngolo-Bolo. From the following year, 2017 till date, he has been studying theology in the same seminary. While in the seminary, he has worked in the following departments: the Music Department, Technical Department, Library, Mechanics and Driving Department and the Seminary Secretariat. He is a cleric for the diocese of Kumba.

REV. YVES MOSONGO

He was born on 4th May 1989 in Lobe Estate, into the family of Mr. Obase Charles Mottoh and Mrs. Oufen Florence Mottoh. He is the second in a family of five (two boys and three girls). He did his primary education at C.B.C. Lobe Estate and G.S.S. Ekondo-Titi respectively. From there, he proceeded to St. Pius X College Ekondo-Titi where he obtained his GCE O Level in 2009. He moved to G.B.H.S. Ekondo-Titi, where he obtained his GCE A Level in 2011. In September 2011, he was admitted into BIROCOL Buea, as a Prospective Major Seminarian. The following year, he proceeded to St. John Mary Vianney Spiritual Centre for a year of Spiritual Formation. In September 2013 he gained admission into STAMS Bambui and after three years of philosophical studies, he was sent to St. Michael the Archangel Parish Baseng, for a year of pastoral experience.

He returned to STAMS to commence his theological studies. He was ordained as a Deacon by Mgr. Agapitus Nfon on 21st August 2020 at the Sacred Heart Cathedral Fiango-Kumba. While in the Seminary, he served as Librarian, Dormitory Manager, Janitor, Gardener, Lawn Manager and Infirmarian. He will serve the people of God in the Diocese of Kumba.

REV. JESSY NKAMTCHOU

He, the last son of Mr Michael Nkamtchou and Mrs Jeanette Ngassa, was born on 24th November 1994 in Kumba. He did his primary education at St. Anthony of Padua Primary School, Kumba Mbeng. In 2005, he was admitted into Bishop Rogan College, Small Soppo – Buea where he did his secondary and high school studies. Upon graduating, he applied to begin formation to the priesthood, as a seminarian, under the Diocese of Buea. In October 2012, he started formation at St. John Mary Vianney Spiritual Center, Bafut. Thereafter, he proceeded to Grand Seminaire Interdiocesain Notre Dame de L'Espérance de Bertoua to start philosophical studies. But after a year he was transferred to St. Thomas Aquinas Major Seminary, Bambui where he completed the remaining years of his philosophical studies and was awarded at the end of that (2016) a Bachelor's Degree in Philosophy. When the Diocese of Kumba was created in 2016, he applied to be admitted as a seminarian. He was accepted and sent for a year of pastoral experience at St. Martin de Porres Parish, Bekora. After that year, he returned to STAMS Bambui to begin theological studies. At the end of the third year of theology, he was ordained a deacon by his own bishop, Msrg. Agapitus Nfon, Bishop of Kumba at Sacred Heart Cathedral, Fiango – Kumba on August 21, 2020. While in the seminary, he served in various capacities – Phone Booth Manager, Website Manager, Dormitory Manager, In-charge of the flowers, Journalist, Class Delegate, member of the Golden Jubilee Committee, editor of the *Searchlight* Magazine, Assistant Editor-in-Chief and Editor-in-Chief of the same magazine. He enjoys public speaking, being in the company of friends, watching educative movies. As a priest, he will serve the people of God in the Diocese of Kumba.

**REV. STANLEY EPIE
AWAHSUME**

He was born on Tuesday, 18 February 1992, in Kumba, to the Family of Pa Mbome Pius Epie and Ma Mbome Scholastica Nyong, both of blessed memory. He is the last of a large family of twelve, two of which are of late. He hails from Ekambeng village, Bangem Sub-division, Kupe Muanenguba Division, Southwest Region. He attended St. John School (now St. John College) Kumba Town from 1996 – 2003, then moved to Government Bilingual High School Kumba (2003 –

2005), and then Government Bilingual High School Essos – Yaoundé (2005-2010), where he obtained the GCE Ordinary and Advanced Levels Certificates. Upon acceptance to start formation to the Catholic Ministerial Priesthood, he moved to Bishop Rogan College as a prospective seminarian for the Diocese of Buea (2011/2012), and did a Spiritual Year at St. John Mary Vianney Spiritual Formation Centre, Bafut (2012/2013). He then did three years of Philosophy in St. Thomas Aquinas Major Seminary, Bambui (STAMS, 2013 – 2016), completing this phase as a seminarian for the Diocese of Kumba. He was sent to St.

Paul Parish Mundemba for a year of pastoral experience, after which he returned to STAMS for the study of Theology (2017 – 2021). Ordained a deacon in Kumba on Friday, 21 August 2020, by Rt. Rev. Bishop Agapitus Nfon, he is currently in his last year of seminary formation. While in the seminary, he has served as Classroom Manager, Singing Prefect, Instrumentalist, Path Tender, Gardener, and Auxiliary. As hobby, he loves to read, sing, do sports, compose songs, play instruments. As a priest, he will serve the local Church of Kumba.



**THE MAN, ARCHBISHOP PAUL
VERDZEKOV**

1. EARLY/YOUTHFUL LIFE

Paul Mbiybe Barrah Verdzev was born at Shisong on Thursday, 22 January 1931 of Paul Bara (son of the Princely Fai Wainseri) and Francisca Viyoy (daughter of Fai Ndzendzev). He was baptized at Shisong three days after his birth by Fr. John Scott, MHM. The young Verdzev did his primary education at Shisong: Infant Class One at Shisong convent, Infant Class Two at Sacred Heart Boys' School, as well as Standards One to Six from 1937-1944. From January 1945-1947, he served as a probationary pupil teacher at Saint Joseph's Junior Primary School, Djottin, which was then part of Shisong Parish with the then Michael Paul Wamey as Headmaster. In May 1947, he was transferred from Djottin to Sacred Heart Boys' School, Shisong, where he served till December 1947 (cfr. Gregory NGWA, *Archbishop Paul Verdzev: A Man of Faith and Integrity*, Acapp – Bamenda 2006, pp. 12-15). In 1948, he

began the Teacher Training Course (T.T.C.) in Njinikom, alongside Pius Awa and others. 08



LAWRENCE DOH
THEOLOGY III



BLAISE AWA
THEOLOGY III

April 1948, the T.T.C. was transferred from Njinikom to Bambui. When Paul Verdzev and Pius Awa graduated from T.T.C. as Grade III Teachers, they were appointed to teach in the Practicing School in Bambui, with Paul Verdzev as the Head Master of the school (cfr. Andrew Nkea, *"Ut Cognoscant Te": The Life and Work of His Lordship, Bishop Pius Suh Awa, on the Occasion of his Episcopal Silver Jubilee*, Aux Editions Universelles, Douala 1996, 21-22).

2. LIFE AS A PRIEST

In 1952, Paul Verdzev went to St. Joseph's College, Sasse (the Holy Family Junior Seminary was attached to St. Joseph's College, Sasse). There, he, as well as his friend, Pius Awa, were expected to finish a six years course in three years. They started the Secondary School Course in Form 3. In the second year, they were in Form 4 during the first semester, and in Form 5 during the second semester, after which they were set for the exams. The third year, they did Form 6, and both of them passed the final exams in "Division One," which qualified them for direct entry into any university (cfr. *Ibid.*, 22-25). From there, he proceeded to Bigard Memorial Seminary, Enugu in 1955. Thereafter, he went to Rome, on 07 October 1958, to continue his theological studies at the *Propaganda Fidei* College, where he was ordained a priest on 20 December 1961 in the Chapel of the *Pontificio Collegio Urbano de Propaganda Fidei* by the then Prefect of the

Congregation of *De Propaganda Fidei*, His Eminence, Gregorio Pietro Cardinal Agagianian, Patriarch of Cilicia of the Armenians. He finally graduated from the *Pontificio Collegio Urbano* on 30 June 1962, and continued his studies in the Jesuit Gregorian University, where he had a Licentiate, and in August 1965, he returned to Cameroon (cfr. Bernard FONLON, *A Simple Story Simply Told*, Ceper, Yaounde 1983, p. 37).

3. HIS APPOINTMENTS AS A PRIEST

In September 1965, he was appointed, by Bishop Jules Peeters, to serve as the curate of St. Joseph's Parish, Tiko. In March 1966, he was transferred to Sacred Heart Parish, Fiango in the same capacity, and in August 1966 he was reassigned to Victoria as acting Parish Priest. In January 1967, he took up residence in St. Anthony's Presbytery, Buea, in order to carry out research work in preparation for his return to Rome for further studies. In September 1967, he returned to Rome and was given full accommodation at St. Peter's College, and admission to the doctoral programme at the Gregorian University from October 1967 to May 1969. When he obtained a doctorate in the Social Sciences, he returned to Cameroon in August 1969 and was appointed priest in charge of the Catholic Information Service, Buea (cfr. Gregory NGWA, *Archbishop Paul Verdzekov: A Man of Faith and Integrity*, p. 16).

4. LIFE AS A BISHOP

The Diocese of Bamenda was created on 13 August 1970, by His Holiness, Pope Paul VI, and Fr. Paul Verdzekov, barely one year after his return from Rome, was appointed Bishop of the newly created diocese of Bamenda. On Sunday, 08 November 1970, he was consecrated bishop in Bamenda and became the first residential bishop of the newly created Diocese of Bamenda. In October 1977, Bishop Paul Verdzekov represented Cameroon at the Fourth Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops.

On Thursday, 18 March 1982, by the Bull of John Paul II – *Eo Magis Ecclesia Catholica*, Bamenda was elevated to an Archdiocese, and, on that same day, the Diocese of Kumbo was created, detached from the territory of Bamenda, and Bishop Paul Verdzekov was appointed Archbishop of the Metropolitan See of Bamenda and Apostolic Administrator of the newly created Diocese of Kumbo. Ten months into his appointment as Archbishop, the *Pallium* was conferred to him on 22 February 1983 by the Apostolic Nuncio, Archbishop Donato Squicciarini in the Metropolitan Cathedral in Bamenda. In 1984, Pope John Paul II appointed him as a member of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. In October 1987, he served as Papal Nominee at the Sixth Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops. On 30 June 1988, he attended the public Consistory in Rome, at which His Grace, Archbishop Christian Wiyghan Tumi was created Cardinal (cfr. *Ibid.*, pp. 17-18).

5. HIS RETIREMENT AND DEMISE

On 22 January 2002, he applied to the Holy See requesting the appointment of a Co-Adjutor Archbishop of Bamenda. Two years later, 07 December 2004, Pope John Paul II appointed Bishop Cornelius Esua, Bishop of Kumbo, as Co-Adjutor Archbishop of Bamenda. Before September 2005, he applied to the Holy See to hand over to Archbishop Cornelius as Archbishop of Bamenda. In September 2005, the Holy Father appointed him as Papal Nominee to serve as a Synod Father at the Eleventh Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops in Rome. On 14 December 2005, he was

informed, by the Apostolic Nuncio, Most Rev. Eliseo Antonio Ariotti, that he could inform Christ's Faithful that he would officially hand over to his legitimate successor on 23 January 2006, and, on that day, in the course of a Eucharistic celebration in the Metropolitan Cathedral in Bamenda, he officially handed over to his successor Archbishop Cornelius Esua as Archbishop of Bamenda. From then, he became simply Archbishop Emeritus (cfr. *Ibid.*, p. 20). The retired Archbishop Paul Verdzekov took up residence at St. Francis Mission Station, Ntasen which was under All Saints' Parish, Bayelle at that time. He served as bishop of Bamenda from 1970 till 1982, and as Archbishop from 1982 till 2006.

Archbishop Paul Verdzekov's scholarship could be seen in his writings. He read avidly and wrote profusely. In fact, the collection of his works is ongoing. He was profoundly multi-lingual, too, for he spoke, read and wrote Lamnso, Latin, English, French and Italian. Archbishop Paul Verdzekov was a "genuine intellectual". He embodied the Fonlonian attributes of an outstanding scholar (cfr. F. WACHE, *Paul Verdzekov (1931-2010): Prelate with the Prolific Pen*, 2010). On 26 January 2010, Archbishop Paul Verdzekov died unexpectedly in his residence at Ntasen after a massive heart attack (cfr. C. ESUA, *The Road to Sainthood*, Archdiocesan Information Service, Bamenda 2020, p. 25). Francis Wache describes his saintly death thus: "On Tuesday, 26 January 2010, when death came calling – like a thief in the night – it found Archbishop Emeritus, Paul Verdzekov in his study. When death struck, Verdzekov died the way he had lived: with a pen in his hand". He died in 2010, aged 79.

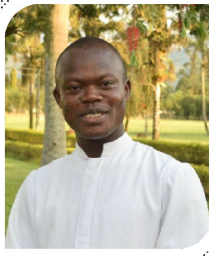
ARCHBISHOP PAUL VERDZEKOV'S VISION OF THE PRIESTHOOD AND PASTORAL MINISTRY

INTRODUCTION

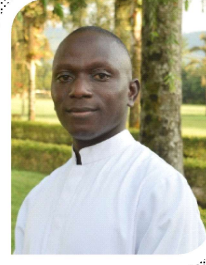
Archbishop Paul Verdzekov was a man who valued the vocation to the priesthood; he lived his priesthood as a man of faith and integrity. As a priest, he was a servant in the world but free from the spirit of the world. His vision of the priesthood and pastoral ministry stemmed from his own priesthood, for he saw priests as “men of integrity, truth, humble servants, men of prayer, moving together towards holiness,” (P. Verdzekov, *Priestly Ordination Cathedral* Mankon, 1999, pp. 4-5). This write-up, which seeks to lay bare his vision of the priesthood, would be a synopsis of the homilies he preached to priests and priests-to-be on the priestly ministry.

1. WHO A PRIEST IS AND WHO HE IS NOT

The author of the *Letter to the Hebrews* classifies a priest as “one chosen from among men, appointed to serve God on their behalf and offer sacrifices for sins” (cfr. Heb. 5:1-2). Archbishop Paul Verdzekov says that the priest is a gift from Christ to the community, a fellow disciple of Jesus, being in the forefront of the Church because of his configuration to Christ. He is from the world and in the world for the world’s sake but not of the world (Homily, Ordination to the Diaconate and Priesthood in Our Lady of Fatima Parish, Bambili, Saturday, 5 July 2003, pp. 4-5). What is more, priests are not born but made so as to become *Alter Christus*, stewards of the mysteries of God and servants of Christ. By virtue of their ordination, priests are called to the service of Christ the teacher, priest and king. For the Archbishop, “A priest is a human



FRANKLINE EPIE
THEOLOGY III



OLIVER MH
THEOLOGY III

being, a member of the Holy Church, a Christian, just like the rest of us poor and weak men in need of God’s mercy” (P. Verdzekov, Homily on Sunday, 3 November, 1974).

On the other hand, at the Holy Mass of Maundy Thursday, 9 April 1998, the Archbishop pointed out that the priesthood is not a means of self-fulfillment, not a ladder for upward social mobility for the priest and his relatives, or his ethnic group from which he

All ordained ministers are to be men of integrity and to exercise their ministry in humility. Integrity entails discerning what is right and wrong, acting on what you have discerned even at a personal cost and saying it openly.

comes. It is simply a vocation to serve the people of God.

2. THE PRIEST AFTER THE EXAMPLE OF CHRIST

In the life of Archbishop Paul, we see a shepherd who loved his flock and cared for them. To him, a priest is another Christ, a servant freed from the desires of lording over those kept under their charge. Consequently, priests, as shepherds, must be configured to Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd and are to carry

out their pastoral ministry in charity (Homily, Sanctification of Priests, Paul VI Memorial Centre, Bamendankwe, Thursday, 10 December 1998, p. 14). Drawing from the analogy of Christ and his Church, it was clear to the Archbishop that the priest, as the image of Christ – *imago Christi*, the spouse of the Church,

stands out in spousal relationship with regard to the community, loving people with a heart which is new, generous, pure, with genuine self-detachment, and never off-duty, but always available to serve God’s people (Homily, Day of Sanctification of Priests, Bamenda, Friday, 27 December 1996, pp. 4-5).

3. THE PRIEST, A MAN OF INTEGRITY

All ordained ministers are to be men of integrity and to exercise their ministry in humility. Integrity entails discerning what is right and wrong, acting on what you have discerned even at a personal cost and saying it openly (cfr. Stephen L. Carter, *Integrity*, Harper Collins, New York 1997, p. 7). Calling on his priests to be men of integrity, Archbishop Paul was wont to say that the dignity of the priest lies in his integrity. Thus, “a priest is a man of charity filled with wisdom and good reputation. He should be above suspicion and blame, and a man firmly rooted in the faith” (Homily, Admission to Candidacy for Diaconal Ordination, Bambui, Wednesday, 28 May 2003, p. 2).

Preaching during the Mass for the admission of candidates to the diaconate in Bambui on Thursday, 3 June 2004, the Archbishop told priests and

seminarians that the dignity of the priesthood lies in the fact that it is a gift from God, but the dignity of each individual priest is something which the individual priest has to earn. As such, priests are to cultivate qualities that will help them to exercise their ministry as men of integrity, and this involves being truthful, loyal, respectful to everyone, just, and balanced in judgement and behaviour.

4. THE PRIEST, A MAN OF PRAYER

Someone who knows how to pray and loves to do so will certainly live well. Archbishop Paul Verdzekov saw the priesthood as a ministry of prayer. "Prayer is our first service. Time spent in personal prayer is time spent in authentic service to God and His People..." (P. Verdzekov, Sermon on 10 October 1972). The life of a priest is contradictory if prayer is kept aside. Archbishop Paul prayed as if everything depended on God and worked as if all depended on him. Preaching at the Mass for the sanctification of priests in Bamenda on Friday, 17 December 1996, he noted that priests are to be men of prayer who nourish the faithful on what they themselves lived on. The proclaimed truth of the Gospel must be discovered only in the intimacy of prayer and meditation so that what they express should be what was first prepared in prayer (p. 7). To the Archbishop, therefore, a priest must be a man of prayer if he is a believer, and the herald of the faith. He must strive to have an intimate experience of his Master, Jesus Christ, in prayer (cfr. *Sermon, Liturgical Seminar, Mbengwi*, 10 October 1972).

5. THE PRIEST AND THE PRESBYTERY

In his book, *Why Priests are happy*, p. 22, Fr. Stephen Rosetti says that priests need to keep in unity with one another in order to be strong, joyful and peaceful. An isolated priest is unlikely to do well spiritually, pastorally and humanly. Archbishop Paul saw the success of the priestly ministry from the perspective of cooperation among brother priests. He encouraged them to live as a family in their presbyteries and in the diocese, sharing a common life, which is an expression of the unity in the presbyterate (cfr. Homily, Bamenda Provincial Association of Diocesan Priest, 13 July 1999, p. 17). Furthermore, it was his conviction that, without unity in the presbytery, there could not be holiness, since

there could not be holiness without love for brother priests (cfr. Homily, of Sanctification of Priests, Bamenda, 27 December 1996, p. 6). In his book, *The Priest and the Presbyterium*, Fr. Bonaventure Ndong writes that the Sacrament of Holy Orders is conferred on the priest as an individual, but each priest is inserted into the communion of the presbyterate. The Presbyterate, thus, appears as a true family, as a fraternity whose ties do not arise from flesh and blood but from the grace of Holy Orders (p. 5). Also, in his appeal to the priests in 1997, inter alia, the Archbishop exhorted priests to stop criticizing their brother priests and be united in such a way that no one can pitch one against another.

6. THE PRIESTHOOD AND THE EVANGELICAL COUNSELS

The priesthood entails a commitment to the Evangelical Counsels of Chastity in the celibate state, and a commitment to Obedience and Poverty. According to the Archbishop, priests must express this total gift of self, most especially in celibacy, a grace of the Lord all should strive to live. He believed and told priests that the practice of perpetual and perfect continence for the sake of the kingdom was, at once, a sign of pastoral charity and a source of spiritual fruitfulness in the world (cfr. Homily Bamenda Provincial Association of Diocesan Priests, 13 July 1999, p. 18). This implies that celibacy is a witness of the priest's undivided consecration to the mission entrusted to him, and a living sign of the world to come. The virtue of obedience must be exercised as a sign of love and service in accordance with the gospel, for Christ Himself was obedient to the Father's will. Christ, being God, abandoned his glory and became poor for our sake. The priesthood, then, is a call to poverty and to the love of the poor. Priests, therefore, should not become civil servants, the Archbishop reiterated (cfr. Homily, Priestly Ordination,

Cathedral-Mankon, 15 April 1998, pp. 7-9).

CONCLUSION

Conscious of their human weakness and frailty, and relying on the grace of God, Archbishop Paul saw the priesthood as a vocation to serve as Christ did. It equally entails being men who are morally sound and men of integrity, men of truth, living in unity and men striving towards holiness. According to Archbishop Paul, priests are to be men living in the world, for the world yet to come, free from the spirit of the world and reflecting the face of mercy and love to the world. As such, they must be prayerful, upright, loving, orderly, encouraging, dedicated, zealous, kind, respectful, and, above all, Christ-like (cfr. Fr. Gregory Cheo Ngwa, *A Man of Faith and Integrity*, Back Cover of the Book). In fact, his vision of the priesthood and pastoral ministry is found wholly in his life, for he lived the vision of the priesthood visibly.

Stop and Laugh! "Acts 2:38"

An elderly woman had just returned to her home from an evening of religious service when she was startled by an intruder. As she caught the man in the act of robbing her home of its valuables, she yelled, 'Stop -Acts 2:38!' (..turn from your sin...). The burglar stopped dead in his tracks. The woman calmly called the police and explained what she had done. As the officer cuffed the man to take him in, he asked the burglar, 'Why did you just stand there? All she did was yell a scripture to you.' 'Scripture?' replied the burglar, 'She said she had an AXE and two 38's!'

VOX POP

STAMS IN PICTURES

**DID PIUS AWA ACHIEVE ...BY
PAUL VERDZEKOV**

**DID PIUS AWA ACHIEVE ...BY
PAUL VERDZEKOV**

A third essential function entrusted to the Bishop is that of Governance. "Bishops govern the Particular Churches entrusted to them as the Vicars and Ambassadors of Christ... The Pastoral Office or the habitual and daily care of their sheep is entrusted to them completely. Nor are they to be regarded as Vicars of the Roman Pontiff, for they exercise an authority which is proper to them" (Ibid., 27). However, the individual Bishop must be in hierarchical communion with the successor of Saint Peter, to whom he is necessarily and obligatorily subject.

EPISCOPAL ORDINATION

At every Catholic Bishop's ordination, the Ordaining Prelate, clearly and publicly, admonishes him, to the hearing of all the assembled Faithful, about the essential and fundamental tasks which, by Episcopal Ordination, are entrusted to him as a Bishop. To the Bishop-Elect, the Ordaining Prelate says, *inter alia*: "Proclaim the Message whether it is welcome or unwelcome; correct error with unfailing patience and teaching. Pray and offer sacrifice for the people committed to your care and so draw every kind of grace for them from the overflowing holiness of Christ. As a steward of the mysteries of Christ in the Church entrusted to you, be a faithful Overseer and Guardian. Since you are chosen by the Father to rule over his family, always be mindful of the Good Shepherd, who knows his sheep and is known by them and who did not hesitate to lay down his life for them" (Roman Pontifical).

Here, again, we see that, at his Ordination, the new Bishop is given a triple function by the Church: the Proclamation of the Doctrine of the Faith (Teaching); Sanctification of the People of God; Oversight, Ruling and Governance of the Christian People in his Diocese. It is the same triple function mentioned in the Second Vatican Council's Dogmatic Constitution on The Church *Lumen Gentium* mentioned earlier. The triple function, entrusted to the Bishop at his Ordination, must necessarily be taken into consideration by anyone who wishes to carry out an assessment or evaluation of his Episcopal ministry.

THE BISHOP: SERVANT OF THE GOSPEL

From 30 September to 27 October 2001, the Tenth Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops was held in Rome under the Presidency of Pope John Paul II. It was the present Archbishop of Yaounde, the Most Reverend Victor Tonye Bakot, who represented the Cameroon National Episcopal Conference at that Synodal Assembly. Its theme was: The Bishop, Servant of the Gospel of Jesus Christ for the Hope of the World.

The Holy Father carefully considered all the Propositions and Suggestions offered to him by the Synodal Assembly. He, then, published an authoritative Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation entitled: *Pastores Gregis* (Pastor of the Flock). He did this on 16 October 2003, which was the twenty-fifth anniversary of his election as Successor of Saint Peter. Three chapters of this Apostolic Exhortation consider the three essential and fundamental functions or tasks of every Bishop as Teacher of the Faith and Herald of the Word. Chapter four takes up his role and function as Minister of the Grace of the High Priesthood. Chapter five takes up the function of the Pastoral Governance of the Bishop. A thorough study of these three chapters seem to me as absolutely indispensable for anyone who wishes to make an objective, serene balanced and impartial assessment or evaluation of the ministry of a given Bishop.

WHAT IS THE DIOCESE OF BUEA?

The Diocese of Buea, like every Diocese in the Catholic Church, is, as the Second Vatican Council tells us, a "portion of God's people which is entrusted to a Bishop to be shepherded by him with the cooperation of the Presbytery. Adhering thus to its Pastor and gathered by him in the Holy Spirit through the Gospel and

the Eucharist, this portion constitutes a Particular Church in which the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church of Christ is truly present and operative." (Christus Dominus, no. 11, Decree of the Second Vatican Council on the Bishop's Pastoral office in the Church).

The Diocese of Buea is, therefore, a Particular Church, like any other Catholic Church, "in which the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church is truly present and operative." But what is "The Church"? The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church of the Second Vatican Council tells us that "The Church is a kind of Sacrament or sign of intimate union with God, and of the unity of all mankind. She is also an instrument for the achievement of such union and unity (*Lumen Gentium*, no. 11). This definition of the Church is capital. An objective, impartial and balanced assessment and evaluation of a Particular Church over which a bishop presides must take this definition into account. The Church is a Communion. The Bishop who presides over a Particular Church (*cum Petro et sub Petro* – with Peter and under Peter) is not a monarch, lord, civil servant, civil administrator, economic or political operator, president of a non-governmental organisation or branch manager of a multinational. He is essentially a Pastor of a Particular Church which is, essentially, a Communion.

IS THE CATHOLIC CHURCH A DENOMINATION AMONG OTHERS?

To some Catholics, this question may seem surprising. In ordinary parlance they show that they understand the Catholic Church as a Denomination. In such a very serious matter as "Monitoring the heartbeat of the Church," and assessing the ministry of a given Bishop, it is extremely important that we know the right answer to the above question. Is the Catholic Church, in its own self-understanding, a Denomination among others? The distinguished American Catholic Layman and eminent Theologian, George Weigel, gives us the right answer to that question. "A denomination is something we help create by joining it; according to Vatican II, however, the Church is a divinely instituted Community into which we are incorporated by the Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist). Denominations have members like voluntary associations or clubs; the Church has members as a human body has arms and legs, fingers and toes. A denomination has moving boundaries, doctrinally and morally; the Church, according to Vatican II, is nourished by Creeds and moral convictions that clearly establish its boundaries. The structures of a denomination are something we can alter at will; the Church, according to Vatican II, has a form, a structure given to it by Christ. Catholicism has Bishops and a Ministerial Priesthood, and Peter's successor, the Bishop of Rome, presides over the whole Church in charity, not because Catholics today think these are good ways to do things but because Christ wills these for his Church" (George Weigel, *The Truth of Catholicism*, New York, Cliff Street Books, Harper Collins 2001, p. 39). The Catholic Church, indeed, is not a denomination among others. Informed non-Catholics know this, even if some Catholics themselves seem not to know. But, as has already been said, it is extremely important for us to keep in mind what the Catholic Church is in order that our assessment and evaluation of its operations may be helpful. The Bishop who presides over a Particular Church is not above criticism by any means. He is human, and is liable to error, even many errors, like the rest of us. However, an objective, impartial and balanced assessment of his ministry must take into account the triple office entrusted to him at his Episcopal ordination as well as the true nature of the Particular Church over which he presides.

THE BISHOP: PROMOTER OF THE SPIRITUALITY OF COMMUNION

An essential and truly fundamental point which my fellow Catholics of the Bamenda Ecclesiastical Province would need to keep firmly in mind, if they wish to assess a given Bishop's ministry, is that the Bishop has the responsibility of promoting and fostering a Spirituality of Communion in the particular Church over which he presides. With regard to this responsibility of the Bishop, Pope John Paul II had this to say: "In my Apostolic Letter *Novo Millennio Ineunte* I pointed out the need to make the Church the home and school of communion. This remark had a vast resonance and was taken up by the Synodal Assembly. Obviously the Bishop, in his own spiritual journey, has the primary duty of promoting and encouraging a spirituality of communion, and tirelessly working to make it a basic educational principle wherever human and Christian formation takes place: in Parishes, Catholic Associations, Ecclesial Movements, Catholic Schools and Youth groups. The Bishop will be particularly concerned to ensure that the spirituality of communion takes root and grows wherever future priests are trained, that is to say, in Seminaries and in Religious Novitiates, in Religious Houses, in Institutes and Faculties of Theology." (*Pastores Gregis*, no. 22). The promotion and fostering of a Spirituality of Communion at every level of the Particular Church over which he presides must certainly constitute one of the principal criteria for assessing and evaluating the ministry of a given Bishop.

IS THE DIOCESE PRIMARILY A "DEVELOPMENT" AGENCY?

In any effort to assess and evaluate the Pastoral Ministry of a given Bishop, it seems to me essential that all of us, Catholics of the Bamenda Ecclesiastical Province, should get our priorities right with regard to our expectations concerning the involvement of our particular Churches in what have come to be known as "development projects." In this regard, chapter five of Anthony Ndi's excellent book entitled: "Mill Hill Missionaries in Southern West Cameroon", seems to me to be particularly insightful and enlightening. That chapter is entitled: "Role of the Missions in Educational and Socio-Economic Development."

Anthony Ndi writes, inter alia: "In considering Missionary contributions to nation-building in Southern Cameroon, the tendency is to think merely of the physical and tangible achievements made in the areas of infrastructure, schools, hospitals, clinics and Agro-industrial projects that were realized as part of their integrated approach to Evangelization. Consequently, to ordinary observers, the real impact of missionary enterprise was and continues to be measured in terms of their contributions to visible, quantifiable and structural developments. Whereas to the missionaries, generally, these secular achievements were only a means to spiritual development in the country, to many Cameroonians, on the other hand, the material attainments were an end in themselves by which the missionaries are frequently unwittingly judged. There have been occasional pointless arguments as to which of the Christian denominations made the most contributions to national development. But hardly do those interested in these debates pause to consider how many Catechists, Evangelists, Pastors, Clergymen and Religious who actually constitute the essence of missionary endeavour were produced by the denominations and how many graduates from the various mission institutions really practice the faith they profess... Even within the Catholic Church, there are Christians who would prefer to have European missionaries to Diocesan priests in their parishes because the former can more easily solicit funds for development projects for their parishes. The emphasis tends to be on material rather than on spiritual development, far removed from the original intention of the missionaries... For someone like Bishop Peeters whose zeal for development in Buea Diocese rivalled that of the State, he always strove to know where to draw the line between the Church's involvement in development projects and when this interfered with the principal goal of Evangelization... Even in matters of Catholic Education, there has always been a strong tendency among the Laity to rank the Schools according to performance in Public Examinations. The right emphasis is not placed on the Christian quality of the graduates and the manner in which these institutions have contributed towards the furtherance and deepening of the Catholic Faith." (Anthony Ndi, op. cit., pp. 129-131). The

forgoing observations of a Cameroonian Catholic layman seem to me to be essential in providing a solid basis for any exercise aimed at making an objective, serene and impartial assessment of the ministry of a given Bishop, and in the Particular Church over which he presides.

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM THE CHURCH

It is absolutely true that on account of a deeper awareness and better understanding of her mission in the world, the Catholic Church is irrevocably and irreversibly committed to the exigencies of integral human development, to the exigencies of Justice and Peace. That is why she becomes involved, in response to the changing needs of times and places, in what has been said earlier on in this article, we should be extremely careful, when assessing or evaluating the ministry of a given Particular Church, i.e., a diocese, that we do not confuse MEANS and ENDS! The means employed for the purpose of attaining an end, or a goal, are distinct from that End or Goal.

"Between Evangelization and Human Advancement – development and liberation – there are, in fact, profound links. These include links of an anthropological order, because the man who is to be evangelized is not an abstract being but is a subject to social and economic questions..." (*Evangelii Nuntiandi*, no. 31). That is why the Diocese of Buea, for example, the Church, apart from its Schools and Health Institutions, has been involved, at various times, in such Agro-Industrial Development Projects as the Lower Bakundu self-help, or the Bangem Agricultural Project. Pope Paul VI of blessed memory warns us, saying: "We must not ignore the fact that many, even generous Christians who are sensitive to the dramatic questions involved in the problem of liberation effort are frequently tempted to reduce her missions to the dimensions of her simply temporal projects. They reduce her aims to a man-centred goal; the salvation of which she is the messenger would be reduced to material well-being. Her activity, forgetful of all spiritual and religious preoccupation, would become initiatives of the political or social order. But if this were so, the Church would lose her fundamental meaning." (*Evangelii Nuntiandi*, no. 32).

It is for this reason that, in his very first Encyclical Letter which he signed on Christmas Day 2005, Pope Benedict XVI tells us, inter alia: "The Church cannot and must not take upon herself the political battle to

bring about the most just society possible. She cannot and must not replace the State. Yet at the same time she cannot and must not remain on the side-lines in the fight for justice. She has to play her part through rational argument and she has to reawaken the spiritual energy without which justice, which always demands sacrifice, cannot prevail and prosper. A just society must be the achievement of politics, not of the Church. Yet the promotion of justice through efforts to bring about openness of mind and will to the demands of the common good is something which concerns the Church deeply" (*Deus Caritas Est*, no. 28).

The Church contributes to development through the formation of consciences. The Editorial in "The Sun" newspaper mentioned above tells us that "The Church is easily the biggest and most potent non-governmental structure in this and other countries. It therefore stands accused if it fails to use that leverage to press the leadership for needed institutional changes." To my fellow Catholics of the Bamenda Ecclesiastical

"...a people's development does not derive primarily from money, material assistance or technological means but from the formation of consciences and the gradual maturing of ways of thinking and patterns of behaviour."

Province who might wish to assess or evaluate the role of the Catholic Church in public life, or the ministry of anyone of their bishops, I would respectfully propose that we all keep firmly in our minds, at all times, the following teaching of Pope John Paul II concerning the involvement of the Church in the Promotion of Development: "Today, more than in the past, Missionaries are being recognized as promoters of Development by Governments and International Experts, who are impressed at the remarkable results achieved with scanty means... It is not the Church's mission to work directly on the economic, technical and political levels, or to contribute materially to development. Rather, her mission consists in offering an opportunity not to "have more" but to "be more", by awakening their consciences through the Gospel... The Church and her missionaries also promote development through schools, hospitals, printing presses, universities and experimental farms. But a

people's development does not derive primarily from money, material assistance or technological means but from the formation of consciences and the gradual maturing of ways of thinking and patterns of behaviour. Man is the principal agent of development, not money or technology." (*Redemptoris Missio*, no. 58).

COMMUNIQUE OF THE DIOCESAN PRIESTS OF THE BAMENDA ECCLESIASTICAL PROVINCE

In the Editorial of "The Sun" Newspaper quoted above, we find the following two sentences: "Buea is today under Bamenda Ecclesiastical Province – a tribute to Bamenda's relative growth and dynamism. That does not exactly enthuse the population of the Southwest, who may be tempted to lay the stagnation around Buea at the outgoing Chief Shepherd's door" (page 5). Note the transition, almost imperceptible but real, from an affirmation about Bamenda Ecclesiastical Province, to "the population of the Southwest". Far be it from me to argue or take issue with anyone concerning the above-mentioned editorial. In connection with the Civil Provinces of origin, our Diocesan Priests, I only wish to call our attention to a Communique which the Association of Diocesan Priests of the Bamenda Ecclesiastical Province adopted and published at Mutengene on Thursday, 10th July 1997. In that Communique, our Diocesan Priests said, inter alia: "The Diocesan Priests of the Bamenda Ecclesiastical Province totally abjure, and absolutely reject, whatever could sow, or foster division among us, or whatever tends to divide or to categorise us along ethnic, civil provincial or regional lines. Since 'In Christ there is no East or West, In Him no South or North' (Cameroon Hymnal, Hymn No. 303), we totally reject our being categorised by anyone as North-Westerners or South-Westerners. For us to accept to be labelled, identified and categorised, first and foremost as North-Westerners or South-Westerners, would be tantamount to endorsing the partisan and divisive agenda of those 'who wish to exploit the tribal sentiments of the weak as a means of arriving at political power.'" (Pastoral Letter on Tribalism, no. 4).

Such an agenda, since it is essentially based upon the promotion of the idolatry of ethnic group, is patently anti-evangelical. In their Pastoral Letter, the Bishops remind us that "when messengers of the Gospel allow themselves to be recruited on behalf of partisan interests, they

become accomplices on certain attitudes and forms of behaviour which they ought to denounce" (Ibid., no.2). We make ours the following principle of the great Vietnamese Archbishop, the Most Reverend Francois Xavier Nguyen Vanthuan: "Do not be particular as to which locality you live or work in, but open wide your heart so that every person may have a place there. Otherwise you will be a Catholic only in name" (*The Road of Hope*, no. 226). The only legitimate and admissible distinction among us is that which is based upon our respective dioceses of Incardination, i.e., the diocese in which each one of us was incardinated on the day of his ordination to the Diaconate" (*Cameroon Panorama*, no. 428-429, August/September 1997, pp. 3-4).

It seems that the authors of the foregoing Communique, Diocesan Priests of the Bamenda Ecclesiastical Province, were bearing public witness to what they are in Christ. Their Communique sounds a bit like the celebrated Epistle to Diognetus, written in the second decade of the second century, in which we find some characteristics of the early Christians. In that document, we read: "For instance, though they are residents at home in their own countries, their behaviour there is more like that of transients; they take their full part as citizens but they also submit to anything and everything as if they were aliens. For them every foreign country is a motherland and any motherland is a foreign country... Though destiny has placed them here in the flesh, they do not live after the flesh; their days are passed on the earth, but their citizenship is above in the heavens."

DIOCESAN PRIESTS: PRO-CULTURAL AND COUNTER-CULTURAL

"The schisms and centrifugal tendencies that have rocked the Body of Christ were all born of the clash between unbending conservatism and revised values seeking accommodation. The

Maranatha palaver was not between Awa and Ntella any more than the revival in Bastos was between Bame and Elangwe. They were part of the so-called charismatic movement born of the understandable need to break from the drabness of old canons in favour of more expressive spirituality. In the Catholic Church, it may even be 'Ecclesia (sic) in Africa' pushed unexpectedly to its limit."

The immediately foregoing quotation is a passage which appears in the editorial of "The Sun" Newspaper to which reference was made in no. 2 above. Not really understanding it, because I am intellectually incapable of handling the issue of the Maranatha movement referred to in the editorial of "The Sun" Newspaper, I completely refrain from any attempt to address the passage quoted above, consistently with what I earlier said in no. 5 above, relative to the purpose of this article. The Priests of the Bamenda Ecclesiastical Province are totally committed to what is known today as Inculturation. They are so committed because the Second Vatican Council firmly teaches us as follows: "In imitation of the plan of the Incarnation, the Young Churches, rooted in Christ and built upon the foundation of the Apostles, take to themselves in a wonderful exchange all the riches of the nations which were given to Christ as an inheritance (cf. Ps. 2:8). From the customs and traditions of their people, from their wisdom and their learning, from their arts and sciences, these Churches borrow all those things which can contribute to the glory of the Creator, the revelation of the Saviour's grace, or the proper arrangement of Christian life" (*Ad Gentes*, no. 22). The Fathers of the First Special Assembly for Africa of the Synod of Bishops held at Rome from 10 April to 8 May 1994 treated the issue of Inculturation at considerable length. On 14 September 1995, Pope John Paul II signed and promulgated his Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, *Ecclesia in Africa*, at the Nunciature in Yaoundé. Chapter three of that Apostolic Exhortation is all about Inculturation. From Wednesday, 17 to Sunday, 21 March 1999, hundreds of elected delegates from every part of the Bamenda Ecclesiastical Province celebrated the Seventh Catholic Convention at Sacred Heart College, Mankon. These delegates represented

every parish in the four dioceses of this Ecclesiastical Province, as well as participants representing the main Associations of Christ's Lay Faithful, the Ecclesial Movements, all institutes of the Consecrated Life, and the Clergy, in short, all the components of the Mystical Body of Christ in the Bamenda Ecclesiastical Province.

The one and only point of business addressed by this Convention in five days of very intensive work was the drawing up of a Provincial Pastoral Plan based on the Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation: *Ecclesia in Africa*. The 254-page Report of that Convention, printed by Copy Printing Technology, Bamenda, contains our Provincial Pastoral Plan drawn up and adopted by the Convention.


order is observed in this matter in the diocese over which he presides in charity.

THE BISHOP'S RESPONSIBILITY OF DISCIPLINE

It is extremely important for all of us, Catholics, to understand and appreciate the grave responsibility of a Bishop for discipline among all categories of Christ's Faithful in his diocese. With regard to all the priests of the diocese, the following teaching of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* is extremely important and pertinent. Quoting directly from *Lumen Gentium*, the *Catechism* says: "The Priests, prudent co-operators of the Episcopal College and its support and instrument, called to the service of the people of God, constitute, together with their Bishop, a unique sacerdotal college (presbyterium) dedicated, it is true, to a variety of distinct duties. In each local assembly of the Faithful they represent, in a certain sense, the Bishop, with whom they are associated in all trust and generosity; in part they take upon themselves his duties and solicitude and in their daily toils discharge them" (*Lumen Gentium*, no. 28, para. 2). Priests can exercise their ministry only in dependence on the Bishop and in communion with him. The promise of obedience they make to the Bishop at the moment of ordination and the kiss of peace from him at the end of the ordination liturgy means that the

Bishop considers them his co-workers, his sons, his brothers and his friends, and they in turn owe him love and obedience" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 1567).


Indeed, as the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, quoting the Conciliar Constitution *Lumen Gentium* rightly says, no Catholic priest can claim to have a personal ministry which he can exercise independently outside of the Bishop. That is why the Communique of our Diocesan Priests issued at Mutengene on 10 July 1997, rightly quotes the letter of Saint Ignatius to the Smyrnaeans in which he said, inter alia: "Make sure that no step is ever taken by anyone without the Bishop's sanction." Every priest is co-operator with the Bishop, and is dependent on the Bishop. It does not help a Catholic priest



Stop and Laugh!

IF JESUS WAS
HERE!

A mother was preparing pancakes for her sons, Kevin, 5, and Ryan, 3. The boys began to argue over who would get the first pancake. Their mother saw the opportunity for a moral lesson. If Jesus were sitting here, He would say, 'Let my brother have the first pancake. I can wait.' Kevin turned to his younger brother and said, 'Ryan, you be Jesus.'



It was certainly because of this that all Christ's Lay Faithful, Members of Institutes of Consecrated Life, and the Clergy must be resolutely and unambiguously Pro-Cultural. However, it is not just anything that is admissible in the Catholic Church just because its author, or authors, claims to be engaged in Inculturation. The Catholic Church is not in the business of folklore. Inculturation is only admissible in the Catholic Church if it complies with two essential and fundamental criteria, namely: (1) Compatibility with the Gospel, and (2) Communion with the Universal Church. It is the Bishop of the Particular Church who, in the spirit of effective and affective collegiality with his brother bishops, has the grave personal responsibility to see to it, welcome or unwelcome, that the right

one bit if anyone of us should assist him, or connive with him, so that he may act in rebellion against his Bishop, or independently of his Bishop.

UNITY OF THE DIOCESAN PRIESTS OF THE BAMENDA ECCLESIASTICAL PROVINCE

The idolatry of the ethnic group is a real problem in our country, and in other parts of Africa. So pervasive is the idolatry of ethnic groups that even Priests, if they are not extremely wary, can become affected by it. The Bishops of Cameroon addressed the matter in their Pastoral Letter on Tribalism, a pertinent passage of which was quoted by the Plenary Assembly of the Association of Diocesan Priests of the Bamenda Ecclesiastical Province in their Communique issued at Mutengene in July 1997. Our diocesan priests across the Ecclesiastical Province consider their unity in Christ as a priceless gift which they will not allow any cleavages along ethnic, or civil provincial lines to erode. Our diocesan priests, rightly jealous of their unity, and conscious of their responsibility to be the flag-bearers of unity of all Christ's Faithful, irrespective of the ethnic groups, divisions, provinces, or nations of origin, are very mindful of the following passage of the Post-Synodal Exhortation, *Ecclesia in Africa*: "Another challenge identified by the Synod Fathers concerns the various forms of divisions which need to be healed through honest dialogue. It has been rightly noted that within the borders left behind by the Colonial Powers, the co-existence of ethnic groups with different traditions, languages and even religions often meets obstacles arising from serious mutual hostility. Tribal oppositions at times endanger if not peace at least the pursuit of the common good of the society. They also create difficulties for the life of the Churches and the acceptance of Pastors from other ethnic groups. This is why the Church in Africa feels challenged by the specific responsibility of healing these divisions" (*Ecclesia in Africa*, no. 49). In order to implement the foregoing point made by the Exhortation, *Ecclesia in Africa*, we, the priests of the Bamenda Ecclesiastical Province, earnestly appeal to our fellow Catholics to pray

constantly for us, and to challenge and advise us forthrightly, so that we may be truly united with our Bishops, and united among ourselves. We need the prayerful support of our fellow Catholics, so that we may truly and unambiguously live, concretely, that sublime passage of the Letter of Saint Ignatius of Antioch, Bishop and Martyr, which we all read in our Breviaries on the Second Sunday of the Year: "That is why it is proper for your conduct and your practices to correspond closely with the mind of the Bishop. And this, indeed, they are doing; your justly respected clergy who are a credit to God, are attuned to their Bishop like the strings of a harp, and the result is a hymn of praise to Jesus Christ from minds that are in union, and affections that are in harmony. Pray, then, come and join this choir, every one of you; let there be a whole symphony of minds in concert... A completely united front will help to keep you in constant communion with God." Thus wrote Saint Ignatius of Antioch to the Ephesians at the beginning of the second century. Thanks to the prayers, advice, challenge and support of our fellow Catholics, may we, Diocesan Priests of the Bamenda Ecclesiastical Province, be found to live these sublime words of Saint Ignatius of Antioch daily, in a manner that is at once credible, coherent, consistent, honest, sincere, unimpeachable and

Stop and think!

To me, God and compassion are one and the same. Compassion is the joy of sharing. It's doing small things for the love of each other-just a smile, or carrying a bucket of water, or showing some simple kindness. These are the small things that make up compassion —
Mother Teresa

transparent, without any hypocrisy, deceit, pretence or dissimulation.

SELF-EXAMINATION

Because the Bishop who presides over a Particular Church is human, and has his own human weaknesses, he is, as already affirmed above, not above

criticisms. Similarly, the Particular Church over which he presides, made up, as it is, of fallible human beings, is not above criticisms. It is, however, extremely important for each one of us, Catholics, never to forget that THE CHURCH is all of us. The Mystical Body of Christ, THE CHURCH, is never the Bishop alone, though he has a unique role of leadership therein. Consequently, when I feel free to criticise THE CHURCH, let me not forget that I am also, by Baptism, a member of THE CHURCH. In this regard, the following words of a great Italian Seminary Rector can help each and everyone of us: "It is easy and convenient to love the ideal Church. The real Mystical body of Christ is the real Church: divine in its human infirmities. Christ assumes as his own the infirmities of the Church and expects assistance from you, assistance above all in you yourself" (Felice Cenci).

The Second Vatican Council made it abundantly and unambiguously clear that politics and the conduct of temporal affairs is the province of Christ's Lay Faithful. Consequently,

We must not give only what we have; we must give what we are.

—Cardinal Mercia

whenever any of the Lay Faithful want to exercise his right to criticise "The Church" of which he or she is a member, for its weaknesses, failures or negligence as far as the temporal affairs of the nation are concerned, it is necessary that such a Catholic should also pause and ask himself or herself: How have I fulfilled my own duties and responsibilities in the conduct of temporal affairs which are my direct province, and not directly of the Bishop, as the Council teaches? "The Laity are called in a special way to make the Church present and operative in those places and circumstances where only through them can she become the salt of the earth. Thus every layman by virtue of the very gifts bestowed upon him is at the same time a witness and a living instrument of the mission of the Church herself 'according to the measure of Christ's bestowal' (Eph. 4:7)" (*Lumen Gentium*, no.33).

GRATITUDE

We, the Catholics of the Bamenda Ecclesiastical Province, must ever feel deeply grateful to the Diocese of Buea for having hosted the First, Second and Fourth Catholic Conventions of our Ecclesiastical Province. At the First Catholic Convention in April 1967, Mrs. Susan Mondoia, addressing a Plenary Assembly of the Convention, said, inter alia, (I cite from memory): "Do not ask what the Church has done for you, but ask yourself what you have done

for your Church.” She was no doubt paraphrasing, and adapting to our local situation, the immortal words of John Fitzgerald Kennedy, 35th President of the United States of America addressed to his fellow citizens. One must also thank the Diocese of Buea for having organized for all of us, over the years, a number of other very important spiritual events, such as: The Provincial Marian Year at Bojongo; The Provincial Symposium held at Bojongo from 7 to 11 December 1994 on the Special Assembly for Africa of the Synod of Bishops; and the Provincial Eucharistic Congress held at Bojongo in 2000.

THE WITNESS OF DR. SIMON N. LYONGA

On Trinity Sunday 1996, Bishop Awa, surrounded by His Eminence, Christian Cardinal Tumi, and by several archbishops and bishops in Cameroon, celebrated the Silver Jubilee of his ordination as a Bishop in the Parish Church of Mutengene. The Jubilee Mass on that occasion brought together a very large number of Christians and other well-wishers from all over the Bamenda Ecclesiastical Province. In the run up to the jubilee celebrations, a Cameroonian English language newspaper ran a barrage of disparaging acerbic and deprecating articles on the Episcopal Ministry of Bishop Awa, insisting that there was nothing really to celebrate, according to that newspaper. It would be totally wrong, and deeply offensive and gratuitously unfair to Christ’s Faithful of the Diocese of Buea for me to even suggest that the joyful celebration of the Silver Jubilee of their Bishop was not worthwhile.

At the end of the Jubilee Mass, Mrs. Patricia Elonge read an address on behalf of the Catholic Community of the Diocese of Buea. This address of seven closely typed pages was the work of the Jubilee Organization Committee under the chairmanship of Dr. Simon Lyonga. After paying warm tribute to the Bishop of Buea for a number of significant achievements in the promotion and fostering of vocations to the priesthood and to the Consecrated Life, as well as for his many achievements in Education, Healthcare, and the Construction of excellent Parish churches, the address included the following passage which appears to be particularly significant: “As the primary beneficiaries, we, your flock, can, today, and before all present, say with confidence and pride of heart that for the past twenty-five years, our diocese has matched forward with a sense of purpose. The flock is alive and growing, and the grass beneath has not withered. Your people have not drifted

aimlessly nor have they been tossed around in confusion. Ignorance has not been banished among the people of the Diocese, but the people are maturing in the knowledge of the living God. You have exercised your authority as derived from your ordination...” The Jubilee Organization Committee, bore witness in its Address, publicly, that Bishop Awa had fostered and promoted the Spirituality of Communion in the diocese.

NO REQUEST FOR THANKS

Bishop Pius Suh Awa was ordained a Catholic priest by Cardinal Agagianian, Patriarch of Cilivia of the Armenians, in the Chapel of the Pontificio Collegio Urbano di Propaganda Fide on 20 December 1961, i.e., forty-five years and three months ago. The Rector of the College who saw to his Seminary training, the Rector who recommended him for priestly ordination, was a very learned, humble and saintly man by name Felice Cenci. Cenci used to tell us: “Anyone who does good in order to be thanked for it does not merit the gratitude he expects; he will not receive that gratitude either, because gratitude is a flower which blossoms, when it does blossom, only for the person who does not grow it” (my weak translation from the Italian) (Sac. Felice Cenci, *Noterelle di Viaggio*, Roma, Tipar Poligrafica Editrice, 1982, p. 5). Another person who learned from experience never to expect gratitude for anything, and for that reason, is an example for all of us, is Bernard Fonlon. He wrote in 1965 i.e. forty-two years ago: “Those who think they can win people over by pandering to loafers and hangers-on are headed, more often than not, for disappointment and bitterness; for as I have learnt from very personal experience, it is a curious fact that it is often those for whom you

do most that will grumble loudest and turn round to say the unkindest things about you. From my short experience, I can assure you of one thing absolutely: it is that being an elected representative, especially of a needy, thoughtless people, is a thankless job, a job that tries your soul. For do what you will, those who are never satisfied, those who grumble or denounce you, will be louder or far more numerous, than those who see your worth” (Bernard Fonlon, *To Every Son of Nso*, Yaoundé, Centre d’Edition et de Production de Manuels et d’Auxiliares de l’Enseignement, 1965, p. 35). The above two quotations from Monsignor Felice Cenci and Bernard Fonlon suffice to let us know that Bishop Awa is not looking for or expecting any thanks from anyone here on earth for his ministry in the Diocese of Buea.

THE TESTIMONY OF ST AUGUSTINE

This article will close with a quotation from Saint Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, and an eminent Doctor of the Church. Placing his hope, like any bishop, in God and in Him alone, Bishop Awa can make Saint Augustine’s words his own. “Whatever we may be, do not let your hope rest in our person as such but in the Person of Christ. I would readily make little of myself as to speak like a true Bishop; I want to rejoice over you and not be exalted by you. Without a doubt, if I find any people placing their hope in my person, I would not commend them for this; they are to be corrected, not confirmed in their attitude; to be changed, not to be left to continue to do this.... Don’t let your hopes rest on me. If we are good, we are ministers; if we are bad, we are also ministers. But, if indeed we be good, we are being ministers faithful to Christ really and truly ministers” (Quoted in *Instrumentum Laboris* of the Tenth Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, Vatican City, 2001, p. 26).

Stop and think!

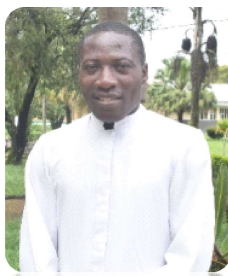
A church is “sacred” because it is set apart exclusively for the service of God. A vessel is “sacred” when it is used only at Mass or to hold the Blessed Sacrament. In the same way a priest is “sacred” because he has entered into a contract with God to spend himself exclusively on what has to do with the service of God, and on His side God has accepted this offering and has sealed the priest as His well-beloved son. Just as the image stamped on the coin shows it to be true, or as the signature at the foot of a document proves it to be genuine, so this “character” or mark set upon the priest by God entitles him to a place of special honour in the ranks of God’s friends. That is why the priest, for the very reason that he is “another Christ,” must expect love from those who love Christ, and bitter opposition from those who hate Christ.

Rev. Robert Nash, S.J.

VIOLENCE, TORTURE AND THE QUEST FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE: THE INSIGHTS OF ARCHBISHOP PAUL VERDZEKOV



FR. GASINYUMEN

REV. EUGENE KUM
THEOLOGY IV

inalienable rights of the human person: deepening the doctrinal aspect of Christian life, dealing with questions under discussion both at individual and institutional levels, and showing concern for victims of violation of human rights (cfr. *Ibid.*, pp. 35-36).

2. TORTURE AND THE CHRISTIAN CONSCIENCE

INTRODUCTION

In primum, it is important that some basic terms should be clearly defined regarding our topic under consideration. According to the 8th Edition of the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, violence is an action done with the intention to hurt or kill somebody, and torture is the act of causing somebody severe pain in order to punish them or make them say or do something. Torture can be mental as well as physical suffering. The term social has to do with society and the way it is organized. Justice is the fair treatment of people. Articles 4, 5 and 9, especially article 5, of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* prohibit violence and torture as follows: "No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment." With terms defined, we can now examine Archbishop Paul Verdzevov's view on violence, torture and the quest for social justice.

1. CREATION OF AN ARCHDIOCESAN JUSTICE AND PEACE COMMISSION

As an ardent supporter and defender of social justice, Archbishop Paul, on 12 December 2002, created the Justice and Peace Commission in the Archdiocese of Bamenda, (cfr. G. CHEO, *Archbishop Paul Verdzevov: A Man of Faith and Integrity*, 2006, p. 35). He proposed three things to be done by its members in order to enhance and safeguard the dignity and

One other decisive statement on the aforementioned subject is the article which Fr. Paul, as editor of the *Cameroon Panorama*, wrote entitled "Torture and the Christian Conscience." Here, he presented a brief historical survey of torture in the world, and in the Church, from ancient times right down to the Nazi concentration camps of the Second World War. He also looked at what was happening in Brazil, South Africa and elsewhere in the world, and the problem that this created for the Christian conscience. (cfr. P. VERDZEKOV, "Torture and the Christian Conscience," in *Cameroon Panorama* 105 [1970], p. 5).

"Torture debases the torturer more than it does the victim, and it brings shame on the nation. The act carried out under the command of a superior does not excuse one before God"

Hinging his argument on article 5 of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, the Divine Law and the Magisterial teachings of the Church, Archbishop Paul condemned all acts of torture. When he saw what was going on in the world then, he lamented: "What are we to say when we discover that some of our own kith and kin in Black Africa have been converted into sadistic savages, into agents of torture atrocities inflicted on their own fellow blacks, in the name of the preservation of law and order, of security? It is a situation that calls for tears, for utter revolt in the hearts

of all Africans" (*Ibid.*, p. 8). According to him, our ancestors who knew nothing about torture, and did not practise it, were more civilized than those colonial masters who have planted horrible torture in Africans; alongside those Africans who have, without qualms of conscience, picked it up (cfr. *Ibid.*) For him, torture is one of those acts which must be considered as intrinsically evil (cfr. *Ibid.*).

He ended the article by paying tribute to Great Britain in the following words: "The glorious heritage of the British trained African police, a heritage in which respect and veneration for the dignity of the human person is a fundamental principle, is one that should be forever cherished and preserved" (*Ibid.*, p. 19). This is because their heritage is one that prohibits slavery and forced labour, torture (bodily or mental), and cruel or inhuman or degrading treatment and punishment. In those days, "under the British, it was indeed unheard of that a police-man in British Cameroons, slap anyone, let alone torture him" (Cfr. G. CHEO, *Archbishop Paul Verdzevov: A Man of Faith and Integrity*, p. 36). It is sad to observe that this Archbishop so eloquently spoke against torture in South Africa and other parts of the world in 1970 without knowing that, two decades later, Cameroon, his own beloved fatherland will be caught in the same web.

3. TORTURE AND VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN CAMEROON

The zenith of the teaching of Archbishop Paul Verdzevov on violence, torture and the quest for social justice was reached when on Sunday, 29 November 1992, he issued a Pastoral Letter titled "*Torture and Violation of Human Rights*", occasioned by the post-election crisis

in Cameroon in general and the North West Region in particular. The atmosphere of this period has been artistically painted in the Song *"Tribute to Paul Verdzekov"* by Fr. Bonaventure Ndong, 2005. In this song, he recounts: "And I remember in 1992, the state of emergency, imposed on the North West Province, torture was rampant, people were brutalised, battered, some silenced to death; movement was prohibited. All efforts to get you [Archbishop Paul Verdzedov] as an exception to this rule failed; so you trekked and trekked, through the whole town, to go and ordain deacons in Bambui. Then you took your pen, a true scribe, and wrote, condemning torture in all its forms."

As a true ecclesiastic, he upheld the teachings of the Church: "Torture debases the torturer more than it does the victim, and it brings shame on the nation. The act carried out under the command of a superior does not excuse one before God" (*Gaudium et Spes*, n. 27). He insisted on the sacredness of the human person and said: "Every time that you torture your fellow human beings in your torture chambers; every time that, in public, you inflict cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment on others; every time that you force people to roll and to wallow in mud for your 'amusement', you drag the name of our country and its Government into mud, you dishonour our country, rendering it, through your abominable actions, a pariah among the nations" (P. VERDZEKOV, *Pastoral Letter on Torture and Violation of Human Rights*, 29 November 1992, nn. 1-4).

During this period, he decried the rampant torture, brutality, and mysterious disappearance of some individuals, condemned the fact that many detainees were continuously being subjected to psychological and physical torture. He personally saw them in great pain, with swollen limbs and genitals, blisters and deep wounds and cracks in skulls (Cfr. G. CHEO, *Archbishop Paul Verdzekov: A Man of Faith and Integrity*, p. 35).

4. FACTORS THAT UNDERMINE, THREATEN AND DESTROY PEACE IN CAMEROON

In his homily for the Annual Holy Mass of the Cadets of Mary at St Joseph's Metropolitan Cathedral, Bamenda, 12 December 1992, n. 6, the Prelate outlined five factors that undermine peace: Firstly, whenever there is injustice, peace cannot exist in the long run since peace is the fruit of justice. Secondly, lying, falsehood, and deceit poison relations among people. Another factor that undermines peace is envy and jealousy. Fourthly, lack of forgiveness, which nourishes grievances and leads to hatred against others, threatens peace. Lastly, peace is also undermined in a country when some persons or groups of persons feel that they are oppressed by others.

5. SOME LESSONS FROM ARCHBISHOP VERDZEKOV ON MATTERS OF TORTURE AND VIOLENCE

He was firmly convinced that though the forces of Law and Order are needed in every country, guns, intimidation and brutality cannot maintain peace. God alone is the sentry guarding the city (cfr. P. VERDZEKOV, *Homily during the Christmas Midnight Mass*, St

Joseph's Metropolitan Cathedral, Bamenda, 24 December 1992, n. 11). Secondly, violence never pays and should be outrightly denounced. Violence only begets violence; it creates a vicious spiral of violence and of bloody repression; aggravation of the sufferings of the poor brings about deep hatred in countless hearts and inflicts wounds that might take generations to heal (cfr. *Ibid.*). In the third place, vengeance never pays, because vengeance is God's. "If your enemy is hungry, you should give him food, and if he is thirsty, let him drink. Thus, you heap red-hot coals on his head" (Rom. 12:20). Fourthly, we can learn from him that the theme of peace is the responsibility of each and every one of us. Peace can never be generated solely by politicians or by the armed forces (Cfr. *Ibid.*). Lastly, justice is the foundation of peace and peace is the fruit of justice. Whenever injustice reigns, peace disappears" (cfr. P. VERDZEKOV, *Homily during a Mass with the Inmates of the Provincial Convict Prison*, Bamenda, 25 December 1992, n. 5). For him, social justice, which brings about peace, consists in the scrupulous respect of the rights of others (cfr. *Ibid.*).

CONCLUSION

Having seen the insights of Archbishop Paul Verdzekov on torture, violence and the quest for social justice, the point remains: with the socio-political crisis in the North West and South West Regions of Cameroon, a copycat of the 1992 incidents, which from the very start in 2016 till date, has seen moments of torture and violence and degradation of the human person, there can be no doubt that his voice is re-echoed in the condemnation of these vices inherent in this crisis. In fact, his thought on this matter remains relevant today. His words speak to each and every one of us, they prick our consciences, and are a clarion call for a change of heart.

Stop and Laugh!

CHURCH USHERS

Six-year-old Angie and her four-year-old brother Joel were sitting together during Holy Mass. Joel giggled, sang, and talked out loud. Finally, his big sister had enough.

'You're not supposed to talk out loud in church.'

'Why? Who's going to stop me?' Joel asked.

Angie pointed to the back of the church and said, 'See those two men standing by the door? They're hushers.'

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY LIFE: THE INSIGHTS OF ARCHBISHOP VERDZEKOV

INTRODUCTION

Some families today, beset by profound and rapid changes that come along with modernism, have been bewildered over the role, truth and the ultimate meaning of family life. Nonetheless, many families still faithfully keep those values that constitute the foundation of matrimony as instituted and intended by the Creator. Archbishop Paul Verdzevov's teaching on marriage and family life depict marriage and the family as one of the most precious gifts of God to humankind, as seen in his sermons and other writings. He called on couples to see the family as a domestic Church; a place of formation; a place of prayer; a dwelling that leads to salvation; a home of covenant; a residence that needs pastoral care; and a place that respects human rights, just to name a few. These shall be explained in the following paragraphs.

1.1. MARRIAGES AS A COVENANT

Archbishop Paul Verdzevov saw marriage as a covenant of love in which couples pledge themselves to each other in a covenantal relationship with God, and God in turn uses the language of marriage to show his love for mankind. He called on couples to love each other as God loves the world. By this, their love should be faithful, dependable, unconditional, and irrevocable following the paradigm of the love of God for mankind. This kind of love should, as well, be patient and full of piety; a love which is tender, yet strong; passionate but constant; a love which forgives, and never ceases



REV. PETER AIEM
THEOLOGY IV



JOHN OIANG
THEOLOGY III

to welcome home the unfaithful partner. He called on men to love and treat their wives with such love and respect as Christ did for the world (cfr. Sermon, World Day of Marriage, Sunday, 10 February 2002 at Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish Church Njimafor, n. 2). He also emphasized that marriage is a dwelling that leads to salvation.

1.2. MARRIAGE AS A DWELLING THAT LEADS TO SALVATION

While painting the image of the Holy Family of Nazareth as that characterized by love, harmony and togetherness, he called on youngsters to know the kind of partner to marry, bearing in mind that the objective of accepting someone for marriage was for him/her to help one seek the face of God and His righteousness. The primary goal of marriage, according to Archbishop Paul, is that both husband and wife should come to God. They choose themselves as the chief natural means of their salvation (cfr. Sermon of the Nuptial Mass for Edwin Shey Yili and Patience Tata Lamteng, All Saints Parish Bayelle, Saturday, 19 July 2003, n. 2). He called on the youths not to be excited about marriage, seeing it only as a social phenomenon, but to see it as a moment of contemplation of one's relationship with God and of how the partners can be of good morals to help

the family attain heaven. He cautioned them to shun all aspects of secularism, materialism, and relativism, and to concentrate on God's plans for humanity through the family, calling on young couples to know the rights of the family and not to allow governments to compel their children to attend schools which were not in agreement with their moral and religious convictions (cfr. Sermon, The Inaugural Meeting of the Archdiocesan P.T.A Bamenda, Wednesday, 7 February 1990). The family, to him, is a domestic Church, and a place of formation.

1.3. THE FAMILY AS A DOMESTIC CHURCH

The Archbishop lamented over the situation of many families that failed to make their members see the family as a domestic Church, and thus failed in recognizing the fundamental role they had to play in building up the kingdom of God here on earth. He saw this laxity as a result of the indifference of the parents to the activities of their respective Parishes and Mission Stations, perhaps, due to lack of faith. He called on families to renew their sacramental commitment by drawing strength from the Church and using the same strength to build their homes, thus, living the faith by praying and sharing the word of God together. In the same respect, he exhorted families to share their spiritual communion with other families, rooted in a common faith, hope and love that generate inner energy to spread and develop justice, fraternity and unity in the world. As the Christian family springs from marriage, which is the reflection of love that unites Christ and

the Church, the family should show Christ's living presence in the world by its spiritual and human attitude (cfr. Sermon on the 10th Anniversary of the Family Life Association of Cameroon (FLACAM), St. Joseph's Metropolitan Cathedral Bamenda, Friday, 26 October 1990). In the context of the family as a domestic Church, Archbishop Verdzekov emphasized that the family that prayed together stayed together, and would always stay together in spite of life's hurdles. His very words tell it all: "The family that prays together stays together. The Holy Rosary, by age-old tradition, has shown itself particularly effective as a prayer which brings the family together. Individual family members, in turning their eyes towards Jesus, also regain the ability to look one another in the eye, to communicate, to show solidarity, to forgive one another and see their covenant of love renewed in the Spirit of God" (Homily, Solemnity of Saint Joseph, Wednesday, 19 March 2003, n. 10).

1.4. THE FAMILY AS A PLACE OF FORMATION

Archbishop Paul also described the family as a "giver", a "moulder" and a "teacher".

According to him, the formation that one receives from the family is irreplaceable, and if anyone fails to learn good behaviour from his or her family, such a person will be "poison" to the society (cfr. Sermon of the Fifth Sunday of Easter; Marriage Enrichment Reunion Day, 28 April 2002, nn. 10, 14-15). The family, therefore, is the citadel and epitome of morality, because it is through it that a child comes to the knowledge of the sacredness of God and the beauty of creation. As a matter of fact, Archbishop Verdzekov called on all families to fully participate in this God-given task so that the society and the Church will be a better place and

something beautiful for God (cfr. Sermon on the Tenth Anniversary of the Family Life Association of Cameroon (FLACAM), Friday, 26 October 1990).

1.5. THE COMPLEMENTARITY BETWEEN MARRIAGE AND CELIBACY

Marriage and virginity/ celibacy, in Archbishop Paul's view, are complementary, and none is better than the other since both cannot function in isolation. He asserted that the two were in communion. Consecrated virginity is a charism, and Christian marriage is a charism too. They do not contradict each other but presupposed and confirmed each other in all ramifications, since they were, both, the manifestation of the

"...most of the problems facing contemporary families, especially in economically developed societies, resulted from their increasing difficulty in communicating. In his own words: "Families seldom manage to come together, and the rare occasions when they do are often taken up with watching television"

same Spirit (cfr. Sermon for the Nuptial Mass of Edwin Shey Yili and Patience Tata Lamnteng, Saturday, 19 July 2003, 8). There is need for the two to assist each other materially and spiritually, making the reality of this sacrament a family bond in the service of God. In the same token, he called on the clergy to avail themselves to marriage encounters in order to better the society through their catechesis. Having looked at the above, we shall now consider what the Archbishop said concerning the pastoral care of the family.

1.6. PASTORAL CARE OF THE FAMILY

Quoting Pope John Paul II's Encyclical Letter *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, n. 47, Archbishop Paul cautioned that "special attention must be given to the pastoral care of the family, particularly when this fundamental institution is experiencing a radical and widespread crisis..." (Sermon, World day of Marriage, Sunday, 10 February 2002 at Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish Church, Njimafor, n. 7). He strongly suggested that systematized Family Life Apostolate schemes be put in place in every diocese of Cameroon, including organs such as Natural Family Planning, amongst others. Diocesan and provincial chaplains were strongly encouraged, as shepherds of the faith, to take care of the integral formation of the people because many of the people are victims of ignorance (cfr. *Ibid.*, n. 11). He called on the clergy and religious to intensify pastoral visitation of families, stating that any pastor, who loved the Church, must love the family, because it is in the family that vocations spring up to keep the Church alive. He called on couples to understand themselves, make their marriages a happy vocation, and create a serene and conducive atmosphere that assists priests in their pastoral ministry. It was his belief that the communion between priests and families would help to reduce misunderstanding in the families (cfr. A Word to the Participants at a Marriage Enrichment Meeting, Palm Sunday, Mankon, 28 March 1999).

CONCLUSION

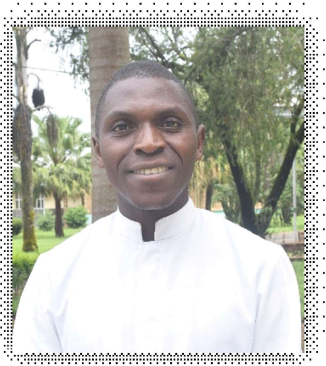
At the bottom of all this, it is worth saying that Archbishop Paul Verdzekov called on all Christ's faithful to love and cherish the family by making it a place of joy, happiness and peace. For the success of every home, couples are to make Christ the head of their families by making Christ present in their homes just as He was at Cana. Vital to

the survival of the home is for families to make good use of their pastors, and for pastors, on their part, to be patient in handling family situations irrespective of the challenges. To Archbishop Verdzekov, most of the problems facing contemporary families, especially in economically developed societies,

resulted from their increasing difficulty in communicating. In his own words: "Families seldom manage to come together, and the rare occasions when they do are often taken up with watching television" (Homily, Solemnity of Saint Joseph, Wednesday, 19

March 2003, n. 10). The challenge, then, is for us all – parents and children to work to make our families places where everyone is loved, abodes of peace, and places of hope.

THE INSIGHTS OF ARCHBISHOP VERDZEKOV ON EDUCATION



REV. JOSEPH TALA
THEOLOGY IV

INTRODUCTION

Biblical wisdom speaks eloquently of the need to educate the young for a better future. In Proverbs 22:6, we read: "Train up a child in the way he should go, so that when he is old he will not depart from it." An African proverb captures this thus: *A tree can be bent easily when it is still young and fresh than when it has grown old or dried up.* This is a task so enormous that it belongs to all in the society, beginning with parents, the Church, the state, teachers, etc. (*Gravissimum Educationis*, n. 3). The future of our society depends greatly on the type of education the young receive, be it formal or informal. Archbishop Paul Verdzekov, of undying memory, was greatly concerned about the education of the young. He might not have written a treatise on the education of the young, but gleaning from what he wrote on the subject of education, we can understand his vision. In what follows, we seek to understand his contribution to this great enterprise.

1. THE ANGLO-SAXON EDUCATION HERITAGE: THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF PAUL VERDZEKOV AND HIS BROTHER BISHOPS

It is important to enunciate, at the very outset, the treasured Anglo-Saxon sub-system of education – a patrimony which the Archbishop sought to preserve for future generations. This patrimony began facing the danger of being adulterated and demolished in the years after the Reunification. In 1976, the government passed a law regulating education in Cameroon. This law repealed the two laws which had regulated education in the former Federated state of West Cameroon, that is, The Nigerian Ordinance, No. 17 of 1952, and Law No. 69/LW/11 of 2 September 1969, regulating the conduct of private schools in West Cameroon (P. VERDZEKOV, *Further Reflections on the Proposed New Law to Regulate Private Education in Cameroon*, p. 3). For the North-West and South-West regions, the abrogation of the above laws marked the end of an era, the end of a historical experience that went right back to the first decade of the century. This new law equally excluded religious knowledge as a subject at the Cameroon GCE examinations.

1.1. RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE DROPPED AT THE CAMEROON GCE EXAMINATIONS

On 10 February 1977, Pius S. Awa, Bishop of Buea, Paul Verdzekov, Bishop of Bamenda, the religious leaders of the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon and the Cameroon Baptist Convention co-signed a letter to the Minister of National Education concerning Religious Knowledge as a subject in the Cameroon GCE Examinations. With utter dismay, they regretted the fact that Religious knowledge was considered, among other four subjects, irrelevant, and so dropped from the Cameroon GCE. They wrote: "*We consider, with utter dismay, that Religious Knowledge was considered as so equally irrelevant that it should have been dropped from the Cameroon GCE... It is because of our utter conviction, shared by practically all our countrymen that Religious Knowledge is of such capital and fundamental relevance in our country that we now make this earnest and respectfully pressing appeal*" (n. 2). They condemned, in the strongest terms possible, this decision, and gave cogent reasons why such knowledge must never be considered irrelevant. They said: "*It is our conviction, Your Excellency, that maintaining Religious Knowledge as a Cameroon GCE subject, you will thereby give unique and absolutely indispensable fillip to*

the efforts that all of us should deploy in order to instil into our youths that sense of professional conscientiousness... Is there any better means of effectively achieving this noble objective of professional conscientiousness other than by fostering religious education in our educational institutions?" (n. 11). On the whole, they said, *it is by imparting a solid religious formation to our school pupils... that we can carry out the task expected of us* (P. VERDZEKOV, *Further Reflections...* p. 41).

1.2. NATIONALIZATION OF SOME CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN BAMENDA

Between 1971 and 1977, fifty-three Catholic Primary Schools in the then Diocese of Bamenda were taken over by the State. In June 1978, there was a proposed takeover of seventy-eight more primary schools. On 22 July 1978, the Archbishop addressed a letter to the Minister of National Education, in which he earnestly appealed that this proposal be reconsidered. Were such not to be the case, the death knell of Catholic Primary Education in this diocese would have been sounded (P. VERDZEKOV, *Bishop's Circulars* 1976-1979). The 1993 GCE crisis was another major issue that affected the Anglo-Saxon education system. In all these instances, the Church did not keep silent.

1.3. THE 1993 GCE CRISIS

Following the incident of 14 September 1993, in which armed forces, at night, carried away the GCE Examination Scripts from the Bamenda and Buea marking Centres to Yaoundé, the bishops of the Bamenda Ecclesiastical Province, that is, Pius S. Awa

(Buea), Cornelius F. Esua (Kumbo), and Paul Verdzekov (Bamenda), on 25 September 1993, made a strongly-worded appeal to the Honourable Prime Minister, Simon A. Achu. In their appeal, the bishops expressed concerns about the Cameroon GCE Examinations, and the survival of the Anglophone educational system in Cameroon. The bishops were worried that there was a process of demolition and destruction of the Anglophone School System, which began in the 1970s with the disappearance of the glorious Teacher Training tradition which flourished in the Former British Cameroons. The bishops were unequivocal that *the issue of the Anglophone Education System, the issue of the preservation and safeguarding of the Anglophone cultural identity in Cameroon were*

"We consider, with utter dismay, that Religious Knowledge was considered as so equally irrelevant that it should have been dropped...to instil into our youths that sense of professional conscientiousness... Is there any better means of effectively achieving this noble objective of professional conscientiousness other than by fostering religious education in our educational institutions?"

not issues of partisan politics, (The Bishops of the Bamenda Ecclesiastical province, "A Humble and Earnest Appeal", in F. B. NYAMNJOH & R. F. AKUM, *The Cameroon GCE Crisis, A Test of Anglophone Solidarity*, n. 20), given that these were also the early years of multi-partism in Cameroon.

2. CONCERN FOR THE MATERIAL AND SPIRITUAL NEEDS OF TEACHERS

A holistic education demands more than just a good content; the quality of teachers is a very important element. In a homily preached on 20 November 1999 at the closing Mass of the Catholic Education Week,

Archbishop Paul said, among other things that: *"Teaching is about what one is oneself... attitudes and qualities of character which teachers promote are caught not taught... the nobility of the task to which teachers are called demands that, in imitation of Christ, the only Teacher, they reveal the Christian message not only by word but also by every gesture of their behaviour. This is what makes the difference between a school whose education is permeated by the Christian spirit and one in which religion is only regarded as an academic subject."* Archbishop Paul was also concerned about the spiritual life of teachers. On 30 August 1984, he wrote a Pastoral Letter, *Sanctification of Catholic School Teachers*, in which he said: *"Because of the extremely vital and delicate nature of the mission entrusted to them, Catholic School Teachers definitely need special spiritual care."* He, thus, recommended that, each year, a three-day retreat be organized for all Catholic School Teachers in each Parish. With the continuous reduction in government subvention, Catholic School teachers had to make-do with very meagre pay packages. Besides looking for ways to pay them regularly, he often encouraged them to see their work more as a vocation, than as a profession. This was all in view of a better education for the youth.

3. EDUCATION OF THE MENTALLY AND PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED

On 6 March 1998, in a letter of appeal to priests of the then Bamenda Pastoral Zone to organize financial support for the mentally handicapped, the late Archbishop admonished: *"Our Church must be seen to stand in the front rank of those who show concern for the marginalized."* In two of his reflections in February 2008, the late Archbishop paid tribute to Sister Kathleen O'Brien of the Missionary Sisters of the Holy

Rosary, founder of *Morning Star Catholic Primary School, Akum, for the Deaf and Dumb Children*; and *Treasure Centre for Mentally Retarded Children*. While tracing the circumstances that led to founding of these institutions, he stressed that such institutions were necessary so that the mentally and physically challenged may not be marginalized, but respected and lovingly helped to live in a way worthy of their physical and social conditions.

4. FORMER BRITISH EDUCATION OFFICERS AND SCHOOL INSPECTION

The exercise of school inspections was provided for in the law governing education in former British West Cameroon. Mgr. Verdzekov described, with picturesque clarity, the dedication, and professionalism with which the former British Education Officers used to do their work. With unbounded admiration, he recounted the rigorous inspections carried out in St. Joseph College Sasse on 17 – 18 November 1947 and St. Peter's Catholic Teachers Training Centre in October 1951. What is interesting is that such inspections were never announced, they were thorough, they were objective, the question of offering a cup of tea or coffee to the inspector did not arise, neither was it the business of the school to be concerned with the expenses of the inspector's transport fare. At the end of such inspections, detailed, objective reports were written, and copies given to the ministry of education and to the school concerned (F. B. NYAMNJOH & R. F. AKUM, *The Cameroon GCE Crisis, A Test of Anglophone Solidarity*, p. 347).

Archbishop Verdzekov regretted that this culture of school inspection was fast dying, and where it still existed, was plagued by ills such as bribery and

corruption, professional inefficiency, lack of objectivity, etc. He said, in the past, such inspections were regular, and nothing, even remotely smacking of bribery and corruption was ever allowed to taint or tarnish their work as Education officers. Objectivity and professionalism were the hallmarks of their work (*Ibid.*). Many schools today, the Archbishop lamented, both in urban and rural areas, go without regular, rigorous, objective professional inspection for years unending. There is need for such inspections of schools to ensure a better education for the young.

"Teaching is about what one is oneself... attitudes and qualities of character which teachers promote are caught not taught"

5. WHAT LESSONS FOR THE PRESENT AND THE FUTURE?

Drawing from the above description, Archbishop Verdzekov made the following evaluation and recommendations. Firstly, these former British education officers were genuine professionals, who were not promoted or appointed on the basis of political leanings, bribe, "militancy" in this or that political party, etc, but on the basis of their loyalty to the state and professional performance.

Secondly, on a whole, they were men and women of integrity, a virtue that is almost foreign in the public service today. Thirdly, they were rigorously fair and objective in their inspection of schools as attested in their reports. Fourthly, they were men and women driven by the Common Good. Fifthly, they were civil servants in the truest sense of the word – and these are the qualities needed by teachers, proprietors and all those charged with the care of public goods.

CONCLUSION

Indeed, as pastor and teacher, Archbishop Paul made great contributions to the education of the young. He knew that the schools were privileged settings to impart knowledge and values that would enable the young not only to get jobs tomorrow, but also to be good Christians and good citizens. To him, Catholic schools, in particular, "must strive by all means to lead all its pupils so that, 'knowing the love of Christ which is beyond all knowledge, (they) are filled with the utter fullness of God'" – Eph. 3:19 (*Homily, Silver Jubilee of Sacred Heart College, Bamenda, Saturday, 25 January 1986, n. 7*). Hence, "it can never be the primary and exclusive preoccupation of a Catholic school to engage in competition with anyone as regards the number of passes scored in public examinations", since "a given school could succeed eminently as an agent of Instruction and yet fail woefully as an agent of Education" (*Ibid.*, n. 5). Our Catholic Schools, if they are to remain veritable institutions of Education, must focus not only on intellectual education, but also formation in the values of integrity, morality, spirituality, dedication, respect, and honesty.

Stop and Laugh!

Mary Clancy goes up to Father William after Sunday Mass and she's in tears. He says, 'what's bothering you, Mary my dear?' She says, 'Oh, Father, I've got terrible news. My husband passed away last night.' The priest says, 'Oh, Mary, that's terrible. Tell me, Mary, did he have any last requests?' She says, 'Yes, Father.' The priest asks, 'What did he ask, Mary?' She replies, 'He said, Please Mary, put down that gun....'



WAYS OF ENCOURAGING TALENTS IN OUR CHOIRS



In one of the past articles written the music corner of the *Searchlight* Magazine, we did mention that we shall propose in a subsequent edition, some ways of encouraging talents in our choirs. True to our promise, we present to you the following:

➤ *Acquire and Use Natural Musical Instruments*

During the Second Vatican Council, the Church decreed: "Other instruments [in addition to the pipe organ] also, may be admitted for use in divine worship" (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, n. 120). This was in a bid to inculturate other instruments for the betterment of the Liturgy. However, some of our choirs (especially in urban parishes) have said NO, at least tacitly, to our traditional instruments (xylophones, drums, gong, hollow, shakers etc.). Some of these instruments, although bought, are rarely used because of the constant use of piano beats. Pause for a moment and visualize the Old Testament orchestra described in Ps. 150, and see how happy those in that orchestra and the whole assembly were worshiping God with their whole being: praising God with trumpet blast, lyre and harp, tambourines, strings and pipes, clashing of cymbals (cfr. Ps. 150). We need to purchase and make good use of our traditional instruments which are part of the African heritage.

➤ *Train a Chorister in any of the Fields in Music*

It is not enough to have these instruments in our churches without people to play them. Just as we need people to play instruments, we need others to conduct, compose songs and others to sing. In this light, the talented few in every choir are challenged to have, at least, one member of their choir members specialize in areas such as: the art of composing songs, the art of conducting; or learn how to play an

instrument always bearing in mind the words of Christ: "You received without charge, give without charge" (cfr. Mt. 10:8b). Whenever necessary, the choir can always bring in an expert to train her members in these domains.

➤ *Give a Chance to Beginners*

Another way of encouraging talents in choirs is to give a chance to beginners. The basic point never to be forgotten is that no one starts as an expert! In many choirs, particular persons have been noted for conducting, playing instruments, while others bury their talents in the ground like the man in Mt. 25:25. To help such dormant persons, vigilant choir directors could appoint them to carry out particular tasks. For a start, give a beginner a song to conduct on a Sunday or ask him/her to compose a simple psalm tune; another could be given an instrument to play for the rendition of a song only, and as time goes on, they would all flourish. With the seed of these talents sown, the choir would, in the long run, have good conductors, instrumentalists and composers, fired with zeal to use their talents for the greater glory and honour of God. In fact,

if possible, organise seminars and music classes.

➤ *Replace Mockery-Laughter with a Word of Encouragement*

Simply put, do not make a mockery of anyone who is making the genuine effort to conduct or play an instrument, especially when he/she falters. Not everyone is gifted the same, but everyone has something to offer, even the timid and fearful members. Instead, encourage anyone who makes the effort, since Scripture says: "As long as this today lasts, keep encouraging one another" (Heb. 3:13). Know that the simple word "Congratulations!" can spur a tyro to do more.

➤ *Challenge Members with Assignments*

The last advice we shall give in this regard is proper to the office of Presidents and Music Directors of our choirs. To help, especially, those with low self-esteem, the assignments could be given them, ranging from the transcription of songs (for advanced choirs), voice training, or on learning how to play a particular instrument. By so doing, many members would become experts and would be of great help to the choir.

CONCLUSION

In so far as Presidents and Choir Coordinators must do everything to encourage talents in choirs, individuals must, at the same time, challenge themselves out of their shells. The bigger challenge is to overcome fear and shame and make good use of the innate gifts and talents in us, for the glory of God and the sanctification of souls; for, as in the Parable of the Talent, Jesus teaches us that it is not a very wonderful thing to hide our talents; we shall render an account for the use, misuse or lack of use of our talents (cfr. Mt. 25:14-30).

Stop and think!

Music can evoke any mood imaginable. The composer's choice of instruments, harmonic structure, compositional structure, recording techniques, and synthesizer effects all evoke a response from the audience.

- Michael Zager

SINGING DEPARTMENT

« IL EST VRAIMENT RESSUSCITE ! » : CENTRALITE DU MYSTERE DE PAQUES DANS LA VIE CHRETIENNE

INTRODUCTION

La résurrection du Christ est un fait historique, bel et bien réel et vécu avec des faits vérifiés (cfr. 1 Cor. 15:3-5). C'est inconcevable d'interpréter la résurrection sans toute fois faire mention des faits physiques concrets comme le tombeau vide et les apparitions. Ces faits auraient pour objet d'attester avec certitude le témoignage des disciples qui ont réellement rencontré le Ressuscité. Notre préoccupation serait donc de présenter la doctrine et les effets de la résurrection du Christ dans la vie du chrétien en passant par son aspect révélateur, salutaire, et rédempteur. Que nous enseigne la résurrection du Christ ?

1. QUELS SONT LES SIGNES JUSTIFICATIFS DE LA RESURRECTION DU CHRIST ?

Le mystère de la résurrection du Christ est un événement vrai, avec des manifestations qui étaient historiquement vérifiables comme nous l'affirme le Nouveau Testament. Nous pouvons cependant relever trois preuves palpables attestant que le Christ est vraiment ressuscité : le tombeau vide, les apparitions et le don de l'Esprit Saint. Pour plus de précision St Paul affirme que le Christ est mort sur la croix pour nos péchés, Il a été enterré, et le troisième jour conformément aux Saintes Ecritures, il est ressuscité des morts et il est apparu aux femmes, aux apôtres, en suite à plus de cinq cents personnes à la fois et à d'autres personnes encore (cfr. 1 Cor. 15:3-5; 5-6), et il a fait don de l'Esprit Saint aux siens et cela s'est réalisé comme promis, le jour de la Pentecôte. Malgré leur incrédulité (avant la résurrection), les apôtres sont les témoins oculaires du tombeau vide et du Christ ressuscité (à cause du tombeau vide, et, surtout,

la présence du Christ ressuscité après trois jours de sa mort, ils ont cru à base de ce que le Christ avait dit – Jean 2 :22), et demeurent la fondation de son Eglise, et la foi des premiers croyants était basée sur le témoignage des hommes concrets et était la majorité encore en vie (*Catéchisme de l'Eglise Catholique* [CECA], n. 127).

2. QUE NOUS REVELE LA RESURRECTION DU CHRIST ?

La résurrection porte en elle-même des traits de révélation. D'après St Paul, la vision de ce qui est révélé par le mystère de pâques couvre non seulement la nouvelle vie des croyants, mais aussi le future de peuple d'Israël

...la pâques révèle aussi le statut divin du Christ et souligne le fait qu'il est l'agent de création, et que tout ce qu'il a dit et fait était vrai – Il est vraiment le Fils de Dieu.

et celui de toute l'humanité (Rom. 9:11; 8:18-25). Aussi, elle nous dévoile la personne de Dieu le Père, du Christ, de l'homme et le monde. Elle révèle aussi entièrement le sens et la vérité de la vie du Christ, sa personne, ses actes et sa mort sans oublier qu'elle glorifie la croix et dévoile le fait que le salut de tous se cache derrière la souffrance. Elle établie aussi un rapport étroit sur le Christ et son ministère. La résurrection du Christ illumine non seulement la

face Trinitaire de Dieu, mais aussi la présence totale de Dieu en la personne de Jésus (Col. 1:19). La pâques révèle aussi le statut divin du Christ et souligne le fait qu'il est l'agent de création, et que tout ce qu'il a dit et fait était vrai – Il est vraiment le Fils de Dieu. Si la résurrection de Jésus est à caractère nécessairement révélateur, elle est aussi nécessairement rédemptrice et apporte la communion avec Dieu et le Christ à travers l'esprit saint.

En gros, La résurrection du Christ s'aperçoit comme un acte divin par excellence. Sur ce, nous pouvons souligner trois principes : le premier basé sur les effets de la résurrection du Christ manifestés par les faits palpables à l'instar des apparitions, et dans la foi, ils ont reconnu la cause première qui est la force de Dieu sur le monde. Deuxièmement, la résurrection du Christ dévoile aux hommes le vrai visage du Christ qui se place comme fils de Dieu ; et troisièmement, l'on note la participation entière de Jésus dans la présence divine quand il s'assoit sur son trône, à la droite du Père et a remis et soumis toute chose à Dieu.

3. LA RESURRECTION PROJETE L'IDEE DE LA REDEMPTION

La résurrection du Christ porte en elle le statut salutaire (*Catéchisme de l'Eglise Catholique*, nn. 654-655). Elle est conçue comme une délivrance des enfants de Dieu des griffes du péché et de la mort, et elle illumine les deux versants de l'histoire, ceux qui dorment en terre et ceux qui naissent à la vie ; elle réveille les uns pour la louange et y convoque les autres (cfr. F. X DURRWELL. *La Résurrection De Jésus Mystère de Salut*, Editions Xavier Mappus, Paris 1954, p.18). Le Mystère Pascal a deux aspects principaux : par sa mort, le christ nous libère du péché ; par sa résurrection, il nous ouvre la voie de la vie nouvelle, ceci a tous sans aucune

exception (Rom. 1:1-4; cfr. Paul Bourgy, *The Resurrection of Christ and the Resurrection of Christians*, The Priority Press, Chicago 1963, 41).

4. QUE FAIT DE NOUS LA RESURRECTION ?

Avec la résurrection, le chrétien devient une créature nouvelle, il n'est plus esclave des lois, il est libre en Christ Jésus, il devient dirigeant du monde pendant qu'il le sert, il devient un signe vivant de la présence cachée du monde à venir. Elle rend nos corps corruptibles corps incorruptibles, de la mortalité à l'immortalité, de la mort à la nouvelle vie, de la souffrance à la gloire infinie. Grace à ceci, nos valeurs ne se mesurent plus avec nos qualités personnelles, par ailleurs elles doivent

être excellentes, mais avec notre degré de participation dans la vie surnaturelle (cfr. P. BOURGY, *The Resurrection of Christ and of Christians*, The Priority Press, Chicago 1963, p. 68). Il n'y aura rien de plus grand et beau que la renonciation de soi-même et se vêtir du vêtement du Christ ressuscité et le chrétien devient une réflexion fidèle de la divine miséricorde de Dieu: un autre Christ.

CONCLUSION

En guise de conclusion, nous pouvons dire que la résurrection du Christ est une activité de Dieu dans son unité Trinitaire pour manifester son amour en rachetant l'humanité toute entière de la domination du péché et

de la mort. Car elle est un fait historique que l'on peut constater et qui est attesté par des signes et des témoignages (tombeau vide et les apparitions). Donc la résurrection du Christ vient compléter notre foi, car elle est le fondement de notre foi, la promesse et la garantie de notre propre résurrection (CECA, nn. 656-658). Elle est la vérité la plus haute de notre foi et elle représente une part essentielle du mystère pascal. Passant par la mort sur la croix, Jésus nous fait sortir de la mort à la vie, du désespoir à l'espérance. Il fait de nous des êtres nouveaux en lui par le baptême et sa croix glorieuse.

DISCUSSION WITH THE FORMER VOCATIONS DIRECTOR OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF BAMENDA ABOUT THE VOCATION TO THE DIOCESAN PRIESTHOOD

SEARCHLIGHT: Father, we are delighted that you accepted to have this conversation with us regarding the Diocesan Priesthood. Could you, please, introduce yourself to our readers?

Fr. Romaric: My name is Fr. Romaric Njuakom Maiyele Stanislaus.

SEARCHLIGHT: In a concise way, who is a Diocesan Priest?

Fr. Romaric: To say who Diocesan Priest is, it will be important to consider the two words that make up the object of our definition: Diocesan and Priest. A priest, according to the Second Vatican Council, in its **Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests:**

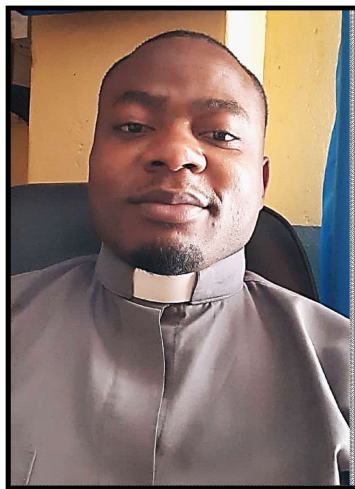
Presbyterorum Ordinis, no. 2 is one who, to his own degree of sharing in the function of the apostles, is, through the Sacrament of Orders, anointed by the Holy Spirit, and thus signed with a special character, and so is configured to Christ the priest in such a way that he is able to act in the person of Christ the head.

"Diocesan" here is used as an adjective to qualify the kind of priest we are talking about. It is

from the noun diocese. Canon 369 of the 1983 *Code of Canon Law* defines a diocese, also called a Particular Church, as a portion of the people of God, which is entrusted to a Bishop to be nurtured by him, with the co-operation of the presbyterium, in such a way that, remaining close to its pastor, and gathered by him through the Gospel and the Eucharist in the Holy Spirit, it constitutes a particular Church. In this Church the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church of Christ truly exists and functions.

Looking, therefore, at these two definitions, we could say that a diocesan priest is one who, through incardination (which is the formal, canonical act whereby a cleric is attached to a diocese or becomes a member in some institute of consecrated life or society of apostolic life) exercises his priestly ministry in a particular Church.

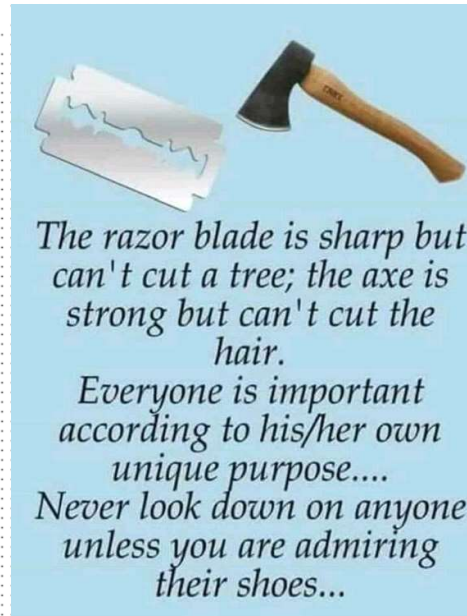
SEARCHLIGHT: Has the Diocesan Priesthood, like the Religious Life, a distinctive spirituality?



Fr. Romaric: Yes! The diocesan priesthood has a distinct spirituality. **George Aschenbrenner**, in his book, *Quickening the Fire in our Midst: the Challenge of Diocesan Priestly Spirituality*, describes what he considers a diocesan priestly spirituality as distinct from religious priestly spirituality. He advances the point that, unlike the spirituality of the religious priesthood, which is based on the mind of their founder, the diocesan priestly spirituality is shaped and influenced by the ministry of the priest, the flexibility, mobility and apostolic availability of the priest, prayer of the apostolate, which is a distinctively prayerful presence that pervades all the activities of the priest, a presence that involves the carefully discerned integration of regular formal prayer with a day's busy activity; a prayer of the apostolate that is able to integrate contemplation and action. This is what we would consider the diocesan priestly spirituality.

SEARCHLIGHT: What are the requirements for admission to formation in view of the Diocesan Priesthood?

Fr. Romaric: The first and most important requirement for admission in view of the Diocesan Priesthood is the right intention. If this is absent, formation would not take place. Other requirements include: a pass in the GCE Ordinary Level exams or its equivalent, including a pass in English and French, a pass in the GCE Advanced Level with, at least, 5 points or its equivalent, including a pass in Advanced Level Religious Studies. It is also required that the candidate should be in a state of good health, he should be in the vocations group, and must have attended the vocations camp, at least, twice. He should also be actively involved in the life of the parish or institution, such that, while presenting himself for formation, others may also be able to testify to their pastoral zeal and efforts at living a holy life, and so recommend him.



The first and most important requirement for admission in view of the Diocesan Priesthood is the right intention. If this is absent, formation would not take place.

SEARCHLIGHT: Any age limits for admission of a candidate for the Diocesan Priesthood?

Fr. Romaric: There is really no age limit as far as admission for formation to the diocesan priesthood is concerned. However, formation to the Diocesan Priesthood is rigorous and long. This, in itself, requires that the one who desires to become a diocesan priest should neither be too young nor too old to shoulder the weight of formation.

SEARCHLIGHT: We would also like to know what role the Vocations Group has in the discernment of vocations in general, and in the discernment of vocations to the Diocesan Priesthood.

Fr. Romaric: The vocations group in the life of every parish community offers young boys and girls that needed environment to be able to - through the various activities designed and tailored for the group, namely: prayers, works of charity, vocations promotion, the life and vocation stories of those in generations past etc. - help young boys and

girls in the discernment process. To discern God's call, one needs an enabling environment. This the vocations group offers.

SEARCHLIGHT: What advice have you for young men nurturing the desire to be Diocesan priests?

Fr. Romaric: Today's world is becoming increasingly agnostic and atheistic in attitude; and so to every young man who desires to serve God as a diocesan priest, I wish to assure you that God needs you, that is why He is calling you. The Church needs you, that is why she is waiting to send you. The world needs you, that is why she is waiting for you to bring the message of faith, hope and love.

SEARCHLIGHT: Thank you immensely for sharing with us these insights.

Fr. Romaric: Anytime; and I should equally thank you for giving me this opportunity.

THE PRECEPTS OF THE CHURCH C.C.C. 2041-2043

The precepts of the Church are set in the context of a moral life bound to and nourished by liturgical life. The obligatory character of these positive laws decreed by the pastoral authorities is meant to guarantee to the faithful the very necessary minimum in the spirit of prayer and moral effort, in the growth in love of God and neighbour:

The first precept ("You shall attend Mass on Sundays and on holy days of obligation and rest from servile labour.") requires the faithful to sanctify the day commemorating the Resurrection of the Lord as well as the principal feasts honouring the mysteries of the Lord, the Blessed Virgin Mary and the saints; in the first place, by participating in the Eucharistic celebration, in which the Christian community is gathered, and by resting from those works and activities which could impede such a sanctification of these days.

The second precept ("You shall confess your sins at least once a year.") ensures preparation for the Eucharist by the reception of the sacrament of reconciliation, which continues Baptism's work of conversion and forgiveness.

The third precept ("You shall receive the sacrament of the Eucharist at least during the Easter season.") guarantees as a minimum the reception of the Lord's Body and Blood in connection with the Paschal feasts, the origin and centre of the Christian liturgy.

The fourth precept ("You shall observe the days of fasting and abstinence established by the Church.") ensures the times of asceticism and penance which prepare us for the liturgical feasts and help us acquire mastery over our instincts and freedom of heart.

The fifth precept ("You shall help to provide for the needs of the Church.") ensures that the faithful are obliged to assist with the material needs of the Church, each according to his own ability.

Archbishop Paul!

Writing about one you seem to know only a little
Feels like the whole write-up can never be enough,
But then it is about the simple "Fr. Paul Verdzekov"
Who may not even wish that I write all this stuff.

Nonetheless, talking with many about him,
In order to have more knowledge of him,
I discovered that many really loved him,
For the simple, firm and saintly nature in him.

Stories upon stories I heard,
And some of his writings I read,
Many being homilies at ordinations,
Others, letters addressing situations.



Still, his knowledgeable contributions form a picture,
Which takes only a refined mind to structure,
In a manner that both the present and the future,
Are addressed with clarity at every juncture.

And his practice of sincere evangelical detachment,
Challenges us daily in our undue attachment,
To all things available even during Lent,
When all Christians are encouraged to repent.

Also, by his fidelity to the gospel,
As would, a faithful disciple,
He left for us a fitting example,
On how to live our Christianity in full;
And truly, his example, is an ample sample.

Alphonse Ekema

New! New! New!

About the Author



Rev. Fr. Joseph Clifford N. Ndi is a priest of the Diocese of Kumbo in Cameroon. He holds a Doctorate in Canon Law and is a lecturer of Canon Law in St. Thomas Aquinas' Major Seminary, Bambui, Bamenda. He is also presently the Judicial Vicar for the First Instance Marriage Tribunal of the Ecclesiastical Province of Bamenda. He is also author of the book "Contracts between Ecclesiastical Entities According to Canon Law."



A HANDBOOK ON MARRIAGE TRIBUNAL PROCESSES



Fr. Joseph Clifford Nformi Ndi
(JCL/STD)

"A Handbook on Marriage Tribunal Processes" is a document that enlightens us on the purpose, the organization and the operation of the Ecclesiastical Marriage Tribunal of the Ecclesiastical Province of Bamenda. It is meant to serve as a guide to all of Christ's faithful; pastors, consecrated persons and lay persons, on what they need to know and to do when faced with a potential marriage nullity case. It is also meant to help those preparing for marriage to know the pitfalls to be avoided, in order that their marriage may be validly celebrated. A copy is 1,500 frs only and can be obtained from parish offices and in our diocesan bookshops.