

Addis Ababa december 2016

Dear friends

It is a new year 2009 (Ethiopian calendar) which opens for our foundation that is not one with the departure of our last founder, father Marie Alexandre for a sabbatical year and also our construction building which will begin before Christmas.

You will find some news of the project baptised « Epifania » with our leaflet.

We are waiting the coming of our general Prior, brother Thomas Joachim to bless the first stone of our new priory for the feast of our Father Saint John on 27th December.

The actual crisis in Ethiopia did not stop us from organizing 5 summer camps that you will find in youtube thanks to brother Arul Nesan's talents who had sent out a lot of pastoral projects in the field of the communication. :

Charity mission : <https://youtu.be/XAghFYkTVB4>

Teenagers camps : <https://youtu.be/K7VBp824cQk>

Les JMJ en Ethiopie <https://youtu.be/yvDHX5oqJGo>

Brother Athanase was able to go to Irak on the Ninive field last summer just before the recovery of Mossoul :

After the departure of 4 postulants in Cameroon, a new school of life had begun with the new brother Moise Etienne (who is native from Cameroon) to accompany them. Let us pray for all oriental Christian persecuted brothers.

Your brothers of Addis Ababa





Epiphany

Br. Bruno Thomas

Dear Friends:

When you get the "letter to our friends" it will be almost Christmas for the majority of you, thus I would like to share with all of you – how our brothers and sisters of the Oriental Tradition celebrate this great feast.

The Oriental Tradition recognizes four such manifestations, herein call the four manifestations, wherein the Lord appeared to mankind in glory and divinity. They are:

1. The Nativity of the Lord
2. The Visit of the Magi
3. The Baptism of Christ
4. The Miracle of the Wedding Feast of Cana

The literal meaning of the word Epiphany is "manifestation of light."

This great feast of the Nativity, Epiphany together with his Baptism in the Jordan and the Wedding Feast at Cana in Galilee are celebrated as one feast, we see this illustrated by two beautiful ancient antiphons:

- "Today the Church has been joined to her heavenly bridegroom, since Christ has purified her of her sins in the river Jordan: the Magi hasten to the royal wedding and offer gifts: the wedding guests rejoice Christ has changed water into wine, alleluia."

- Three wonders mark this day we celebrate: today the star led the Magi to the manger; today water was changed into wine at the marriage feast; today Christ desired to be baptized by John in the river Jordan to bring us salvation, alleluia.



In these three events sum up in one word Epiphany: the mystery of the Magi coming from the East, and adoring the Infant of Bethlehem as the divine King; the mystery of the Baptism of Christ who whilst standing in the waters of the Jordan, was proclaimed by the Eternal Father as Son of God; and thirdly, the mystery of the divine power of this same Jesus, when he changed the water into wine at the marriage feast of Cana, serve as mini – catechism to assure mankind that truly he is the Son of God.

Summer Camp

Sr Marie of Jesus



"It is good to give thanks to the Lord, to sing for Your Name Most Holy God! Ps. 91

Thanksgiving and praise remain in me after this magnificent and strong experience that I was given last July with our brothers of Ethiopia and that I come to share! Astonishment and surprise when I discovered a very unique African country, by language, currency, schedules (those of Jesus time!), The year (2008!), The melody of the songs, the dances, The physiognomy of people, the food (the famous injera) ...! Impressed of my return to the Philippines, also by the joy of living within poverty, smile on the faces, an emotional side in the relations and an incredible reception received in many places!

I laughed when I was taken for Saint Clare or Saint Teresa when people saw a white sister in a grey habit An endearing people in a magnificent country of great human, cultural and spiritual richness, what I discovered during the 3 camps organized by our brothers in different places with young people on all sides! So we left for to Dire Dawa with 30 students and young pros for a "Charity Camp" with the sisters of Mother Teresa. There they have 2 large reception houses, 1,000 places each! Men on one side, women on the other. And here we are to meet people with disabilities, sick, single, more or less young, malnourished babies and their mothers. Strong experience of another poverty, suffering, lived in a climate of peace and joy thanks to the influence of the sisters!



They also entrusted us with the 110 children of the "Summer Camp", the "primary" age, 25 Christians and 85 Muslims! Very beautiful afternoons animated by our young people using songs, games, making bracelets, and encountering Ethiopian tales! It was not always easy for our young people but what a joy to hear them happy to have overcome their a priori and have been able to give themselves for a few days!

The 2nd camp welcomed 48 teenagers in a splendid place, at the edge of a lake in Hawasa, building carved in the rock by an Italian missionary father Adelmo! There is also the joy of seeing young people flourish when they are offered "vacations" outside their usual framework and difficulties, living together with their joys and demands, games, teaching (thanks to the facilitators for the translations English-Amharic!), Mass, manual activities, outings and the famous baths, essential for elsewhere as unique way to wash! Under the more or less distant eye of hippopotamuses! I was deeply touched by the commitment and attention of the animators and brothers for these young people who, for a certain number, have no families, and / or are carry HIV by heredity and therefore In treatment for life, go through a period of adolescence not easy to assume but always inhabited by a smile and, welcoming life as it is given to them every moment without thinking the next day!



We also showed them a film about St. Josephine Bakhita, strong and deep, which earned me many tears. And finally, the 3rd camp, in Mekki, south of Addis, organized by the priests of this diocese and to which we joined with some young people. It was a big festival, gathering 600 young and old, many priests and choirs, punctuated by teachings, dances, songs, drama (the Ethiopians are excellent actors!) ...! A multicolored crowd, praying to God with all their hearts and voices (the melody of their songs is surprising at first for our Western and African ears elsewhere!) But O how much God's bearer and raising the soul in prayer! Spiritual experience for me!)

So here in a few words very limited in front of such a wealth of experience lived intensely, 3 camps in 3 weeks and a half! I wholeheartedly invite you to discover and pray for this incredible country, the mission of our brothers there, demanding but so important for the young people of this country! I cannot finish without thanking for the welcome and the kindness of the brothers, Very beautiful and simple experience of fraternal cooperation that touched me very much! How many graces received in a month and which still dwell in me! May the Lord be blessed!

Sister Mary of Jesus.

Communication

Fr. Arul nesan



It is a great pleasure to write to you again, in order to share one of the activities of our mission here in Addis Ababa: namely communication.

During the last general chapter of the brothers of St. John, we received the call of our Prior General to take care of the "digital continent" and to evangelize it. We also received the call to help our Archdiocese for communication, internal and external, to help the local Church to evangelize through multimedia. I have been delegated by my Community to take charge of this mission.

Our main mission is to create Catholic programs (documentaries, teachings, video clips) so that they can be broadcast on the internet or on local television. We start from scratch because we have neither the equipment nor the qualified personnel. We spent the last year gathering some equipment and qualified people. We are now in a stage of producing Catholic teachings (of course in Amharic, the local language) which will be followed by documentaries and video clips.

Since nothing of this kind exists for the moment in the Amharic language as a tool of evangelization our mission is important and encouraged by the faithful and the Cardinal. But we still need material (cameras, external hard drives, camera lenses, etc.), financial (transport, cost of production) and people who have talents at the multimedia level and who are willing to help us voluntarily for a while to form our team.

The Lord invites us to take care of his people who spend a lot of time in front of a screen. We need your prayers and help to launch this new mission.

Fr Arul Nesan

Dear friends ,

At the close of the year of Mercy, we would like to give you some news about our project called "Epifania".

Why this name "Epifania"?

After seven years of waiting, Providence gave us a beautiful gift on January 5, 2016, Ethiopian Christmas and at the same time feast of the Epiphany in the liturgical calendar.

Thanks to the help of the General accountant of the Congregation of Saint John and generous donors, God has allowed us to buy the land of Entoto, North of Addis Ababa, to finally begin our project to build our priory and a place for young people and families.

"Epifania" literally means the manifestation of the Light. The Emmanuel, God made man, is manifested to the kings of the East who came to worship him after a long journey in the wake of the star.

This feast is full of symbols that can help us in our Christian life: the star that shines in the night and guides the Magi can remind us of the light of Faith that directs our steps towards Him who is "the Way, the Truth and Life".

The meeting of Jesus with the kings of the East shows the universality of salvation; The adoration of the Magi before Christ, the King of the Universe, from the subordination of the temporal power, to the spiritual power; The three presents of the Magi symbolize the mystery of Christ: gold prefigures His royalty, incense His divinity and mire, His kenosis and His salvific death on the Cross.

For our little priory in Addis Ababa, it is for us a providential sign to remind us that we must be "seekers of God" especially in our prayer and apostolic life by cultivating faith, perseverance, and humility and of service following the example of the Magi.



What is Epifania? It is a matter of building a brothers' place of life destined to become a center of welcome and training for young people and families (with a capacity to house fifty people). This project is part of the primary intention of Cardinal Behraneyesus, our Archbishop who called us seven years ago to be Youth Diocesan Chaplains. The Cardinal encourages us and supports us in the formation of the leadership of the youth in Ethiopia.

During the year 2016, we worked with our architect Cristian MAROLI and his associate Eleni HAILE on the master plan of the project and the various buildings.

At the same time, this year we mobilized to find donors (individuals and organizations) needed to finance this project, whose estimated total cost is approximately 1.4 million euros.

That is why we have chosen to spread out the work over several years in four phases: the first phase (the priory of the brothers) should be finished within a year and the total project completed in 2020 if everything goes smoothly.

The first phase building permit submitted in August 2016 is expected to be obtained shortly to begin excavation work in December 2016.

Today, we also have to set up a technical team responsible for construction and choose the contractor for this phase (following a call for tenders).

We are still looking for support to close the total budget for the first phase estimated at 400,000 euros.

Feel free to contact us and if you have ideas and proposals to help us.

In thanking you for your cooperation, be assured of our prayers.

Fr Philippe-François

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N.B: To do a bank transfer please send a mail to :
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The Black Wolf

Fr. Athanase

July 2014

On the plain of Nineveh, also known as the plain of Mosul in Iraq, the wolf of Arabia always wanders in the middle of the Assyrian ruins. Darkness has invaded this wilderness where the Word of the Lord was addressed to Jonah: "Arise, go to Nineveh, the great city, and proclaim which I command you. (Jonah 1, 2). Threatened by DAECH, the wolf with his pack established his den on the banks of the Tigris River.

Since the takeover of Mosul by the Islamic State in June 2014, the Armenian minority has taken refuge in the abandoned villages of Hawresket in Avzrok. Mourad, nicknamed "the black wolf" because of his acuteness to see the enemy in the dark, watches day and night to the destiny of a hundred displaced Armenian families. In a few decades, the Armenian community has to become an endangered Christian minority in Iraq. To enter his makeshift camp, one must show white paws. A few words in Armenian are enough to raise the barrier of the checkpoint which remains closed to any foreign presence.

Drowned trails lead to a little corner of paradise where wine, honey and olive oil flow. The church surrounded by the ruins of this bastion fortified by the cohesion of a whole people. A priest rides from Baghdad every week to celebrate the Divine Liturgy in Grapar. The deserted alleys under a crushing sun reminds one of a ghost village. The Peshmergas, armed wing of the Ottoman Empire during the genocide, provide temporary protection.



Only a few voices of children break this monastic silence. The howl of the wolves Mourad ends up resonating like a distress call: "We are abandoned but we will stay! All have armed themselves to defend their destiny broken by a hundred years of unbridled deportation. Then each one seeks only to obtain his eternal salvation broken by so much hatred. Self-help is the key word of this small community which already has so many of its members gone into exile.

Some Bavarian and Elise B. their guardian angel (<http://www.elisecare.org>) provide them with material help and sporadic care. It is now 20 months that these displaced people wait in unknown land but their idleness is total. Teenagers need to leave their village to go to the nearby high school but without means of transportation, it has become mission impossible. Men need to work to stay; then the work of the East which has supported all Christians in the East for more than a century (<http://www.oeuvre-orient.fr>) has promised to revive micro-projects in agriculture. All told us that they are only waiting for one thing: not to be on the list of forgotten minorities in the Middle East. We can help them by showing them our support and help at the following address: <http://www.addis-abeba.stjean.com>

Let us not forget this small diaspora that was the origins of Christianity in Mesopotamia.
Brother Athanase MARKARIAN +

School of life

Br. Moïse Etienne



School of Life: what are we talking about?

Some people make it a point to take time for reflection somewhere; others make a pilgrimage, attend a session or choose to retire to find themselves alone in front of themselves and may face this ever-present question, even here in Ethiopia: "What am I called to be?"

This year, 8 young Ethiopians have chosen to take shelter in the shadow of our priory, so that, helped by the brothers, they can shed light on this issue that they all carry. Even if the name does not lend itself to it, because life is not learned, in another sense it is adequate because life always teaches us something. And precisely, the School of Life is a period in which the young learn to read their history in the light of Christ, to live together, carried by their personal quest. We help them with the sole purpose of enabling them to see broadly the call of their future and to be able to answer them as Christians by: our time of dialogue, our life of prayer, a time for teaching, moments of sharing.

It is to this effect that we call it a School of Life.



Our motivations

What drives the community of brothers to offer this free time to young people, is it nothing, but the love of Christ for these young people. Thus, our goal is to give them an opportunity to know themselves in the light of Christ and to develop their intellectual and practical capacities for their happiness.

Young people and our activities

The age range of our young people varies between 17 to 20 years and their backgrounds are as diverse as their intellectual and social level. In addition, to this we have girls and boys who are concerned by the same activities that allow them to open up and reveal themselves to others. Among other things, discussion on the Christian faith, exchange of life experiences, apostolate Children of Hope in Sick Children of ASCO, the Children's Library for our Neighboring Children, english lessons, times of prayer and confession, mass and the hour of adoration; Not forgetting of course, community outings, expeditions and Discoveries, and moments of relaxation.

For a year in the midst of us, these young people are involved, every weekend they come with joy, to spend with the brothers.

The primary purpose of the School of Life is to help young people to determine and orient themselves, strengthened by the presence of Christ in their lives, it is nevertheless, an opportunity for the brothers to help them who might be in trouble; because some hesitations, some blockages and even some doubts. Among our young people, we see a lack of moral, spiritual and of course financial support. Our joy is to see these young people emerge from their fear and fly to hope filled horizons. Also, if it is possible for you to help us, due to the fact that this activity requires a lot of investments and expenses, we will be grateful. Since many of them are still from disadvantaged backgrounds and broken families.

Brother Moïse-Etienne

Summery

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