

CONGO REPORT AT THE TOGO AFRAM ZONAL ASSEMBLY  
FEBRUARY 2010

Dear confreres,

Just like you, I received a letter from Father Xene Sanchez, the AFRAM Zonal Coordinator asking for a 15 minutes report for this Assembly. Let me be as brief as possible.

The Divine Word Missionaries are in the DRC since 1951. It's said that, the DRC is an earthly paradise, by its natural resources, relief, and its rich wildlife. This paradise seems to be fanciful, since it's threatened by war, epidemics and groping government. It is in paradise where we are working as missionaries.

### 1. Our missionary presence

We are 128 confreres (confreres in perpetual vows, temporary, vows, novices, students in philosophy, students in pre-philosophy and one bishop from 17 nations), working in 4 dioceses (Kinshasa, Kenge, Kikwit and Kole).

Our apostolate fields:

- a) **Parishes:** 21 confreres work in 7 parishes and 2 missions.
- b) **Formation:** 8 confreres are assigned to different formation houses. We have 12 novices, 14 philosophy students and one doing mechanics, 8 in pre-philosophy (propaedeutiques), 20 in theology (3 deacons) and 1 canonist in temporary vows, 1 nursing and 1 student in medicine. 7 confreres are doing their pastoral year.
- c) **Administration:** 7 confreres are involved in the administration of the province: provincial house, Maison de passage and the Saint Paul Maison in Bandundu.
- d) **Specialized apostolate:**
  - Verbum Bible edition:** 3 confreres take care of the translation of the Holy Bible in local languages.
  - Emission Bibliques (EMIBIB) and Studio Bana Ngayime:** 3 confreres involved in mass media, prepare biblical programmes and clips for the catholic TV and radio broadcast of Kinshasa.
  - Centre Liloba:** 2 confreres form lay people to the knowledge of Holy Scriptures.
  - ORPER:** 2 confreres take care of street children of Kinshasa. It's aim is the re-insertion of these children in their respective families. It was created by Fr. Frank Roelands in 1981.
  - CEEBA:** 1 confrere is renewing the house which was closed for 10 years, for ethnological studies.
  - CAB Bandundu:** 1 confrere has re-started activities for the biblical apostolate in Bandundu, closed for many years.
  - Workshops:** 4 confreres (3 priests and 2 brothers) assisted by two aspirants take care of the garage, carpentry, spiritual centre and cattle breeding of Ngondi.
  - Further studies:** 4 confreres are doing their further studies in Congo and 3 abroad. We are waiting for 2 confreres assigned to our province this year.

### 2. Self-reliance activities

We are insisting that confreres have a simple life style and have a reliable management of temporal goods entrusted to us.

- **In Ngondi:** We make an effort to re-enforce activities of the garage, carpentry, spiritual centre and cattle breeding.

- **In Bandundu:** We are trying to raise again the garage, carpentry and develop our plot of Bimbidi (9 hectares).
- **In Kinshasa:** The Bibwa farm, in spite of its' limited means is doing its best to reach the 'rendement terrible' (big harvest). At the 15ème rue plot, we have just finished the construction of offices and we are waiting for clients.

### **3. The implementation of the Assembly on brother vocation**

Our two delegates to this forum were invited to the last provincial council. They have already gathered all the brothers to see how to apply the resolutions of the Assembly on brother vocation. We want all the districts to analyse the documents and give proposals.

### **4. The year of the priest**

All the confreres are informed of this special time of the Church. The 2009 retreat's team was 'the Faithfulness of Christ, faithfulness of the priest'. Some communities pray the 'Curé d'Ars' prayer during offices.

### **5. Planning of the province**

The province is planning to make an evaluation of its presence in the DRC. It's focusing on the formation of formators and other confreres in different fields, on the self-reliance programme to sustain pastoral activities.

### **Conclusion**

The Congo province which is undergoing socio-political instability has a risk of growing old without growing-up. Forceless, it assists at the disappearance of elder confreres. It relies on the younger confreres who are benefiting from the experience of elder ones to rethink how to do mission today at the light of the signs of the times.

Fr. Bernard Ilunga wa Ilunga,

CNG provincial superior