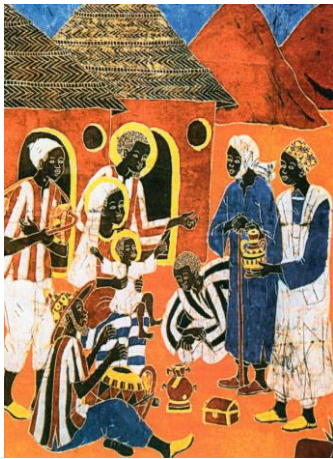


# Mission Letter

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FROM THE MISSIONARIES OF AFRICA (WHITE FATHERS)

## A year not quite as the others

December 2020



The year 2020 will go down in history as the year of the great pandemic of Covid-19, the sneaky little virus that turned our lives upside down and made everything never be the same again. A first and then a second wave reminded us of our fragility and our apparent powerlessness to protect ourselves from it. It is true: we are not completely in control of our destiny. We are only creatures even though we are beloved daughters and sons of God.

However, we took the opportunity to learn many things about the meaning of life, about death, about God. We have understood, at least 1 hope, how important it is to show solidarity, our behavior having a positive or negative influence on others. Sadly, we recognized that not everyone was ready to give up certain rather egotistical habits. And to justify their position, a few relied on conspiracy theories that I found rather far-fetched. It must be said that since ancient times, the witch hunt is fashionable and people often resorted to it so as not to have to recognize their responsibility in what was happening to them.

We, White Fathers, have had to face this strategy many times on African soil... So we were hardly surprised by these protests in the name of a misunderstood freedom against the mask and the restrictions imposed. We now find ourselves in December, more aware of our fragility and perhaps closer to God who has joined us in our boat which sails on waters agitated by high winds (Mt 14, 22-25).

It is with great hope and most probably with more humility that we prepare our hearts for the celebration of the feasts surrounding the birth of the Son of God on our planet. We surely have many requests to entrust to Him. We will ask for his protection from the virus, his blessing on us and our loved ones, peace in several countries ravaged by sometimes selfish conflicts of interest and for many other needs... And we will also have gifts to offer Him such as our commitment to take care of our quality of presence with others and to respect more our environment so battered by climate change.



In any case, the year 2021 will surely be a welcome one, because its mission is to enable our researchers to defeat the virus that made us cry so much by attacking and killing the most vulnerable among us. May this New Year remind us that we must avoid returning to the abuses of a consumer society culture and the search for power! May we live better, humanize ourselves more and humanize our environment, without forgetting the people who live in very difficult situations in other countries!

I would like to end my letter with words of thanks for your unconditional support throughout this year 2020. Your spiritual and financial assistance has enabled our “confreres” in Africa to continue to meet the very concrete needs of the people they serve. And from our side, we assure you of the support of our prayers throughout the coming New Year. In the midst of the difficulties experienced by the Covid-19 pandemic, let Christmas be for each of us an opportunity to be grateful for the Lord's presence among us. He knows our challenges, and to respond to them, he still invites us today to use mercy, forgiveness and prayer to face them with success.

Truly Yours in Christ,

Fr. Réal Doucet,  
Provincial of the Missionaries of Africa