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Mission Tomorrow

Together we are training tomorrow's generation of Priests and Sisters
Missio is the Pope's charity for world mission





Fr Anthony Chantry with students from St Thomas Aquinas Major Seminary in Bambui, Cameroon

Prayer for Seminarians

Heavenly Father

We pray for the men you have called as they prepare for the priesthood.

Bless them with courage and perseverance in their desire to serve you.

May their hearts overflow with your compassion, understanding and generosity.

May they inspire others to answer your call.

Fill their hearts with the fire of your love, and give them the grace to follow you on their journey of faith.

Make them holy as you are holy through Christ our Lord.

Amen

Image on front cover:

The future of our Church! Young men training to be priests in Cameroon.

National Director's Message

Together we are training tomorrow's generation of Priests and Sisters

As you know, Missio ignites God's love by helping missionaries to work alongside communities globally that are poor or in need, regardless of their background or belief.

As a valued supporter, you play a vital part in creating a vibrant Catholic Church for the future. Without you we would not be able to train Priests and Sisters, tomorrow's missionaries, to deliver the life-changing work that we do today.

In this edition of *Mission Tomorrow*, you will read about those being trained to serve their communities as priests, in the knowledge that, like Fr Cosmas in Cameroon, it may mean being prepared to lay down their lives for others.

I hope you enjoy reading the updates from the seminaries we have a special relationship with, through our Sponsorship Scheme.

Your generosity is helping young churches across the world to have their own priests, and even send some of them out as missionaries. Slowly but surely, these young churches are working hard to become self-sufficient. Until that day, your prayers and gifts enable our missionaries to respond to God's call to love and to serve.

May the Lord reward you for your sacrifice.

Yours in Christ,

Father Tony

Fr Anthony Chantry
Missio National Director

Together we're training tomorrow's generation of Priests and Sisters

Last year...



Thanks to your support



Internationally, Missio provides young churches in developing countries with funding to train 25,000 future Priests and 11,000 religious Sisters each year.

These Priests and Sisters are future Church leaders: building a vibrant Catholic Church for tomorrow, passing the gift of faith on to future generations worldwide.

Jeanne Bigard, a visionary young woman, founded the Society of St Peter the Apostle (SPA) in 1889. Thanks to your prayers and donations, Missio proudly continues this vital work in 157 countries, supporting tomorrow's leaders in each and every seminary in the missionary world.

**Look out for
some updates
from our
Seminaries on
page 6**



Focus on: Cameroon

An Internally Displaced family, who have fled to Douala

Innocent people are being killed, entire villages are being destroyed in arson attacks. Fear and anguish prevail in Cameroon.

In 2016, citizens began to protest about government oppression. Small, disorganised protests sprang up in English-speaking townships and rural areas.

The government responded in disproportionate and inhumane ways. They terrorised communities, burned villages and murdered innocent people. The outside world refused to intervene, leaving Anglophones feeling betrayed and government forces encouraged.

St Thomas Aquinas Major Seminary in Bambui is training 157 Cameroonian students for priesthood this year. Fr Ignatius has been the seminary Rector for eight years and a teacher for 24.

‘We worry constantly about the students,’ he says. ‘The crisis is making the whole environment unsafe. We can hear gunshots, but no one has come here to attack us, thanks be to God.’

In the face of the dangers, the seminary doors remain open. And despite – or perhaps even because of – the hardships, there has been an upsurge in vocations. In 2018, 32 young men were ordained as deacons in comparison with 13 in 2017.

The numbers are still growing. It is wonderful news, but it means resources are stretched more than ever and they need our help.

The Seminary has a committed team of Religious and lay formators to help the students and guide them on their journey to priesthood. But the crisis is causing great challenges. One Mill Hill priest who teaches at the Seminary used to take an hour to get there from his village. Now it takes him four hours, due to military blockades and armed skirmishes between the freedom fighters and government forces.

In Bamenda, some schools have been closed for two years. Even

- Cameroon has 10 regions.
- Eight regions are French-speaking and hold the centre of government.
- Two regions speak English.
- Tensions between the Anglophone regions and the rest of Cameroon have been growing for years.

the university closed for a year. And food prices have doubled.

Fr Ignatius says: 'We try to be self-sustaining. We grow our own vegetables and we have pigs, goats and sheep.'

'We had to borrow money to open at the beginning of the year. We have to cut back on non-essential items, so we eat less meat and travel less. We pray we stay healthy and don't need operations or medications.'

In our broken world, we need brave young men to take up the call of Christ. And by supporting them through prayers and donations, you will have a real impact on the communities they will serve.



These brave young men are preparing to serve their communities



'I want to be of service.'

Jacob was ordained Deacon on 29 June 2018. He grew up in a religious family and loved going to Mass.

'I know I have something to contribute,' Jacob shares. 'I just want to do something simple, to be of service. As students we reach out to the local community and help people in need.'

'At the moment the situation is traumatic; we hear gun shots every day. We have to transform this situation for our sake and the sake of our communities.'

Jacob comes from a large family and while his faith is strong, realising his vocation has not been straightforward. 'My father said I should go to University and that priests are too reliant on the help of others,' says Jacob. 'My mother supports me, and the love of my family is very important.'

Jacob's love and respect for family shines through in his ambition to reach out to the older women in his community through his ministry. 'Sometimes when they are widowed, they are left with nothing,' he says. And sadly, it is true that there is a stigma attached to widowhood. Women often face persecution, and risk losing their possessions and livelihoods.

Sadly, Jacob is acutely aware of the risks of being a priest in Cameroon's present environment. He knew Fr Cosmas Ondari MHM, who was tragically murdered whilst helping those affected by the struggle.

Jacob says: 'This morning I spoke with the Spiritual Director. I am very afraid about what is going on. He consoled me and asked me to write a prayer.'

Jacob shares that support from Missio in England and Wales gives him strength: 'Because of you, I know that we are loved and cherished. Thank you, it encourages us and gives us the courage to continue in our ministry.'

Updates from Seminaries where, through Missio, you can support and sponsor students who are studying for the priesthood.



INDIA

St John's Regional Seminary

Fr Solomon, the new Rector, shares with us the good news that 12 deacons were ordained to the priesthood in May, and that they have welcomed 23 students to 1st year Theology, among them, Brother Rajavarapu (below).



SRI LANKA

Our Lady of Lanka Seminary

Fr Expeditus Jayakody, the Rector, wrote recently: 'We commence this new Academic Year with a total of 258 students, with 151 diocesan students and 107 religious students. Of these 101 are for Philosophy and 157 for Theology.'

'They come from 12 dioceses of Sri Lanka and 11 religious congregations. This year we are blessed with students coming from Pakistan, India, Philippines, Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya, Senegal and China.'

KENYA

Christ the King Major Seminary

The Rector, Fr Peter Maingi Mutune, writes: 'Our main focus has always been the welfare of the students; to make them comfortable enough so that they can settle down to a formation that is based on a sound relationship with God, Christian morals and values, and on sound human values, especially maturity and responsibility.'

'Since 2015 the population of our students has gone up by 40% from 279 to 320 students. They are currently from 19 of the 26 dioceses in the Kenyan Church. Their formation in the Seminary is based on four major pillars: Academic, Pastoral, Human and Spiritual. This year some of the students have taken up martial arts. It is a great discipline and gives the students confidence that they will be able to defend themselves should they find they need to do so.'



MALAWI

St Peter's Major Seminary

The Rector, Fr Wezi Mfunu, shares: 'We have 88 students being trained at the Seminary and 14 are on their pastoral placement. This summer, 12 seminarians were ordained deacons and 12 deacons were ordained priests.'

'We managed to purchase a mini-bus in June which has been a great help, as it allows the students to visit those in prison, the sick and the elderly, and to work in the local hospitals. The deacons are able to preach and administer the Sacraments of Marriage and Baptism. This is a great joy for us!'

'We are ever grateful to all our benefactors in Missio England and Wales for standing by our side and offering us the much-needed financial, moral and spiritual support that helps keep this Seminary running.'

NIGERIA

Bigard Memorial Seminary

Fr Albert Ikpenwa, Rector, tells us: 'There are currently 270 in the last four years of Theological studies. 77 of these students are sponsored by Missio supporters in England and Wales.'

'Nine students were ordained in the summer and 10 will be ordained in December.'

Please continue to support these seminaries and others – perhaps you might consider becoming a sponsor if you are not already. See the back page for more information.



Bringing hope after despair



The Cameroon-based Sisters of St Ann of Divine Providence are helping people who have been forced to flee their homes because of the conflict.

‘57 thousand people have registered as refugees with the United Nations,’ says Sr Ekoti. ‘But many more are unregistered and haven’t been taken into account’.

Sr Ekoti and Sr Kiney visit camps for displaced people, reaching out to those in desperate need. The refugees have found space over the border in Nigeria, but very little else.

‘Those registered with the UN receive clothing and food, but not water or amenities,’ says Sr Ekoti. ‘They’re living in tents. Little children aren’t receiving an education. And unregistered people don’t have access to anything.’

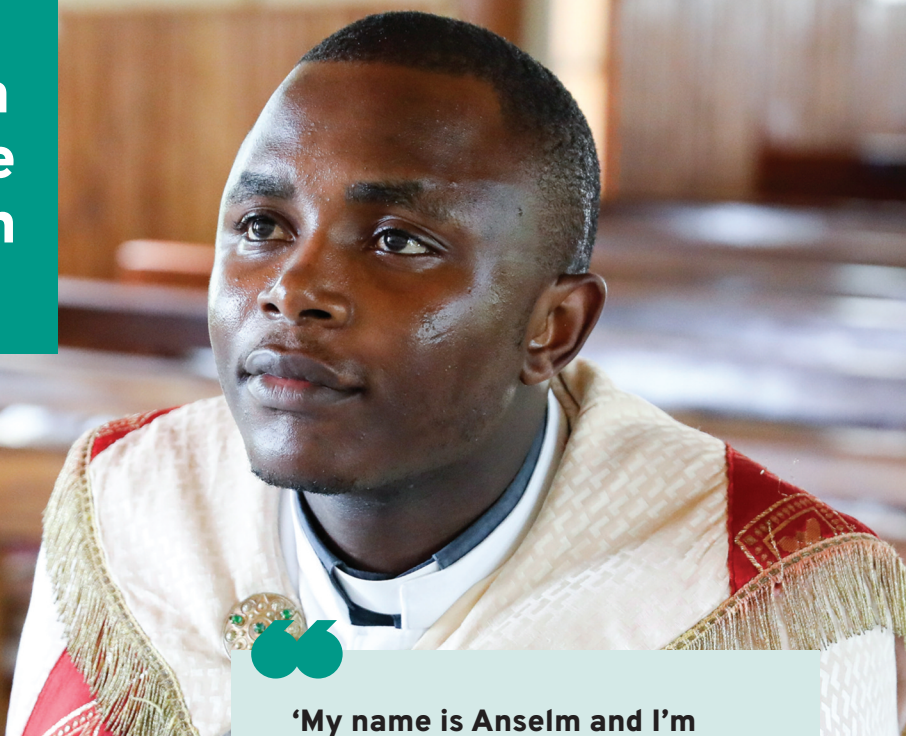
Sr Kiney speaks of the fear and tension the crisis is causing. ‘I pray for it to end well. I feel so bad when people are killed. But it consoles me that God is there too. God will answer our prayers someday.’

Sr Ekoti agrees. ‘We are living in fear. When you are afraid, you are not yourself.’ But, she says, ‘we keep quiet and try to bear with the situation. I see Christ in people – his presence amongst the people. We are trying to give them hope. We welcome them.’

The Sisters ask for your support: ‘If God is not in our midst, we have nothing,’ says Sr Ekoti. ‘We need to help with health and feeding, but also with moral uplift – to let them know it’s not the end of their life. After Good Friday comes Easter Sunday.’

‘Help us bring up the children. They need to go to school... and we want to prepare a Christmas feast for them,’ Sr Kiney says. ‘They need to feel they are children. They need to celebrate.’

When you sponsor a seminarian, you are building the Church of tomorrow, today.



'My name is Anselm and I'm 27 years old.'

I wanted to be a priest from the time I was nine. I joined a minor seminary at age 11 and major seminary at 18.

The first diocese in Cameroon was a Mill Hill Missionaries diocese. It's a very old diocese and I was an altar server there. It was through the example of the Parish Priest, Fr Peter Droog MHM that I reached a turning point in my vocation. Fr Peter was Parish Priest for 27 years. Many found their way to Church through him – his life was an example: to love the Blessed Sacrament, love the Rosary, and sing beautifully. I want to be like that.

The Lord is everything to me. My favourite Bible verse is John 15:5 – "Apart from me, you can do nothing". This speaks to me.

As a priest I want to help people to know God and find out what God means to you – to help you live the life God wants you to live and help as many people know God deeply.

My message to our supporters in England and Wales is this: with God, you are everything. He has never given up on us, so we can never give up on him!



In mission dioceses in Africa and Asia, it costs at least £700 a year to train a student for the priesthood. Despite the sacrifices made by their families and parish communities and the Seminaries' efforts to grow their own food, it is a struggle for them to cover the full costs of seminary training.

Missio believes no vocation should be turned away through lack of funds. That is why the Holy Father asks us to channel help from our supporters in England and Wales to our Church overseas.

As a Sponsor, you will play a vital part in creating a vibrant Catholic Church for the future. Without you, we would not be able to train Priests and Sisters, tomorrow's missionaries, to deliver the life-changing work that we do today.

If you can commit to £500 annually for the final four years of a seminarian's training before ordination, we can offer you the name of a student so you can pray for each other and, if you wish, correspond.

You can sponsor a seminarian individually, or as a family, a community or a parish project.

Thank you if you are already a sponsor – your support means so much. You are encouraging faith to grow and the love of Christ to be shared.

If you do not yet sponsor, please get in touch to receive a free, no-obligation, information pack (see centre pull-out).

Any help you can provide will be so gratefully received. The students pray for all our supporters and sponsors, as we also do here at Missio, and you are remembered at Mass in St Peter's Basilica in Rome every day.