

## E-BULLETIN #66

*"Let the holiness of God shine forth" (cf. Mt 5,16)*

item

### **'we have all it takes!'**

The central aim of the last African Synod was seen in its official title: **"The Church in Africa and its Evangelisation Mission towards the Year 2000"**. It sought to equip the Church in Africa for its mission of bringing the Good News to the peoples of Africa. The Church, including our community, is being sent to proclaim the joy and hope of the Risen Christ who, with the anointing of the Spirit of the Lord, comes "to bring Good News to the poor, to proclaim release to the captives, to let the oppressed go free, and to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour." (Lk 4:18.)

When the Church, planted in hopelessly dependent possibility of 'providing for its to contemporary Africa "Good News"! It proves the better for Africa, and which that is possible. In this part of the Church's mission

At the end of the African to implement its developed a plan to hold local include the topic of self-laiity, encouraging them by on the sources of funding for



the midst of a poor and continent, demonstrates the own needs', it is proclaiming something that really is possibility that things can get demonstrates the means by way, **self-reliance** becomes of evangelizing Africa.

Synod, the Bishops resolved deliberations. They diocesan synods which would reliance. Also to involve the providing open information Church projects.

In this paper I will speak about steps a Pallottine working in Africa might use to foster a spirit of self-reliance as strongly recommended by the African Synod.

#### **definition of a living and effective Pallottine community in Africa**

According to Patrick Kalilombe, a local Church/community becomes living and effective in the measure in which it becomes basically self-supporting in its internal and its external mission, when all the basic structures and resources for its life and work are found in it, even if a measure of reliance on external help may still continue.

It is extremely important that as Pallottines today we realise that it is high time our communities and mission stations reach this stage. Economic meltdown and donor fatigue in some parts of the world should serve to warn us that perhaps time is not on our side.

We owe it to the mother Provinces, and to our people, to do all we can in the time that Providence may still grant us to build up communities and mission stations that stand some chance of survival and growth even in the worst imaginable hazards. According to Kalilombe such a community, mission station and Church will have to be self-ministering, self-propagating and self-supporting.

### **a self-supporting Pallottine community and mission station**

Kalilombe says a Church that depends for its existence and essential services upon the continuous charity of other Churches is not a healthy, properly established Church. *“Basic economic self-reliance is as much a part of the establishment of the Church...as is the localisation of its hierarchy.”* I don’t think anyone would dispute the truth of these words of Fr A Hastings. We all have had enough proof of what he says earlier: *“The people of God are an earthly, eating, drinking, buying, selling people”*. It is not only practically advantageous, it is theologically necessary that a local Pallottine community be itself an economically viable unit.



By tradition, our Pallottine community and mission stations here in Africa have depended for their economic viability on continuous outside help. That enabled us to build our missions, apostolate, formation houses, initiate and run essential but expensive services like hospitals and schools and maintain a large number of domestic, farm and pastoral workers – to the point where they cannot continue, let alone develop further, without an ever increasing flow of outside help through kind grants from Rome, the Province or other international donor organisations. We’ve grown accustomed to taking all that for granted, to presume that these grants will always be forthcoming. But suppose the grants stop or dwindle; suppose these generous benefactors are called to their eternal harvest, what would become of our admirable structures? I tremble when I ask myself such questions. Our Pallottine family in Africa will be viable only if it can devise ways and means of bringing about a sufficient measure of self-support.

## **what will be involved?**

### **1. bringing the best out of confreres:**

John C Maxwell says that many organisations today fail to tap into their own potential. Why? Because the only reward they give their employees is a pay cheque. The relationship between employer and employee never develops beyond that point. Successful organisations take a different approach. In exchange for the work a person gives, he/she receives not only a pay cheque, but he/she is also nurtured by the employer. And nurturing has the ability to transform people’s lives. Nurturing benefits everyone. What people wouldn’t be more secure and motivated when their leader or superior believes in them, encourages them, shares with them, and trusts them?

People are more productive when they are nurtured. Even more important, nurturing creates a strong emotional and professional foundation within workers who have future leadership potential. As Pallottines in Africa, we need a bold plan to train confreres to support their own community through capacity building and on-going formation in spiritual and secular sciences. *“Identify and*

develop the talents of the confreres you have under your authority”, says Archbishop Remi Ste-Marie.

**2. sustaining ourselves locally:**

Finding money and other material goods to maintain the community and run its essential services, to support and maintain its workers, and to expand and develop those services that need development (project management and fund raising skills in our formation period).

**3 getting serious about setting personal and community goals:**

Today there are simply too many things to do, too many television programmes to watch. There are too many voices, cell phones and distractions competing for attention. Defined goals provide a framework for smarter choices. If you know precisely where you are going it becomes far easier to select those activities that get you there. If you set goals the actions you take will be based on your charism or spirituality rather than on day to day moods. Discipline almost magnetises your mind to seek out new opportunities to create the personal, professional and spiritual life you desire. Clearly defined goals commit you to a course of action. They give you the inspiration to act on your priorities and make things happen in your life rather than waiting for opportunities to land in your lap.

Selecting goals that engage and motivate is one of the best ways to boost the level of one’s personal commitment to life and apostolate and to increase the energy one brings. So set big goals. “You are only as rich, whether materially or spiritually, as your dreams.”

**4. change of self-image / mindset:**

Many confreres suffer poor self-image because of their own words. “Father we have no means in Africa”!

For many years they have put themselves down and have now developed a negative mind-set that prevents them from rising higher in their apostolate or in their personal lives. Words can be self-defeating, or they can have creative power. Our words can set the direction of our lives and of our community: “I am the Lord’s servant,” Mary said, “may it happen to me **as you have said.**” (Luke 1:38). Positively or negatively, creative power resides in one’s own words, because we believe our own words more than we believe anybody else’s.

Change the way you speak about yourself, learn to send positive messages and you will change your self- image which will in turn change your attitude and then that will change your action. When God told Abraham and Sarah they were going to have a child, they were both beyond child- bearing years. No wonder Sarah laughed. God had to change their self-image before they could ever have that child. How did God do that? He changed their names; He changed the words they were hearing. He changed Abram to Abraham, which means, “father of many nations,” before he had a single child. God changed Sarai to Sarah, which means “princess.”



**Zaire Jesus**

Don't use words merely to describe your situation or to win peoples' sympathy. Use words to change your situation. With words, we can prophesy our future. Unfortunately, many of us in Africa predict defeat, failure, and mediocrity. "Remember, you will eat the fruit of your own words, so bless your future." To know where your community is going to be in five years from now, listen to your words.

#### 5. investing in our relationships:

"Now after six days Jesus took Peter, and James and John, and led them up on a high mountain apart by themselves" [Mark 9:2]. "...if all possible means....human relationships... are used to renew faith in Jesus Christ and to increase love all over the world."(St Vincent Pallotti).

If you want relationships to thrive invest in them by being a giver rather than a taker. Strive to make relational deposits into people's lives, encouraging them, building them up, and helping them feel better about themselves. Remember that every time you interact with people, you are either making a deposit or making a withdrawal from their emotional account.

In our apostolate and mission stations let us try to build authentic relationships with those we are trying to help and listen to their needs. Also pay attention to what they are not saying. Often silence is more powerful than words. Use this to become agents of reconciliation. We have the power to enable others to do things for themselves and to encourage the poor to use their Spirit-given gifts. (Rom 12:6. 1 Cor 12:4-11. Eph 4:7). "The poor, no matter how destitute, have enormous untapped capacity; find it, be inspired by it, and build upon it."

The call to a self-supporting Pallottine community in Africa is but a call to learn to be effective which includes the following: *Firstly*, never do for the poor what they can do for themselves – to be an effective helper, you need to learn to coax and encourage. *Secondly*, limit one-way giving to emergency situations – intervention may be needed during emergency situations, but it is hardly a method for continuing change. *Thirdly*, strive to empower the poor through establishing a beneficial relationship characterised by responsibility, accountability and respect – communicate in a way that builds mutual



trust rather than a sense of superiority. *Fourthly*, subordinate your interests to the needs of those being served – investigate your own motive for getting involved. When the aim is to create an inspiring and enriching experience for oneself, the interests of the poor may be overlooked and we have to avoid that in our Pallottine community of today and tomorrow in Africa. We should aim in our apostolate and mission stations to create lasting change, to create a model of development and empowerment. Whilst betterment projects and programmes have their place and time in the Church and society, serving people is different to developing people.

May the Risen Lord open our minds and hearts to the potential within us and around us, for "Africa has all it takes." [Chinese Ambassador]

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**you commented...**

**on #65**

I am back again... and reading backlog of E-bulletins. The articles continue to be challenging and informative.

**LR 28.04.13**

The article on apathy needs to be an ongoing reminder to us to "stick to the essentials" of our Pallottine charism -- to give new life to faith, a new spark to love and a new thrust to unity in Jesus Christ. The poor and the call to faith and new evangelization are intertwined in the challenge that we have received. So keep the reminders going!

**CL 29.04.13**

**ON #63**

Thanks for this, Ray. I think we'll be hearing lots more about Mary Glowrey in the years to come -- an extraordinary story!

**MB 29.04.13**