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Denese Howard visits MIC

By Br. Ignatius Matemba



Denese and Lawrence enjoy Breakfast inside Charles Howard Memorial Park

She was happy to move around our beautiful Community, but this joy could not surpass the tremendous joy she felt when she reached the Memorial Park of her uncle which is behind L'Hermitage Fraternity; "Brother Charles Howard Memorial Park". She appreciated this kind gesture shown to her uncle and as a result, she donated a substantial amount of Ksh 80,000 for the installation of new seats in the Park. We are very grateful for this monetary donation. Thank you.

In Chichewa there is a saying that goes like: "Mulendo amabwera ndi kalumo ka kuthwa". This literally means that, a visitor comes with a sharp blade, that is to say, the visitor brings something new.

Marist International Center saw this saying come true on the 15th of August, 2013. On this day we received Denise Howard in the company of her friend Sr. Leonida Kwamboka, a Loreto Sister. Denise is the niece of one of our most celebrated former Superiors General; the late Brother Charles Howard. Her visit she said, was inspired by the mere fact that we (Marist Brothers) and her, share something in common. Her being the niece of our former Superior General is enough reason for her to feel connected to us.



BROTHER COOPER'S FIRST VISIT TO AFRICA

By Jariosse,fms jariosse@yahoo.com

Brother Dennis Cooper is an Australian Marist Brother recently appointed to Manziana to be in charge of the formation of Formators. The program is scheduled to commence in January 2014. Br. Dennis will be working with two other Brothers; Br. Sylvain Yao (West Africa) and Br. Alfredo Herrera (East Asia). Manziana is located about 40 km Northwest of Rome in Italy. Since his new appointment requires being in contact with Brothers all over the Marist world, Africa included, he decided to have a glimpse of some parts of Africa. Nairobi (MIC) and Maputo (Matola Novitiate) were targeted places on his visit.

Africa is as big as an elephant and the experience of Nairobi and Maputo may have given Br. Dennis a bit of what Marist Africa looks like. While on the visit, he experienced the joyous young Marist Brothers who tirelessly endeavor to see Marcellin's dream of making Jesus known and loved become reality.



From his countenance, I could read signs of gratitude for having stepped his feet for the first time on African soil and interacted well with the Brothers in the MIC Community. Similarly, I guess he had a wonderful time with the Brothers and young people in the Land of Guebuza, Mozambique.

We hope you have enjoyed your stay with the MIC Community and our arms are open for your second visit. KARIBU SANA!!

An interview with Brother Dr Eugene Ezugwu, fms.

By Dominic and Daka (MIC Newsletters correspondents)

The 28th Graduation ceremony of the Catholic University of Eastern Africa held on 4th October, 2013 enabled a grand total of 2653 graduands to graduate out of whom were 23 young Brothers and 2 Formators who graduated with first class honours respectively. The atmosphere around MIC was extra ordinarily different especially on the night of the 4th of October as we celebrated the achievements of our Doctor Brother Eugene and Master Juvance and the 23 Brothers in absentia and so the MIC Newsletter Commission decided to interview Br. Dr. Eugene Ezugwu, fms.

How can you describe your joy now that you have just graduated with a First Class Honours?

(Ha. Ha. Ha), I am very happy and I feel a sense of relief since it has not been easy to combine studies and my work here at MIC. Secondly, I feel challenged because I know that there is a task ahead of me as far as academic and social contribution is concerned. Either I publish or I perish as Br. Dr. Cyprian expressed. As the scripture says, the one to whom more is given, more is also expected of! That is why I say that the battle is not yet over but just beginning.

When did you start your Doctorate studies and what area did you specialize in?

I started on 11th August, 2009 at CUEA and I specialized in Religious Studies. I am happy that I have two areas of specialization now: Biblical Theology and Religious Studies.

Is there anything you would wish to highlight as far as Doctorate studies are concerned?

I think the secret to Doctorate studies is personal discipline. It also requires some kind of critical thinking in looking at issues. In addition, it involves being able to articulate clearly the ideas you have in your mind like when you are explaining things to little children and not presuming that everybody already knows what you want to explain. This is what is required so that when people read your work they would be in a position to follow step-by-step. This is the major skill that I have acquired in this course of study since it demands a lot of details when you are writing.

What message do you have for the young Brothers who are still in the process of realizing their dreams in the Academic area?

One thing is to believe in the superiors' discernment of what is needed in our respective Administrative Units, and what is required of us in terms of choice of areas of study. Let us always keep in mind that we do not study for our own personal needs, but for the needs of our AU(s). For instance, I did my Masters in Biblical Theology and there was an opportunity for me to do my Doctorate in that area in 2007, but that was not what MIUC needed at the time. So I came back from Rome and took up my appointment at MIC in May, 2007, fully resigned to the will of God, as made known to me by my immediate superiors. But in 2009, there was need for me to start a Doctorate programme at CUEA in Religious Studies. This means that now I am qualified in two areas of study: Biblical Theology and Religious studies.

Therefore, my message to the young Brothers is simple but challenging: always believe in what the Superiors are telling you for God speaks to us through them. In addition to that, keep in mind always the needs of the institute. Now I can testify to my young Brothers that every disappointment is a blessing in disguise because I might have felt a bit disappointed when I did not do Doctorate in Biblical Theology right after finishing my Masters, but now I have done it, although, in a different area of study. For me, this is an added advantage!

Let us not seek for opportunities for studies for our own interests. That may lead to serious disappointment in life. Therefore, let us dispose ourselves to do whatever we are asked to do. Of course, we can make suggestions to our superiors, but they are the ones to decide.

What could be some of the challenges that you faced during the programme?

The most challenging part was encountered during the writing of the dissertation itself. The Literature Review was very demanding because it required a lot of reading and time. The choice of the topic for the dissertation was also a challenge because one does not write just for the sake of writing, but to address a pertinent issue in the society. Therefore, one has to identify a problem in the society, and then tries to find a solution to the problem through research. This demands a voracious reading in order to ascertain whether other people have provided solution to the problem one has identified. This task is time-consuming and has financial implications too.

How did you manage to harmonize your work as a formator and lecturer and the studies?

I think that that was indeed a great challenge. However, it was possible because I had to stick to a timetable. The key thing here is to have the timetable, and follow it faithfully. You know, here in the community, some people are fans of Chelsea, others are supporters of Arsenal or Real Madrid, and I am staunch sympathizer of Nollywood movies, but I had to discipline myself. I had to put first things first!

Just for curiosity's sake, what would be your message to the entire Marist World?

Wow! Message to the entire Marist World? Well, there is a burning issue now in the Marist World, and that is the issue of collaboration between Marist Brothers and the Laity. I would like to say that this is an issue that needs to be taken seriously so that we find new ways of collaborating with our Lay partners. Already, we have been collaborating with them to a certain extent but we need to deepen our understanding of the nature of the vocation of the Lay Marist. We are called as Marist Brothers (Consecrated persons in the Church) but they are also called as Lay Marists. They have vocation as lay people in the Church, and one way they express their vocation as lay people is through their identification with the Marist Charism.



It is unfortunate that in some parts of the Marist World, the vocation of the lay people sharing in the Marist Charism is not clearly understood. Thus, in some places, some Brothers spend their energy speculating whether lay people have Marist vocation or not! That kind of attitude will not help us. Understanding the vocation of the lay people, in my opinion, helps us refine our understanding of our vocation as Brothers. My belief is that more collaboration with the lay people will help immensely in the extension of the Marist Mission in the world.

However, one area we need to pay serious attention to is that of the administration of the material and financial resources of Brothers and lay Marists. If this is not handled carefully, it could easily be a source of squabble between the Brothers and the lay people.

In your Acknowledgement in the dissertation, you thanked the Brothers especially for their prayers. May you elaborate more about this?

For me, my success was a result of prayer. We have a saying, "Pray as if everything depends on God, but work as if everything depends on you." Therefore, one has to combine praying and working in such a way that when one works hard, God will find ways of bringing people to one's aid. I believe in hard work, and I also know very well that God uses people, the environment, and my efforts to help me to succeed in my endeavors. I am very grateful to the community for the prayers, and I can attribute my success to those prayers.

Looking at your table in this office, there are some symbols that call for explanation. What do they signify to you as an Igbo man?

Whatever is placed on this table is a gift given to me by different people, and after discovering their deeper meanings, I feel it is worth sharing with anyone who comes into this office. The symbols are striking and are fully packed with meanings. I leave it to the one looking at them to discover their meanings.

Any last words?

I am grateful and I feel honoured for the opportunity given to me to express my feelings. My prayer is that God may bless you in your formation here at MIC. Thank you.

The special Joy of Graduation.

By Heriniaina Maurice Juvence

Graduation is referred to as an act of receiving or conferring an academic degree to graduands. In my opinion, graduation is more than this definition. Graduation is a long awaited day during which one feels fulfilled after a long and serious academic work.

On Friday 4th October 2013, all graduands from CUEA and other affiliated Universities were awarded various degrees according to their areas of specialization. The Mother University celebrated the graduation day in a very solemn way. A lot of preparation had to take place to ensure the smooth running of the celebration. On the 3rd of October, at 11:00, the Holy Mass was held at the Graduation Square. The Mass was crowned by many Catholic Priests and the presence of almost all graduands, lecturers and parents. The Choir was amazing in their singing. The square was beautifully decorated.

The next session was the Rehearsal of all graduands that took place on the same day at 2 p.m. On the very day of the Graduation, the most exciting part of it was the reading of the names and the degrees conferred on the graduands. This is the time when one experiences feelings of great joy and fulfillment. My encouragement therefore to all is that, hard work pays.

Thank you.



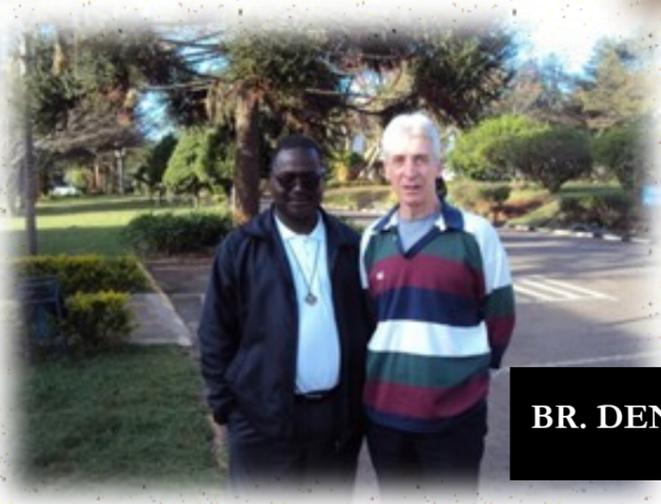
Denise gives a cheque to Br. Francis



Denise plants a tree



MIUC CULTURAL DAY



BR. DENNIS COPPER AND HIS CONFRERES



MIC COMMUNITY SAYS WELCOME TO THE COMMISSION FOR LAITY AND THE PREPARATORY COMMISSION OF THE SECOND MARIST INTERNATIONAL ASSEMBLY TO NAIROBI.

It was great joy for the MIC Community as she welcomed Brothers and our lay associates of the Commission for Laity. In the same vein, the Community was also blessed with the presence of the members of the Preparatory Commission for the Second Marist International Assembly. We appreciate your brief visit to our Community.



COMMISSION FOR LAITY



SECOND MARIST PREPARATORY COMMISSION

MIUC BURSARRY FUNDRAISING

In fidelity to the dreams of Champagnat which is that education be available for everyone especially the less privileged in society, the Marist International University College organized a fund raising exercise with the sole aim of supporting the less privileged students in the College. It all started with a mini fund raising and car washing campaign organized by the leadership of the students' body prior to the actual day for the main fund raising exercise which was on 12th October, 2013.

Also, there was the raffle draw with a number of instant prizes to be won. This was organized by the College. Participation was high, there were many lucky winners as well as the unfortunate ones. The students as well as staff present were not in a hurry at all to leave. It was funny, very funny because I had the intention of winning one of the bicycles; however, I told myself that it was not meant for me but to support our dear students.

Finally, about 1.4 million Kenyan Shillings was raised, thanks to the generosity and love exhibited by the Brothers, students, staff and in a very special way, the guest of honour for the occasion in the person of Dr. Ogutu Omondi.

Br. Francis Ndapisha

Did you know that laughter increases one's life span?

We all want a healthy lifestyle. We know that making a few changes to our lifestyle can make a difference including an increase in our life span. Compared to a century ago, many of us are taking a proactive approach to ensure we have a good quality of life as we battle the ravages of time.

Most of us are also realizing that healthy living is not just about good food and exercise. There is a growing awareness that taking charge of our emotional well being is just as important. A good number of studies have shown that having a regular dose of laughter helps people handle stress better.

Believe it or not, laughter has beneficial effects internally and externally. It counters the negative effects that stress causes on the body. When you laugh, natural chemicals are released that help you feel good and look great. See this here at MIC, look at the brothers who laugh; they are all looking good and healthy.

Relearning to laugh like you did when you were a child could have a valuable effect on your general well being. Did you know that children laugh nearly 400 times a day? This is significant compared to adults who only laugh about 15 times per day.

Live a love filled life by focusing on loving those around you. Create opportunities for social interaction and surround yourself with positive thoughts. Self depreciating and limiting thoughts do us no good.

Is your life unexciting and boring? It shouldn't be. Learn something exciting. You will be surprised at how learning something you have always wanted to do can repair you. As you expand yourself, you find that you add excitement into your life which can lift your spirit and is carried on to those around you.

Having love and laughter can help you be your healthiest, most positive self. The best news of all is that, how we age, isn't all down to our genes, but is determined by how well we look after ourselves.

Make it a habit to laugh every day. You could watch a funny movie or read a joke book. People with a sunny character are known to live longer, healthier, and happier lives. A merry heart is good medicine. So go on, put on that laughter to your life. Have a laugh, it's free and costs nothing at all.



LIFE IS WONDERFUL, LIFE IS BEAUTIFUL, GIVE IT A LAUGHTER.

Laugh! Laugh! Laugh! Laugh! Laugh! Laugh!!!!!!

BR. PETER ZULU