

# Mission Letter

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

September 2016

Dear friends of the Missions,

We are slowly preparing the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary (1868) of the foundation of the society of the Missionaries of Africa by Cardinal Lavigerie.

The first generations of members of our missionary Society, priests and brothers, were all trained in North Africa.

As the number of candidates increased and because of the political situation in Europe, the formation houses were transferred to Europe and the Americas. In Canada there was a novitiate in Montreal and a scholasticate in Ottawa.

Today most of the formation is now given in Africa. The spiritual year centers are in Zambia, Tanzania and Burkina Faso. Theology is studied in Ivory Coast, the DRC, Kenya and South Africa and in Jerusalem. Philosophy is studied in Africa but also in Mexico, The Philippines, India, Brazil and Poland. At present there are 492 students in our formation program, 90% of whom come from Africa.



13 novices at the end of the Spiritual Year in Burkina Faso.

During the first century of our existence our candidates came from Europe and North America.

In Africa, our priority was to promote vocations to the diocesan clergy and not to our missionary Society. With the growth of the local clergy and the emergence of African bishops, the time came to promote all vocations, even missionary ones.

With the increase in confreres from Africa, people now understand that when we were called the white fathers it was because of our white habits!! At present 284 of our members come from Africa.

Since some of the members from Europe and America are ageing and ailing, leadership in our Society is being entrusted to the younger generation. At the recent general chapter of our Society, Father Stanley Lubungo, of Zambia, was elected superior general. The four other members of the General Council come from England, Canada, Burkina Faso and Ghana.



Father Stanley Lubungo, Zambia, Superior General (left); Father Martin Grenier, Canada, Third Assistant

We thank the lord for the large number of candidates He is attracting to our community. We invite you to pray for them and to help us with the increasing formation budget. We also pray that some Canadian youth will answer the call to join us as priests or brothers. We take pride in our tradition of having international and inter racial communities.

We thank you for the continued interest in our missionary activity in Africa and for the support of your prayers and your financial contributions.  
May God bless you.

Fr. Mike Merizzi M Afr.