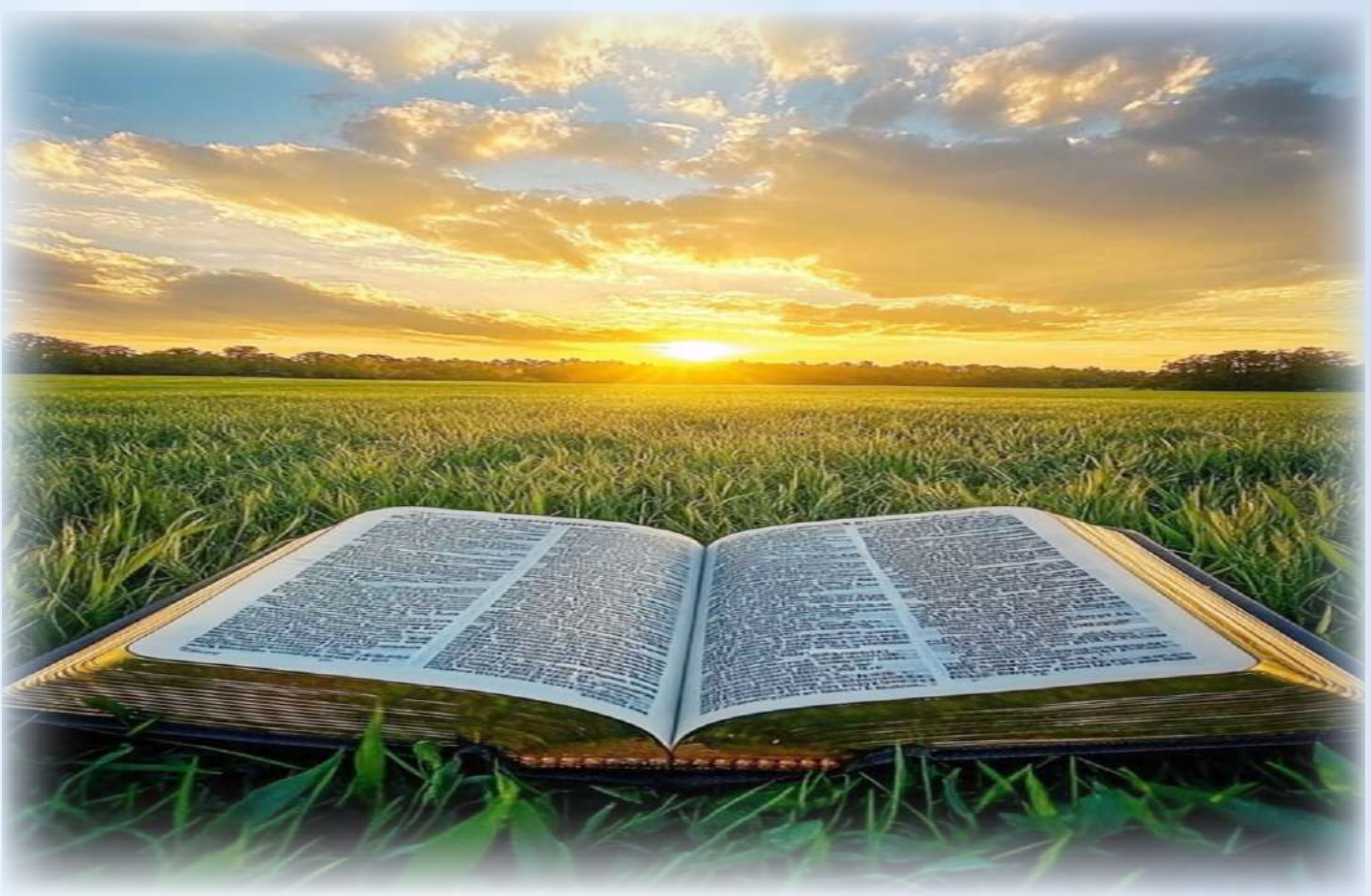
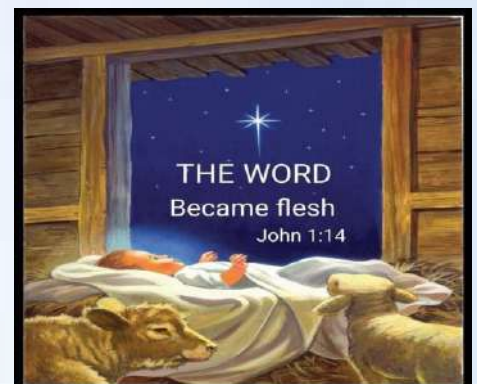

SAVE AFRICA

NEWSLETTER



“In the Heart of Jesus we find the strength to hope, the courage to persevere, and the grace to pray without growing weary.”

St Daniel Comboni



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SAVE AFRICA NEWSLETTER (SAN)

is a biannual publication of the Comboni Postulancy, Nairobi. We publish the most recent developments in the Catholic Church and the Comboni Missionaries in Kenya and South Sudan.

We educate people on the activities of the Postulancy as well as the trending issues in the Comboni Missions. Through this we journey together, with our families in discerning our vocation and making a difference in the modern world.

You can be part of us too, you can be part of our vocation.

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****Prayer to St. Daniel Comboni****

God of goodness, who called Daniel Comboni to bring your message of love to the suffering peoples of the African continent, grant that we may find in the suffering around us the face of your son Jesus Christ.
Who lives and reigns forever. Amen.



Christmas Message 2025

Fr. Tesfaab Bekit Mccj

In the Gospel of Luke, we hear the tender words of God's mercy: *"By the tender mercy of our God, the rising sun will come to us from above, to shine on those who live in darkness and in the shadow of death, and to guide our feet into the way of peace."* (Luke 1:78-79)

When St. Luke tells us of the birth of Jesus, he does not speak of a legend or myth. He records a real event that happened in a specific time and place, in Bethlehem, under the rule of earthly kings. The birth of Jesus is history, not fantasy; **it is the fulfilment of God's promises to His people.** But we might ask ourselves: Why do we still celebrate Christmas after more than two thousand years? The answer lies deep within our hearts. If we listen closely, we will discover that Christmas is not simply a feast of the past, but a **living mystery** that continues today.

The Light Has Dawned

At the time Jesus was born, the Roman Empire celebrated the feast of the **"Unconquered Sun."** They believed the sun was divine, the source of life and power. Yet the early Christians courageously proclaimed: *"No, the true Sun has risen, not a created light, but the Light of the World, Christ the Lord."* As the prophet Isaiah foretold: *"The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; upon those who lived in the land of deep darkness, light has dawned."* (Isaiah 9:2). And again, Balaam prophesied: *"A star shall come out of Jacob, a ruler shall rise out of Israel."* (Numbers 24:17). This Light is Jesus Christ - **"the Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace"** (Isaiah 9:6). In Him, all fear is scattered, all shadows flee, and the night of sin gives way to the dawn of salvation. No wonder the angel said to the shepherds: **"Do not be afraid." I bring you good news of great joy for all the people.**" (Luke 2:10)

Why Do We Celebrate Christmas Today?

The Romans celebrated the return of the physical sun during the shortest days of winter. We, however, celebrate the coming of the Eternal Light - the light

that never fades, the Source of joy, the Prince of Peace. Christmas, then, is not merely a day of outward festivity, lights, decorations, or gifts - but a call to an inner transformation. The true question is not, *"Do we celebrate Christmas?"* but rather, *"Is Christ truly born in us?"*

1. The Darkness Around us

Look around and within: why is there so much unrest, pain, and division in our homes, communities, and world? Why do greed, hatred, and selfishness seem to rule? It is because Christ has not yet been born in many hearts. When our hearts are closed to love, peace vanishes. When pride replaces humility, joy fades. When God is forgotten, humanity becomes restless and lost. The true celebration of Christmas begins when Christ is born again within us - when peace, mercy, and love dwell in our homes and hearts.

2. The Mystery of the Nativity

The birth of Christ is a mystery of great joy and peace. He was born once in Bethlehem, but He desires to be born again every day - in the heart of each believer. If we make room for Him, if we open our hearts as Mary did, Christmas will not be just one day of the year, but a way of life - a continual renewal of hope and faith. Thus, Christmas invites us to fill our lives with faith, hope, joy, and love. It calls us to receive Christ not only in words, but in our actions - in our care for the poor, the lonely, and the forgotten. Our hearts become His manger when we welcome Him through compassion and prayer.

The Meaning of Christmas for us today

Even though we are weak and poor, the Child of Bethlehem strengthens us with **His grace.** He who was born in simplicity desires to be born in the humble and the open-hearted. Let us, then, make room for Him - to allow **His light to dispel our darkness,** His peace to overcome our fears, and His love to fill our lives. When Christ is born in us, Christmas becomes alive - not only a memory, but a **living encounter with the God who still comes to dwell among us.**

Prayer

Lord Jesus, You are the Light that never fades, the Joy that fills every heart, and the Peace the world cannot give. Be born anew in us this day. Shine in our homes, in our families, in our communities and in our world. May Your humble birth renew our hearts, so that we too may become bearers of Your light and witnesses of Your love to all people. Amen.



**Vocation:
From Childhood to a
Refugee Camp,
Matured A Deep Desire to
Serve God**

Morris Boboya

I am Morris Boboya, a postulant of the Comboni Missionaries' Province of South Sudan, studying philosophy at Tangaza University, Nairobi. My story is a journey of faith, inspiration, and persistence, which from childhood to the refugee camp, matured a deep desire to serve God.

The journey began when I was in Yei, as a child. One day, we visited my maternal aunt. While in the sitting room, my eyes were attracted by a picture hanging on the wall. It was one which showed "*the way to heaven*." Before reaching the road going to heaven, was a route through hell. I saw a priest walking through the fire, yet he was not burnt. I saw that to reach heaven, one must pass through judgements and suffering; only the pure and worthy can resist the fire and reach the heaven. I was deeply touched by this. I asked myself, "*why is the fire not burning the priest?*" The priest was protected because of his clean heart and consecration to God. That image remained in my mind for years and became my first motivation toward the priestly vocation. I started to think that the unquestionable way to heaven was the priesthood; to live a life devoted to God and service to others.

Being a member of the Holy Childhood at Christ the King Parish, helped me to learn more about missionary life, prayer, and service. On one Sunday, I saw an altar server walking reverently from the sacristy to the altar. Approaching the tabernacle, he genuflected respectfully with a medal around his neck. I was moved, overjoyed and wondered how he served God with love and respect. I shared with my mother the desire to serve at the altar and she agreed. After my *First Holy Communion*, I joined the *Altar Servers* and started serving at Mass. This brought me closer to God. I loved the veneration, discipline, and the peace I experienced during service. I was chosen to be a trainer and teacher of new servers. Many people in the parish started calling me "*Abuna*." At first, I laughed at the nickname, but deep inside touched me. I felt as though people saw something in me that I had not yet fully accepted. I began to realize that God might be calling me to priesthood.

The conflict of 2016 forced us to seek refuge in Uganda. Life in the refugee settlement was not easy. There were days when food was limited, and hope seemed far. But even in those moments, God was present. However, I was hurt by the absence of priests in the camp. For many months, we could not receive the sacraments. I began to reflect deeply on the situation of our community.

I saw how people desired the Eucharist, confession, and for priests who could guide and comfort them. I realized that God might be calling me not just for my own salvation, but to serve His spiritually hungry and abandoned people. I thought, "*If I were a priest, I could bring Christ to these people who are in anguish and waiting*." Those years in the refugee camp became a time of silent preparation. They trained me endurance, compassion, and trust in God's providence. Even in the face of hardship, I identified an inner peace that confirmed my calling. After returning to South Sudan, I was deeply inspired by the charism of the Comboni Missionaries, "serving the poor and most abandoned people." Their founder, Daniel Comboni, once said, "*Save Africa with Africans*." His life of sacrifice, missionary zeal, and vision of evangelizing the marginalized with love and service matched what God had placed in my heart. After high school, I contacted Fr. Paul Idra, the Vocation Promoter who guided me through the discernment process, encouraging me to continue with prayer and commitment to the Church.

In June 20th, 2022, I was officially admitted to the Pre-postulancy, in Moroyok. That marked an important stage in my journey. The formation assisted me to grow spiritually, intellectually, and human dimension. I learned about community life, missionary spirit, the importance of prayer and service. After the pre-postulancy in 2023, I was admitted to the Postulancy, in Ongata Rongai, Kenya. I engage in pastoral activities that help me integrate philosophy with the journey. Living in a multi-cultural is community imparting in me humility, cooperation, and cultural openness. I have learned that vocation is not a decision made once, but a nonstop "Yes" to God every day.

Therefore, when I look back, recalling that moment at my aunt's house, altar service, refugee crisis, to my formation today; I see how God's hand has been leading me step by step. I believe that the one who started this good work in me will carry it to the end. I am encouraged by St Daniel Comboni who said, "*The missionary must be ready to die for the salvation of souls*." I pray that God may give me the grace to continue with my vocation, to serve the poor and the abandoned with compassion.

Mission Experience in Amakuriat Parish, West Pokot



Bonaventure Matoke

As a Comboni postulant, I was privileged to undertake a mission experience at our parish, Mother of Peace (Yoto Kalia), Amakuriat in West Pokot. It was a formative experience that gave me a glimpse of Comboni Missionary life; being close to the people, serving them, and growing together in faith. Living with Postulant Wilberforce Ochieng, four priests who were Fr. Philip Andrug, Fr. Kelly, Fr. John, and Fr. Jesus and Postulant Cornelius from the Consolata Missionaries, I experienced true fraternity marked by humility, love, and unity. These encounters greatly inspired me and deepened my admiration for Comboni's charism.

I trained altar servers, taught catechism, and led Sunday services at the parish and in the surrounding schools as part of my apostolate. By supporting organizations like Young Christian Students (YCS), I fostered students' Christian identity and leadership and promoted spiritual growth. I participated in catechism lessons at elementary schools like Alale and Orok. In addition, we helped with everyday tasks like fixing desks and water pipes. These initiatives frequently resulted in fruitful discussions with the faculty, strengthening understanding and cooperation among them.

The mission journey was not without its difficulties: low literacy levels forced me to be creative in my catechesis; limited manpower confirmed Christ's quote that "the harvest is plentiful but the workers are few." Rugged terrain tested my endurance as well as commitment; language and cultural barriers humbled me to listen and adapt. These hardships strengthened my passion for the Comboni Missionary life and significantly influenced my discernment.

My mission experience at Amakuriat has been a powerful confirmation of my vocation, deepening my appreciation of the Comboni spirit of simplicity, closeness to the people, and journeying with

communities in faith. It taught me that being a missionary is not only about giving, but about being present that is, walking alongside others in their joys and struggles, allowing their faith, resilience, and simplicity to evangelize me in return. Though challenging, these moments have left a lasting mark on my vocation, strengthening my desire to serve with the heart of Christ in the spirit of St. Daniel Comboni. I am confident that this experience will guide me toward a mature decision in my



discernment journey.

Recollection: Understanding Human Sexuality: A Path to Wholeness and Holiness

By: **Abraham Wekesa**



In many cases, I have been challenged by individuals who believe that sexuality focuses only on sexual pleasure, and that fulfilment comes solely through sexual satisfaction. However, based on the workshop presented by Sr. Rose, human sexuality develops through four interrelated dimensions: biblical, biological, psychological, and socio-cultural. These interconnected aspects provide the foundation for understanding human sexuality in its fullness.

According to Pope John Paul II's Theology of the Body, we share in God's dignity, for we are created in His image and likeness. Our bodies are His dwelling place that is, a gift to be respected and appreciated, not as source of pride. My body is a visible sign that communicates what I feel within my soul. Embracing celibacy does not mean rejecting the body or suppressing desires; rather, it is about integrating those desires in selflessness and developing healthy relationships with others.

Sexuality involves one's entire way of being which includes all feelings and thoughts experienced consciously. The brain is the master sexual organ, while the skin and genitalia are the body's most sensitive parts. Sexual feelings can be triggered by the presence of another person, fantasy, or exposure to pornography. It is important to listen intuitively with the heart and be truthful about what one truly wants as a person. Every individual must make decisions that lead toward holiness (whether through the celibate life or marriage) always embracing chastity.

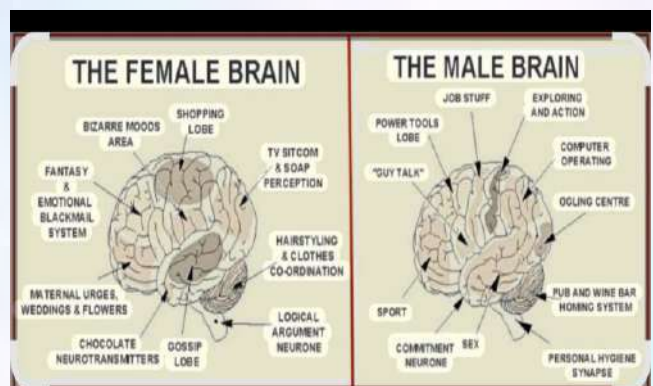
The dangers of pornography are clear. It has trapped

a large percentage of men compared to women.

Pornography is a silent and destructive killer; it violates the body, excites false fantasies, and undermines human dignity. It turns others into objects of satisfaction and leads to secrecy, isolation, and immorality. Ultimately, it draws us away from God, leading to sin without fear or remorse.

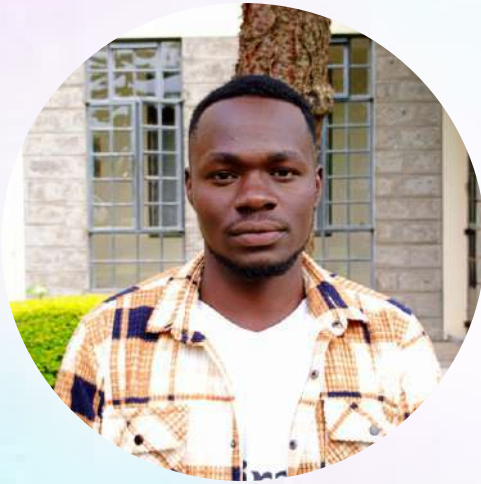
Culture and background also shape our understanding of sexuality, either positively or negatively. I have often encountered myths claiming that living without sexual fulfilment is abnormal or leads to prostate cancer. But how many married people have still suffered such conditions? This dangerous ideology can encourage unfaithfulness and sinful habits such as pornography and masturbation.

Masturbation and casual sexual relationships,



though sometimes defended as harmless, are not alternatives for genuine human formation; either physical or spiritual. Seeking a healthy life involves self-awareness, making responsible decisions, maintaining balanced relationships, and avoiding what is sinful. It also involves engaging in activities and exercises that help control the mind, reading the lives of saints to overcome temptation, and discovering one's inner self, including the wounds that affect human growth. Above all, a life of prayer and fasting remains the firmest pillar for integrating human sexuality with holiness and virtue.

St. Daniel Comboni Day 2025: Rekindling the Fire of Faith as Missionaries of Hope



By: Ambrose Muendo

There are moments in our walk of faith when the flame within us flickers; when life's challenges, disappointments, or simply the weight of routine begin to dim our spiritual glow. Yet, God gently reminds us that the fire of faith is never meant to die out: *"For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you"* (2 Timothy 1:6).

The Comboni Family gathered with deep joy on October 10, 2025, to celebrate *Comboni Day* which is a cherished occasion to commemorate St. Daniel Comboni, the great missionary who gave his life for the people of Africa. The celebration, held at the Comboni Postulancy, was a time of reflection, thanksgiving, and renewed commitment to live as true missionaries of hope.

The air was filled with warmth and excitement as the Pre-postulants, Postulants, Scholastics, Priests, Lay Missionaries, Sisters, Seculars, and friends of the Comboni Family graced the celebration. The turnout of invited guests was wonderful which is a true sign of unity and shared love for the Comboni spirit.

The event began with a welcoming talk from Fr. Tesfaab, who spoke about the life of St. Daniel Comboni and the deep motivation behind his missionary journey. He reminded everyone that Comboni's dream was born from a heart full of faith, courage, and love for Africa. His words were

touching and inspiring, calling all present to draw strength from Comboni's example and to keep their own faith alive, even in moments of doubt or struggle. It was a beautiful reflection that set the tone for the rest of the day.

Following the talk, the Thanksgiving Mass was celebrated by the Provincial Bursar, Fr. Meshack, with the Provincial Superior, Fr. Andrew Wanjohi, as co-celebrant. Fr. Andrew, who delivered the homily centred it on the theme *"Rekindling the Fire of Our Faith as Missionaries of Hope."* His message invited everyone to look within and renew their relationship with God; to let His love reignite the flame of hope and service in our lives. Through prayer, songs, and reflection, the community entered into a deep moment of renewal.

After the Holy Mass, all gathered for a shared meal filled with laughter, fellowship, and joy. As the celebration drew to a close, hearts were renewed and spirits uplifted. Comboni Day 2025 reminded us that the fire kindled by St. Daniel still burns brightly within us, guiding us to be missionaries of hope



in today's world. May our hearts never cease to burn with faith.

First Year's Welcoming Ceremony: Who Will Preach to Your Generation?

By Jerome Gaaniko



On the 12th of September 2025 (Solemnity of the Exaltation of the Cross), the first years were officially welcomed into the community of the postulancy. As a tradition in the house, this was done through the celebration of the Mass and a refreshing moment of entertainment. Outstandingly, the newly recruited postulants are 15 in number: 10 from the Kenyan province and 5 from the province of South Sudan. These raised the number of the entire postulants to 39. Thus, serves as a blessing not only for the congregation but also for the church.

Moreover, “the way to genuine formation requires genuine openness”, Fr. Pedro Percy who presided over the Eucharist stated. This will enable the candidates to get help in their discernment. He also emphasized that the primary purpose of postulancy is to prepare the postulants for the mission. Echoing the past he said, “my generation is different from your generation. As for me, I have preached to mine; who will preach to yours?” challenging the postulants to confront evangelization in this modern era. He invited them to take their formation seriously and not for granted, since both the congregation and the church need them to further the cost of evangelization and human dignity.

Additionally, the newly welcomed postulants

expressed their joy as they officially joined the broader family of postulancy. All of them shared their happiness and vowed to commit themselves to proper discernment through openness and transparency. In his view John Orry said, “I felt greatly excited to be part of this family, and I entrust this new journey into the hands of God.”

Similarly, I experienced immense joy, feeling called to set aside my personal desires and get committed to this special journey of faith and discernment”.

More so, Fr. David Ahiro, the community's superior, generally welcomed the new postulants to feel at home. He advised them to be open to the formators and to Christ in order to grow. “No one finds himself here accidentally; everything is designed by the one who initiates vocations”, Fr. Ahiro emphasized. He called all the postulants to make efforts and



commitment in the journey of their discernment.

Therefore, welcoming of the first years is a glorious culture of making them feel at home to start their holistic formation: human, spiritual, intellectual, community and pastoral dimensions. This moment was special and memorable, filled with colourful joys and awesome happiness.

From the Altar to Either Garden or Burden

By Denis Dino

Once a hoe is cursed, life is cursed. This is a reality that is seen in man's history. Neither spiritualism nor intellectualism can stand it. Divinely, God, being the first architect of work, instructed man in his wisdom "to subdue the earth". Can this be possible? The whole lights fall into the basin of work! Practically, work is considered as one of the most formidable aspects of formation in postulancy. "Sparing the hoe, invites the hunger," a fun yet incredible saying used by some postulants, makes farm work not just a priority, but even a pride. This gets instilled in them as they walk the road of their discernment. But why farm work in the postulancy? In general, yes, the light of a community is dim, and its survival is even at stake without a stable food system. And yes, the sustainability of a community depends on food security.

However, is that all? No! It's just half of the moon's face. Realistically, farming is a livelihood, and it is done at the postulancy in the spirit of preparation for the mission and the challenges of this changing society. Some of the missions in both sub-urban and rural Kenya and South Sudan are located in fertile, arable lands. Nonetheless, most of them operate entirely on the charity of well-wishers; cut off the charity, and the mission stumbles. So, can't such missions, even in their smallest way possible, invest in agriculture to support local programs, rather than entirely relying on charitable donations that sometimes take years to realize?

Today, Mission's economic independence is crucial, and I believed they can! Nevertheless, this doesn't negate the importance of external charity in supporting missions, because it has its own place. But to totally depend on them even for the smallest activity in the mission, is the point where we should



raise eye-brows.

One way of forging it, is through a sustainable farming enterprise. This will help the mission to thrive with or without external charities, since it strengthens the microeconomic system that fosters the mission's prosperity. Of course, this can happen in small ways, yet it makes a difference in the life mission.

Therefore, farming is critical to the sustainability and operational independence of the mission.



The Church and State in Dialogue: Spiritual Mission and Social Responsibility

By Simon Lodai Amin Salvatore



The Catholic Church in its tradition has maintained a consistent collaboration with the civil authority. However, one should know that; The political community and the Church are autonomous and independent in their own fields. Yet both, under different titles, are devoted to the personal and social vocation of the same men. ... The more that both foster sounder cooperation between themselves ... the more effective service they will be able to render to the good of all; (*Gaudium et Spes*, 76).

The human person who is at the centre of anthropological nuances is a complex creature. He demands care, dignity, and freedom. But more importantly, the human person deserves a destiny, a home out of this world, and better life in the hereafter. In order to serve man in his entirety, the Church and the State become two necessary instrument that would help man reach his human *qua* human end.

According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church, “every institution is inspired, at least implicitly, by a vision of man and his destiny, from which it derives the point of reference for its judgment, its hierarchy of values, its line of conduct. ... If it does not acknowledge as supreme the authority of God, it will tend to divinize its own power and to make the State its own end, the ultimate source of its own value judgments; (*CCC*, 2244). This baptizes the very ‘Need for collaboration between the Church and the State.’

More so, the fathers of the second Vatican II council wrote that “government is to see to it that equality of

citizens before the law, which belongs to the common good of society, is never violated (...) It is the special duty of government to provide effective protection for the religious freedom of all the citizens, by just laws and by other appropriate means.” (*Dignitatis Humanae*, 13). Many heads of State, on their part, have cooperated with the Church in delivering services to humanity.

During the worse times of the conflict in the then Sudan, the Church stood with the marginalized; providing health care, food, shelter and education to thousands of Sudanese while carrying out her spiritual mission, “Salvation of Souls” through evangelization. It is self-evident in Gaza, Ukraine, Democratic Republic of Congo, among many countries across the globe.

Therefore, it is imperative that the Church and State – though holding different powers – advance the human agenda towards progress that builds the human ecosystem into a habitable, morally upright and just world. That is why the late Pope Benedict in his address to the German parliament said, “The State may not impose religion, yet it must guarantee religious freedom and harmony between followers of different religions. (...) The role of religion is to purify and shed light upon the application of reason to the discovery of objective moral principles, (2005, Address to German Parliament)



The Catholic Church: A Living Family of Faith

By Victor Gitono



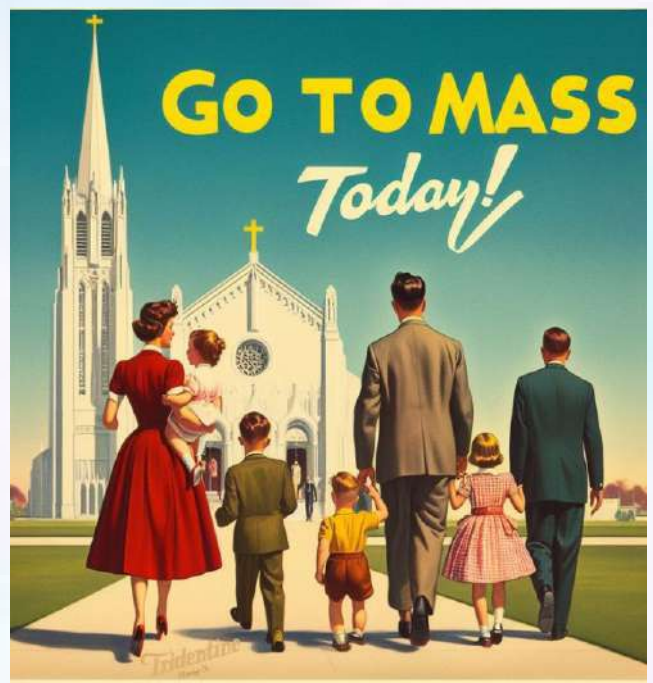
The Catholic Church was founded by Jesus Christ, and He entrusted it to His disciple Peter to govern it. He gave him the key, which acts as a sign of his authority to govern the Church, an authority that has been passed on by Peter, the first Pope, to others. The Church is a continuation of Jesus' mission here in the world, and His presence is seen through the sacraments, which unite the Church, making it a family of faith. It is the largest Christian community in the world, a living community of believers united in hope, love, and faith.

From its earliest days, the Church has understood itself as universal, called to embrace every people and culture. This gives meaning to its nature as a community without borders, open to all and sent to proclaim the joy of the Gospel to the people. In every parish, whether in a city or a remote village, the faithful gather around the altar to celebrate the presence of Jesus Christ through the Eucharist. This celebration is for all people regardless of race or nationality. Through full participation in Communion, the Church expresses her unity while also honoring the diversity of cultures and traditions that enrich her life. Through her relationship with

Christ and the sacraments, the Church becomes a sign and instrument of union with God and of the unity of the whole human race.

The Church as a family is called to share in the life of purity as an eternal destiny during its pilgrimage here on earth, directing us to Christ and finally to God. Like a pilgrim, the Church continues to press on in spite of the persecutions of the world, with hope and power from God, until it arrives at the light of eternal life. It also plays an important role in society through its great contribution in the fields of education, healthcare, and the promotion of social justice.

In conclusion, the Church remains a living community of faith, hope, and love despite the challenges and changes of the modern world. It continues to offer spiritual guidance and moral direction to millions of people across the globe.



The Meaning of Synodality in Today's Church

By Abraham Oyet Kanis Kasmir

When we look at the Church, we realize that it is not the building, but the faithful who worship God with sincerity; finding joy, peace, and renewal in His presence. We gather together as believers with a solemn purpose: first, to praise and give thanks to God while acknowledging that we are sinners, united in the communion of fraternity. The late Pope Francis called us to live out the values of Synodality i.e., communion, sharing, and participation. He invited the laity, religious men and women, and the clergy to listen to the



Word of God and be guided by the Holy Spirit.

Synodality teaches that the Holy Spirit speaks through the Body of Christ. This gives value to the multiplicity of

voices within the Church in the hope of reaching a consensus that reflects the needs and desires of the faith community. This belief rests on the understanding that, although God's will be often unpredictable, He reveals it to His people through prayer, experience, and discernment; empowering Catholics everywhere in their mission to share the Good News.

Synodality became an expression of the Church's very nature, form, and mission. It is not a parliamentary process or an attempt to democratize the Church, but rather a spiritual journeying together as the family of God which is always led by the Holy Spirit. This "journeying together" calls us to show love for God by listening to His Word in our daily lives through prayer, receiving the sacraments. It also invites us to show love to our brothers and sisters by helping the needy, caring for the sick and the suffering, and practicing works of mercy in all that we do.

One may ask, what is the role of Synodality in the

Church today? Is it merely about mutual discernment, shared responsibility, and a participative spirit under the guidance of the Holy Spirit or is it something deeper? Synodality is not simply a procedural reform, but a way of being Church that brings everyone together under one umbrella who is Jesus Christ.

This Year of Hope reminds us to live with renewed confidence in the future, and we are invited to bring hope to those we encounter each day. We must accept others with their strengths and weaknesses, in the spirit of the Church's mission grounded in the three dimensions of communion, participation, and mission. We are called to be ambassadors of hope, peace, unity, and love to every human being and every creature of God. In the spirit of Synodality, Christians must walk beside others and never walk alone. We must share our gifts, ideas, and lives in common to build up one another. The Church rejects the spirit of selfish individualism and instead embraces the spirit of Ubuntu amplified in the phrase, "I am because we are." The Church is built upon communion, just as the Holy Trinity (the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit) act together for the common good of redeeming humanity from the slavery of sin and evil. Therefore, let us allow ourselves to be molded by God so that we can



continue to support one another and truly journey together as one family of faith.

“VOCATION AND CHALLENGES CANNOT BE SEPARATED FROM EACH OTHER”

By Angelo Botha

Greetings of peace of mind and body to you all. It is my privilege to write this article, especially to the young men and women in formation houses who are discerning a call to be religious priests, brothers, and sisters. St. Daniel



Comboni, the founder of Comboni Missionaries of the Heart of Jesus (MCCJ), is a saint who suffered throughout his mission for the regeneration of Africa.

He faces numerous challenges in saving the souls of Central Africa, but through his courage, hope, prayer, dedication, and strength for the mission, he never worked alone, trusting in Jesus as his hope for the regeneration of Africa. Dear brethren in Christ, your vocation is not a mistake, but a divine call from above and a gift from the Creator. St. Comboni, the only survivor

among his eight brothers, decided to leave his parents and his hometown only to save the Africans, as he said, “SAVE AFRICA WITH AFRICA.” This is not a vision of Comboni, but it is a prophecy. He knew well that the greatest hope for Africa would come from within people like you who are preparing to dedicate your lives to God.

This journey you have started is too long, and it is not easy. You are going to encounter numerous challenges, temptations, and moments of doubt, either to leave your vocation or continue. But let me assure you that a vocation cannot be separated from challenges and temptations; rather be glad and grateful for them because the challenges that you are

encountering may strengthen your vocation. Comboni himself suffered, yet he never gave up his mission.

He said, “The works of God are born and grow at the foot of the cross.” Struggles and trials are not the signs of failure in our lives, but they are the burning fire that purifies our vocation. It is very clear in the Gospel of Luke 9: 23, “If anyone wants to follow me, let him deny himself and take up his cross.” This is a word from Jesus Himself, our hope; He assures us that challenges, can lead us to His glory in heaven. Therefore, brothers and sisters, our continent, Africa, still needs you, including the church.

Comboni motto needs us “SAVE AFRICA WITH AFRICA”. No one will come from outside to evangelize our people, we are the ones to do so by giving them hope, strength, and courage. I conclude with the words of Pope Francis, “We must fan the flame of hope that has been given us and help everyone to gain new strength and certainty by looking to the future with an open spirit, a trusting heart, and far-sighted vision.”



The Face of Christ within Us

By Peter Kinyua Thumbi



selfishness, hypocrisy, and replacing them with humility, prayer, and genuine love.

Fr. Jean Paul Katembo, A Comboni Missionary, told the postulants during our monthly recollection that there should be no fragmentation in our lives. A situation where we portray two different personalities as religious and as private individuals. Therefore, it is a call for me and for you to wipe the “dust” in the monstrance by living authentic Christian values. This can be done when we eliminate our pride, selfishness, and hypocrisy. Jesus will be seen by others through our way of living.



When we were baptized, the face of Christ was clearly seen in our lives through our good Christian actions, such as attending Mass devoutly, visiting the sick, and many other good deeds. With time, as we grow and at the stage of adolescence, this face of Christ began to fade at an extraordinary rate. The big questions are: ‘why do we change, when do we change, and who is to be blamed?’ Where is our old version of good actions? Where are prayerful PMC and MYM? What we now see is a generation of youths lost in the darkness of the world, and youth who were once good altar servers, full of zeal to join the seminary, are nowhere to be seen near the altar.

The face of Christ is no longer clearly visible in our compassion and Catholic actions. What is visible is the monstrance, yet even that is often filled with dust. How can we wipe this dust so that Christ’s face can be seen again as it once was, when we were prayerful and devoted? God answers by calling us, as Christians and missionaries, to take responsibility of wiping this dust in the monstrance so that Christ within us may once again shine forth. As the Gospel clearly says: “

Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.”
Mt 5:16. This means eliminating our pride,

Living Our Devotion

By Moris Muthoka

The question of 'devotion' though not common to majority, is universal and essential in the Catholic faith. For anyone who knows the Catholic teaching, this terminology is no stranger to the him/her. Many have given an attempt to explain its meaning. The word *devotion* refers to, "that which narrowly and particularly draws you near God's presence." Nevertheless, there is still room for more ideas towards my assumption.



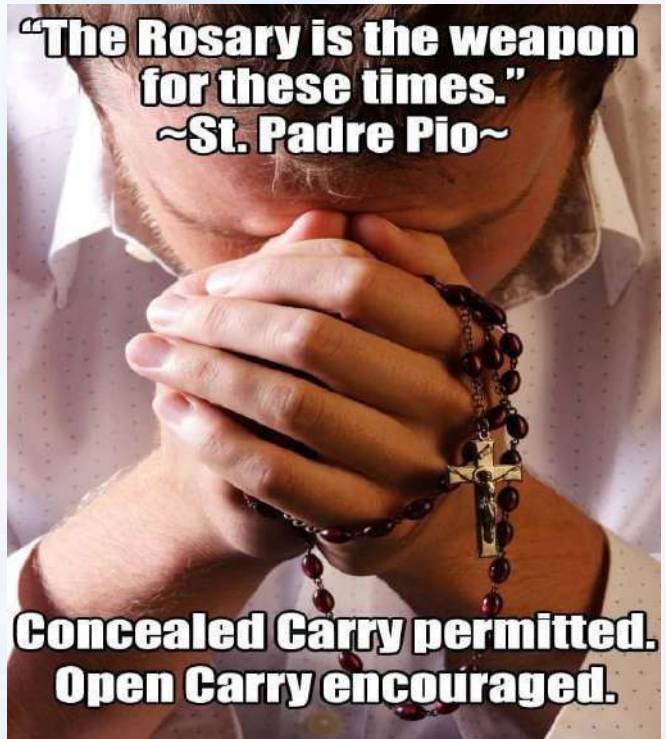
The individual is challenged to find that which when recited brings calmness, comfort and peace to his/her soul.

For a prayer

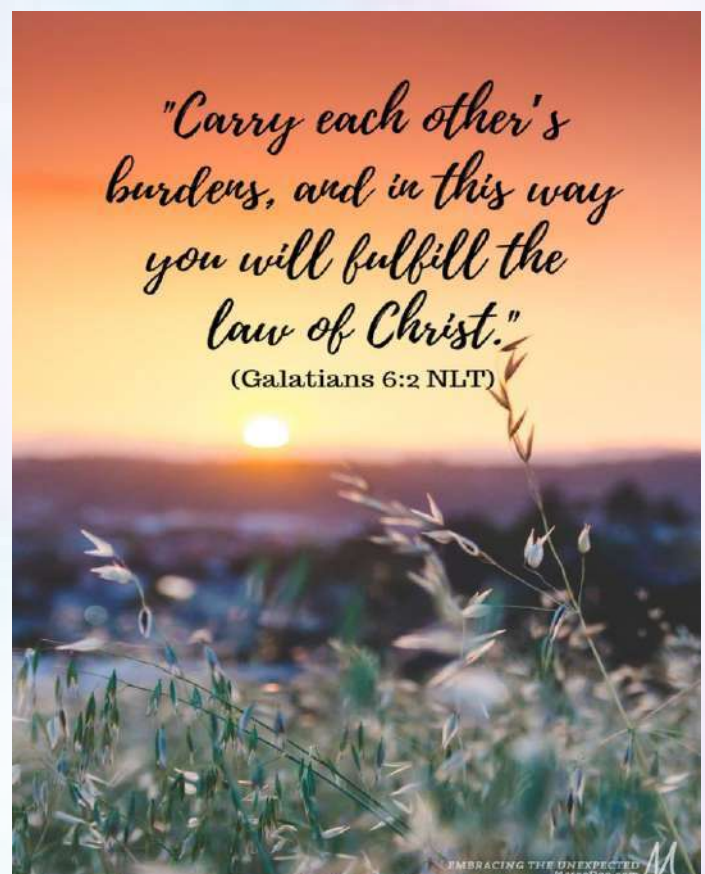
to qualify to be called a devotion, it has to be accompanied by some empirical experiences. This includes accompaniment in moments of calmness, comfort, peace and new strength when recited.

Here a journey is needed to discern well one's devotion. Following a discernment process, and having identified your personal devotion; is it worth one's destiny? The answer is, 'No', a devotion calls for discipline. For instance, for work to be effective, the subject must be a lover of it and visiting the site frequently. So is the case with devotion. A well established, programmed and structured planning must be put in place to ensure harmonious taste to the devotee and smooth dialogue with the Divine One.

In addition, it is not enough to announce this or that to be your devotion but to live it. It has to primarily contribute towards transformation of one's life and the society as a whole. It makes no sense, no matter how many rosaries one can afford to wear or the number of hail Mary's one may recite in a day, when we cannot point out some of the emulations of



Blessed Virgin Mary. Therefore, I invite you to be keen with your devotions; for the harvest is plenty but a strategical labour required to attain the yields.



Living the Formation Period Pilgrimage of Hope

By Fr. David Ahiro, mccj



Pilgrims of Hope is the theme for the 2025 Jubilee Year, representing the idea that is a hopeful journey toward God, even a mind challenges means embracing

uncertainty with trust, supporting each other, and finding and sharing hope with others. When St. Daniel Comboni founded the Institute for Africa in June 1867, he saw in vocations a great blessing from God to boost his pastoral work in Africa. His great concern was to prepare future missionaries. In this perspective, the Congregation pays special attention to the formation stage called Postulancy, where the candidate, with the help of God and the formators, is invited to test the integrity and motivations of his call. It is during this stage that the candidate tries to live his vocation by trusting in God's providence in the sense that his hope involves placing trust in God's will. Romans 8:24-25: *"For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience."*

As pilgrimage of hope, that means walking forward even when the way is unclear, formation in the postulancy can involve uncertainty, personal struggles, or moments of dryness - all opportunities to grow in the virtue of hope. Hope means believing that God's plan will unfold in His time, not one's own, thus the finality of the Postulancy is that the postulant should achieve: *"an initial identity with the Comboni family"*,

Looking at this, we realize that formation is not an which means that the he is ready, to follow Christ for the kingdom of God by means of the Evangelic Counsels, to choose the mission "Ad Gentes" as the reason of his very life and finally to choose the Comboni Institute as a community identifying himself with its Charism, its Style of Life and Apostolic Methodology.

easy task; it requires responsibility, perseverance and great spirit of enthusiasm on the postulant's part and with the help of the formators who help the candidates to live in a peaceful and proper atmosphere so as to facilitate their great decision, which will mark their lives. In this line, in our community we have been lacking enough formators to journey with our postulants. God's time is always the best. At the beginning of this semester, we were blessed with another formator, Fr. Tesfaab Bekit Suleman who was assigned to Kenya and accepted to help the province by serving in the Postulancy. Fr. Tesfaab is originally from Eritrea. He did his postulancy back in Eritrea, afterwards was sent to Uganda for two years where he made his first profession. After taking his first vows, he was sent to South Africa for his theological studies. After his ordination, Fr. Tesfaab was assigned to his delegation of Eritrea where he served in the minor seminary while helping in the parish for eleven years. He later moved to the Postulancy for seven



Fr. Tesfaab Bekit MCCJ

years before going to Rome for Comboni Year. We thank God for the gift of Fr. Tesfaab and we see a lot of hope in the journey of formation of accompanying these young men who are discerning their vocation to either priesthood or brotherhood in the Comboni Family.

The Power of Love to Heal

By Aninyaki Jonathan Abdu



St. Therese of Lisieux reminds the world that *“It’s not about how much we do, but it’s about how much we put in the doing.”* Love is one of the most dominant forces in the world. It has the strength to heal wounds that no medicine can touch, to unite people who were once divided, and to give hope where there seems to be none. Love inspires forgiveness, patience, and understanding. It helps us to see the best in others and brings out the best in ourselves. I have personally witnessed the power of love at work in my life. From my early years, I was deeply moved by the presence of the Comboni Missionary Sisters in South Sudan especially in my hometown, Nzara County, where their humble lifestyle, generous service, and deep respect for every person revealed the true face of God’s love. Their love was not just in words, but in action; in the way they cared for the sick, educated the young, and encouraged those who felt forgotten not only that, but I also learned from them that, love is not abstract; it is something real, given in daily acts of kindness and sacrifice.

Even more deeply, I experienced love from my parents; they sacrificed much to ensure that I grow up strong, healthy, and hopeful. Of course there were times when resources were not enough and even unavailable, yet they always found a way to provide food, education, and care. Their love gave me the strength to believe that no matter how

difficult life becomes, I was never alone.

However, love is not always found solely in parents. Believe me, many children lose their parents at a young age, yet because of the generosity of relatives, neighbours, or even strangers, they grow up cared for and supported. These children discover that though life wounded them with loss, love still find a way to raise them. Moreover, love also restores hope when it is almost gone. Many people, young and adult, go through moments when they feel that, “life has no meaning, when dreams collapse, and everything seems empty. Yet through the encouragement of a teacher, a mentor, or even a simple friend hope is reborn. A few words of kindness or a helping hand can be enough to remind someone that they still matter, that they are not forgotten. Thus, this is the power of love: it heals, it lifts, and it renews.

Therefore, our wounds may be part of us, but they do not define us. What defines us is the love we give and the love we receive. And at the end, love is always greater than our wounds. Hence, I agree us to never forget that, “we are living today because someone, somewhere, chose to love us”.



Technology and Artificial Intelligence: Unless we open our eyes, we cannot save Africa.

By Felix Omollo



One of the most trending contemporary issues today is the rapid growth of Artificial Intelligence (AI) across the world, and more recently, in Africa. Google

launched a new AI

mode in search, and Kenya is among the first three countries in Africa, alongside Nigeria and South Africa, to test it. This shows how fast Africa is catching up with global innovation. What is AI? Artificial Intelligence refers to computer systems that can “think” or perform tasks that normally are casual work of human intelligence, such as understanding language, analysing data or making predictions.

AI is revolutionizing key in sectors like education, healthcare, agriculture, economic; jobs and many others, unlocking many opportunities for growth and well-being. In education, students can use AI to access personalized learning materials, translations and instant explanations of complex concepts. In healthcare sector, doctors can use AI to diagnose diseases faster, predict health risks and manage patient data more efficiently. To agricultural sector, farmers can benefit from AI-powered weather predictions, soil analysis and smart farming techniques that improve food security. In economic and employment sector, AI can create new opportunity in the digital economy, especially in software development, data analysis and online entrepreneurship. Religious organizations use AI to engage with communities through social media and even offer personalized religious content.

Church leaders are engaging in debates about AI which can align with the theological values, ensuring that human dignity and compassion remain at the centre of its use.

Despite its benefits, AI comes with serious challenges. First, we have job displacement, where



of jobs, especially in routine office works or customer services.

Secondly, we can talk about misinformation where AI tools can generate convincing but false information, making it harder to trust what we see or read. Thirdly, privacy concern, being that AI depending heavily on data, there is the risk of personal information being misused. As AI become more integrated into everyday life, society must navigate this challenges carefully, ensuring that technology advancements contribute to human flourishing and are governed by strong ethical principles.

Why It Matters. The arrival of the AI in Africa is not just about technology; it is about the future of education, employment, governance and even culture. If used wisely, AI could accelerate Africa’s growth and give young people more opportunities in the global economy. However, if left unregulated or mismanaged, it could widen social gaps and bring ethical problems. The key question we must reflect on: “Is Africa ready to fully embrace Artificial Intelligence? If so, how can we balance its benefits with its risk?”

Poem: Giving Back A Hānd of Re-evangelization

By Moris Muthoka



Pitter-patter, Pitter-patter, coming your home,
 Gifts on our backs please receive them,
 If not by you still could be in our mid-nights,
 Zeal, patience, determination kept you moving,
 Good deeds special appreciation required,

Transport barriers, diseases hindered you not,
 With your baskets full of education and religion
 brought to us,
 New life you imposed, our cultures you shaped,
 Our Motherland Africa's beauty your eyes sunk in,
 Good deeds special appreciation required,

Our sufferings, your motivation became,
 Endless efforts, regeneration of Africa came true,
 Your death Africa motherland life receives,
 Yours Efforts rewarded, Our Motherland more
 shining,
 Good deeds special appreciation required,

Sons and daughters of Africa Ready for the mission,
 Coming to share back your fruits so amazing!
 Re-evangelization our mission on our way coming,
 Shoe-laces tightened Africa fraternity eagerly for
 this mission,
 Good deeds special appreciation required,

Our bags packed, our visas here with us,
 Now great thinkers, strong Christians your mission
 the priority,

No fear of rejection, re-evangelization or death our
 slogan,
 Not monkeys anymore but holy and capable human
 beings please receive us,
 Good deeds special appreciation required,



St. Daniel Comboni: A Missionary Heart for Africa

By Boniface Wambua



A true missionary is someone who willingly and with a true inner self-drive dedicates himself or herself to promoting faith and service to the people. The service is mostly to those who are yet to receive the good news of the Gospel and to those whose daily lives are challenged by a lack of basic essentials. A true missionary does not only direct his energy towards the spiritual dimension of human life but also seeks to transform people to live a better life. St. Daniel Comboni, a man of his own time, is a truly good example and a model of missionaries who tirelessly sought to bring transformative change in all dimensions of human life.

His missionary nature is evident through his boundless love for the poor and most abandoned people of Africa, especially Central Africa. During his time as a missionary in Central Africa (1857 to 1881), however many difficulties he encountered, he never surrendered. Though he was an Italian, he proved to be both a brother and a father to many Africans. No wonder he said, "They have taken possession of my heart that lives for them alone," and "I shall die with Africa on my lips."

In his mission to Central Africa, Comboni did not escape challenges such as harsh climate, tropical diseases, the death of fellow missionaries, the extreme poverty of the locals, and the slave trade; instead, he chose to live and die for Africa. Before his death on 10th October 1881 in Khartoum, Sudan, Comboni had made a great achievement through his plan, "Save Africa with Africa." Many African schools to train in skills and

hospitals to promote healthcare had been established. s had been trained to lead their own evangelization.

In addition, his campaign against the slave trade had achieved a great milestone. He also founded the Institute of African Missions (now the Comboni Missionaries) and the Comboni Missionary Sisters, hence bringing to reality his belief: *"I shall die, but my work in Africa will never die."*

In modern times, Comboni Missionaries are called to continue the work of their founder by dedicating their lives fully to serving the marginalized and abandoned in our communities. Based on the nature of the less privileged in the present times, their work should not only be to spread the Gospel but also to promote social justice for all, focusing on human development, education, and healthcare promotion. Despite modern-day challenges such as cultural change, conflicts, tribalism, and moral degradation due to technology, missionaries are encouraged to remain faithful, compassionate, and dedicated to transforming lives. They are inspired to always remember to "be shepherds with the smell of the sheep," as late Pope Francis said.



A Man of Faith in Action and Love

By Emmanuel Shitula



Where others saw only hardship, impossibility, and fear, Comboni acted. Where others paused, he advanced. In places where many were afraid to go, where some ran away and others had lost hope, Comboni not only desired to go but went, stayed, and brought hope and love. In his footsteps and exemplary actions, history found a movement.

Even as a new-born child, before becoming fully conscious, and before he could even speak a word, his very name spoke for him. Few have reflected on the etymology of the name Daniel Comboni. The name *Daniel* means “*God is my judge*” implying a man who commits his life and mission to the will of God. *Comboni* is rooted in the Latin *componere*, meaning “*to unite*” or “*to bring together*.” Altogether, the name signifies a man under God’s judgment and guidance, called to gather humanity together in faith and harmony.

Comboni was not only human but a servant and devoted disciple of God. As a Christian devoted to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, he embraced an action-oriented life based on his Master’s greatest commandment which is that of love. As Mother Teresa of Calcutta once said, “Love has to be put into action, and that action is service.” Comboni’s entire life testified to the inferiority of mere speech and the superiority of action. In his life, action was the first and greatest sermon.

Comboni strongly lived the biblical truth expressed in the Letter of James: “For just as a body without a

spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead.” (James 2:26).

He cared for the sick by listening to them, washing their wounds, consoling the dying, and even burying the dead. Though he himself battled illness, often suffering from fever, this did not deter him from sharing the love of the Sacred Heart of Jesus one that is a love that is pure *agape*.

During his first mission at Holy Cross, he learned the local Dinka language and shared the daily life of the people; eating their food, working alongside them, even sewing as a tailor. Because of this, people saw him not as a foreigner, but as a brother, father, and friend. Comboni shared in the poverty of the poor. As a shepherd, he strove to meet both their material and spiritual needs.

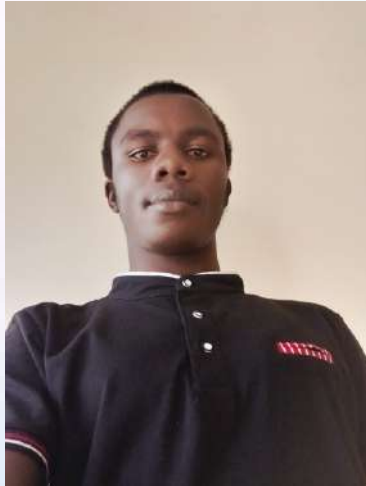
He travelled tirelessly across Europe, seeking alms and appealing to leaders so that his African mission could continue. In defending the forgotten, he spoke courageously for the “poorest and most abandoned” people of Africa, even when many dismissed his dream as impossible. To ensure that his mission endured beyond his death, he founded the missionary families that we now know as the Comboni Missionaries of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Comboni Missionary Sisters. His life remains a true reflection of the superiority of action over words and a living witness to faith expressed through love.



When Will You Be Ordained?

By Joseph Odhiambo

This is one of the most common questions that seminarians face from friends, Christians, and family. This ancient perception continues to ring in the minds of believers in the Church because they see seminarians who are potential priests as already actual ones. However, they are to deepen more in the inner calling of Christ and identify their true vocation.



Annually, on the fourth Sunday of Easter, the Church celebrates Good Shepherd Sunday/Vocation Sunday. It's a day when the Church invites us to reflect deeply on the mystery of God's call, His whisper into the hearts of men and women to follow Him radically, totally, and selflessly. There's a silent pressure, I believe, that society has placed on seminarians. Many have reduced the journey of vocation, especially the journey of seminarians, to a countdown clock. That is why, as a seminarian, you hear comments like: "When will you be ordained? I am waiting for you to become a priest so that you'll come and bless my wedding."

In the midst of smiles and laughter, you may not realize the weight that these words carry. There is a lot of struggling, praying, and sometimes falling. Society believes that when one joins the seminary, he must come out as a priest; something which is not easy "like a lamb being led to the slaughter house ." How will these young men meet all those expectations? This makes those who are struggling pretend to be stable. Sometimes it forces them to wear the mask of certainty. It compels those who long for a break to keep marching, because stopping would invite too many questions.

Why all these? Somewhere along the line, priesthood was turned into a public expectation instead of being respected as a personal

discernment. Thus, seminarians are watched, timed, measured, questioned, and compared. Some enter the seminary with joy but leave with shame because leaving is seen as failure, not as discernment. Even returning home for a short holiday feels like a silent trial. Some seminarians say this: "You arrive home, hoping to rest, and someone comes with, 'Ah, are you back? I hope nothing happened?'" That really hurts because it's not a question but an assumption, a quiet suspicion that maybe something went wrong, since you're explaining your presence to society.

Vocation has never been a straight road. It is a sacred journey, full of valleys, deserts, silence, and grace. We must learn to respect the mystery of vocation. It is God who calls, not man. It is God who ordains, not public opinion. And it is God who finishes what He starts on His terms, not ours.



Why Comboni Brotherhood Matters: Faith in Service of Humanity

By Hillary Werunga

We, the postulants from the Comboni Missionaries' Provinces of Kenya and South Sudan, thank God for the gift of our recently professed brothers: Br. Brian Ochieng from Kenya, and Br. James Okongo from South Sudan. We are also grateful for our four candidates in the postulancy: Boniface Wambua and Hillary Werunga from Kenya; Boniface Angelo and Jonathan Aninyaki from South Sudan. The vocation of brotherhood is not well known to many people, yet it is a vital expression of consecrated life in the Church.



The concept of brotherhood originated in the early Church when lay members assisted the ministers of the Eucharist in serving the people of God. They offered their time and skills such as carpentry, tailoring, farming, and other crafts to support missionary work and daily parish life. Brotherhood therefore represents a form of vocation deeply rooted in the life of the Church, traditionally known as the service of helpers of the priests.

Etymologically, the term *brother* refers to a member of a Christian family who is committed to following Christ through the vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience. A religious brother lives an ordinary life in an extraordinary way, dedicating himself entirely to God and to the service of humanity. The only difference between a brother and a priest is that brothers are not ordained and therefore do not celebrate Mass. Yet through their physical presence and hands-on engagement with people, brothers embody a unique and essential aspect of the Body of Christ. Their work often goes unnoticed because of its humble and simple nature, but it is invaluable to the mission of the Church.

There is no superior or inferior vocation in the Church. Every calling, whether priesthood, brotherhood, or lay service, is a response to God's

invitation to love and serve. As Martin Luther and John Calvin once noted, "God does not need our good works, but our neighbours do." This truth reminds us that vocation is not about status but about service.

Unlike priests who exercise sacramental and pastoral leadership, brothers are deeply engaged in the social and economic dimensions of missionary life. They dedicate themselves to education, healthcare, community development, and the promotion of social justice, often reaching the most remote and marginalized communities. Many are trained as teachers, engineers, doctors, lawyers, or social workers, using their professional skills to



bring tangible hope to others.

Therefore, brothers live not for personal gain but for the good of others (Phil 2:3-4). As St. Daniel Comboni said, "A missionary is one who works for God and for the most abandoned for eternity." This eternity is not merely a future reward but a continuous participation in God's ongoing work of creation and redemption. In this spirit, the Comboni brothers stand as living witnesses of faith in action, men who serve humbly, love deeply, and build bridges of hope where life seems most fragile.

SAVE AFRICA



The Comboni Postulancy Community August 2025 – May 2026

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