

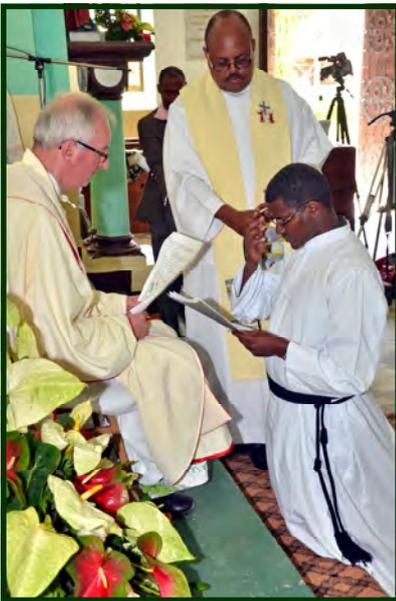


Spiritan Foundation of Ethiopia



Professions of Ethiopian Spiritans

My Final Profession—Kilimpe Garbicha Wako CSSP



We left Nairobi on June 8 at 8:00 p.m. and got to Kampala at 10:30 next morning where we were warmly welcomed by Fr. Bonaventure Wasswa, Vocations Director and Postulancy Master in Uganda and the host of our Spiritan Month.

Firstly, we visited the source of the Nile and also Kigungu-Entebbe on the shore of Lake Victoria. This was the landing site of the first missionaries in Uganda on February 17th, 1879. We visited

Nabulagala Parish in Kampala, where the first Eucharist was celebrated on 25/6/1879 in Uganda. You may ask why they had taken such a long time to celebrate the first Eucharist? This is because on their arrival they did not have Mass kits. This gave me a picture of the religious missionary life I want to be part of and also to be aware of how the missionary experience on first evangelization looks like.

Otherwise, we were in the Postulancy, given lectures on different topics: human development and religious life by Sr. Mary Joe MMS, leadership both in the Church and world by Rev. Fr. Peter Bakka from Kampala Archdiocese, and the third week we had our confrere Fr. John Baptist Ngobi, who took us into the lives of our Founders. The Spiritan month concluded with a week's retreat facilitated by Fr Nicolas Kerebba Mumbi, who preached on *Putting out into the deep.*"

Then we left for Bagamoyo and our Perpetual Profession which took place on 14th of July 2012 at the 20th General Chapter. The new Superior General, Fr. John Fogarty, received our vows. In spite of the heat and humidity the liturgy in the Parish Church was very well prepared and colorful.

We had a couple of days in Bagamoyo, giving us the opportunity to attend the General Chapter and also to meet confreres from different countries. It was such a wonderful

occasion to have so many Spiritans around, especially, those who helped in formation, the out-going and in-coming General Council and the distinguished guests, including the former President of Republic of Tanzania, Mr. Mkapa Benjamin, who attended our profession. May God bless all those who contributed for the successful completion of this occasion.

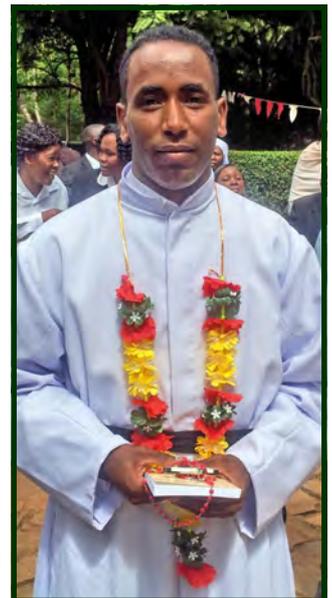
I would like to thank in a special way those who witnessed my final profession, confreres Martin Kelly, Dida Wario and Matthias Ng'oja, Scholastic Nathanael Samson SJ and Engineer Marandu, my friend from Tanzania, for their presence, brotherly love, moral support and the precious gifts that they gave me on that day.

Congratulations Reverend Deacons!

Kilimpe, his five companions, Honest Lyimo and Festo Urasa (Tanzania), Steve Mukami and Thaddeus Kasolo (Kenya) and Mugerwa John Baptist (Uganda) were ordained Deacons in the Church of St John the Evangelist, Langata, on September 22, 2012 by His Grace, Archbishop Peter Kairo of Nyeri.

First Ethiopian-rite Spiritan - Hagos Hailu CSSp

After the long preparation and familiarization with the Spiritan Rule of Life, deep seminars and retreats on prayer to deepen our spirituality, being initiated into the Spiritan way of life our Founders lived and a full one year cut off from the world in order to listen to what our heart tells us to do, moved by the Holy Spirit and with great enthusiasm, the proper time had come for this novice to be a Spiritan and so on 21st June 2012 at Magamba, Lushoto, Tanzania, in the presence of five superiors and one representative from Tanzanian province I was extremely elated to make my first profession, the third Ethiopian Spiritan and the first of the Ethiopian Rite. *Hagos Hailu CSSp*



Making Peace in Borana - Boniface Muema CSSp

For centuries the Borana, Guji and Gabra in southern Ethiopia have been treating each other as *'Gosi Nyaapa'*, as *enemy tribes*. The word *nyaapa* is very common when one group is referring to the other.

THE BEGINNING

In July 2012, conflict broke out between the Borana and the Gabra in Moyale, on the Kenya/Ethiopia border, about 240 km south of Dhaddiim. This led to very high tension in Dhaddiim area. Dhaddiim has both Borana and Gabra. A kind of fear came from nowhere. It was unfortunate that this led to the Borana running away from the Gabra and the Gabra running away from the Borana for fear that a fight might break out between them, leading to possible numerous deaths.

AND THEN...

Then a third party, the Guji, came to realize too that along their common border, all the Borana and Gabra had withdrawn. The Guji people wondered why these two had run away. There were no answers since there was neither Borana nor Gabra to answer. Within no time, the Guji communicated with one another and were on the run northwards. The whole border area of Dhaddiim/Bildima was empty. One could go to any Borana or Guji or Gabra village and only find chickens and eggs. These were feasted on at night by wild animals. All the people's effort and energy was just being lost.

INITIATIVE

So, when the government in Yabello noticed this it sent a person to come and immediately bring the three peoples together. This person then sent word to Dhaddiim Catholic Mission requesting our help in bringing the three groups together before things grew worse.

OUR ROLE

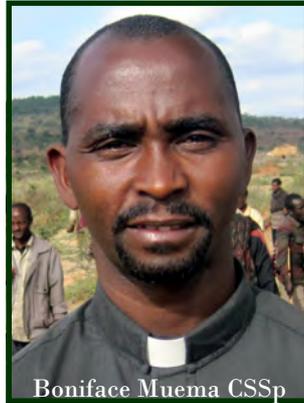
I had just come back from Kukubukatebu outstation. Two of our workers gave the news that tension had grown in the area. We sat down to discuss it and we promised to help in any way possible. We provided transportation and were willing to participate in any other way that the government felt we could. When the government official arrived in Dhaddiim he asked for the elders. He gathered them together and as a team they planned how to go to Dasse and Bildima areas.

Meanwhile, I was also very busy preparing some parish elders who wished to join these. A team of over forty persons made up of Borana elders, Christian and Muslim, was put in place. There was an excellent cooperation among all. But many feared that in the course of talking, emotional people might exchange gunfire, possibly causing fatalities.

FIRST STEPS TOWARDS PEACE

Word was sent to the Guji and Gabra that the Borana were

ready to talk. The Guji and Gabra elders were asked to come back to Dasse where they would meet the Borana. A government motorcyclist went ahead to bring the news to the people and mobile phones were very helpful spreading the messages among the Guji, Gabra and Borana.



Boniface Muema CSSp

There is no road to Dasse. I drove up to a point where the car could no longer continue and from there we continued on foot. The car was loaded with elders, men with long experience of peace talks.

MEETINGS, MEETINGS and more MEETINGS...

Meeting 1: When we arrived at Dasse, Borana young men, most armed with guns or sticks, had already arrived. They ran to hug me. They greeted me very joyfully. They started saying in turns, *'Abba, nagaan kamna,'* meaning, *'Father, we have peace.'* Then one of the elders called me aside immediately and asked me whether I understood exactly what the youths' greeting meant. He explained it, saying that *'my presence to the youth meant, success, reconciliation and peace.'* Peace is synonymous with life in the Borana understanding; where there is peace there is life and where there is no peace there is no life!

I did not yet really realize the significance of it until the Guji and the Gabra persons came in and now was the time for introductions. The first thing was to introduce me. I was introduced as, *'Abba Boniface, warra Abba lede,'* meaning, *'Fr Boniface, of the family of Fr lede'* and *'Fr Boniface being a father to all who were present, one who was only interested in the welfare of each and every persons in the society, and above all, 'The Father of peace!'* After this simple introduction, the mood at the floor changed completely. It was like my presence was one of joy and celebration. This was really challenging to me.

In this first meeting, the Gabra people did not turn up in time for there was no clear information reaching them. A lot of discussion went on, and finally, it was agreed that there was no reason why the people had to run away from each other. A good atmosphere of understanding and trust was there. It was therefore agreed that those present would encourage the fleeing families to return home.

Meeting 2: At the second meeting I happened to step aside



with one of the Guji men inquiring of his family. Near where we stood was a group of young men, a mixture of Guji and Borana. As they were talking loudly and freely, I overheard this statement: *"We are not ready to use arms against anybody because our 'Church Law' does not permit it. Instead, our Church asks for peace and reconciliation when things go wrong."* I was very energized and fulfilled by this statement. I felt that all my time spent in Borana had not been of waste but of fruitfulness. My time spent with the youth, teaching and guiding them had not gone to waste. A seed planted and watered germinates and bears fruit at its own opportune time. At the end it was decided to again encourage people to return home.

Meeting 3: We met for a third time, but reports given did not make us happy. The people who had run away were very hesitant to return. People had been enslaved by a great fear that war could break out. Therefore it was agreed that a special action had to be taken in order to free them from that. Talking alone was not enough. Therefore, a fourth meeting had to be called to discuss a strategy of freeing people from that fear.

BREAKTHROUGH

Meeting 4: In the fourth meeting, a startling breakthrough was made. It was decided that the remedy would be to exchange elders from each group, meaning that some Borana elders would be sent to Guji and Gabra villages, some Guji elders would go to the Borana and the Gabra, with some Gabra elders going to the Borana and Guji. In each place they would spend time persuading the people to return home.

Meeting 5: A fifth meeting took place and in this meeting there was a brilliant report that was given by the Borana elders who had been sent among the Guji. People had responded very positively to their message to go back home.

So, it was in this fifth meeting that some Guji men were sent to the Borana, while other Guji and Borana men were sent to the Gabra. I myself volunteered to go to both the Guji and Gabra.

Meeting 6: The sixth and final peace discussions came. Reports were encouraging. People were received very well and the message they had taken to the people was received with a lot of trust. People believed one another and were ready to return home.

I went to both the Guji and the Gabra with two Elbethol Church Borana pastors. I never had my legs washed by any Ethiopian, but this time, a Guji woman washed them gently. This was the highest gesture of welcome in a family that I have ever received in my life. We spent three days with them and they wanted us to stay even longer.

We had to discuss a long-term strategy in order to prevent

recurrences. Representatives from every group were selected and these have to meet regularly to discuss the lives of the each group in general. Such should minimize the tension and help the people regain their peaceful life. Understanding one another always leads to belief in one another. Believing one another always leads to peace among the three peoples and as a result, a healthier life for all. At the end of the sixth meeting there was a very big ceremony of eating and drinking together. Goats were slaughtered and the whole event turned into a feast.

THANKING THE MISSIONARIES IN BORANA

There was repeated special thanks given to the Catholic mission in Dhaddiim by officials and representatives of the Guji, Gabra and Borana. Other religions were mentioned and thanked as well, but there was a recognition of a job well done by the Catholic Church.

THE RECEIVING OF GUJI IN DHADDIIM

When we arrived back in Dhaddiim with Borana and Guji elders, they asked me to drive round the Dhaddiim villages hooting

the horn and all these Borana and Guji elders stood up on the car singing and clapping their hands. People came out of their villages to see what was happening. To their amazement, they saw the car filled with Borana and Guji. Many Borana came round to see these joyful looking armed Borana and



Guji men. The Guji elders took this chance to shake hands with all the Borana and were then escorted to one of the Borana houses. Immediately after sitting down, they were given water to wash their faces, hands and legs as is customary when receiving visitors. It was after this that the Guji men surrendered their guns. So, here were Guji men, unarmed, in a "foreign and enemy land." By the very fact of their free giving up of their guns it was clear to everybody that the Guji people were in peace with the Borana people. It also meant that the Guji believed themselves to be in safe hands.

People celebrated. There was a lot of meat and milk for all to eat and drink. We were called to come and join in the celebration, which we gladly did. When time came for people to go to bed, the Guji visitors were brought to nicely prepared places and they retired on Borana-style beds.

The following morning after breakfast, the Guji elders were given back their guns and off they left for the Borana villages to ask those who had run away to return home. The majority of them were already on the way back following the experience of the previous night.

The Church we found as missionaries speaks louder than we missionaries could speak for the people.'

This is exactly the kind of Church we want to build in Borana, a Church that can speak openly and freely of, by and for itself.

Boniface Muema Isenge CSSp

SCORE — Spiritan Community Outreach in Ethiopia — 2013-2017

On the 2nd of October 2012 the Spiritans in Ethiopia and their collaborators, gathered in Arba Minch for the second phase of our strategic planning workshop guided by Eamonn Brehony, PhD. During the first phase we had assessed the reality of our works in Ethiopia.

THE FIRST WORKSHOP

It was also during the first workshop that we came up with principles of good practice in our Development and Pastoral work for the next five years. A SWOT (Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis followed that led to the identification of three strategic issues. Some participants were then assigned into working groups for in-depth study and research the core issues. Based on these findings the participants at the 2nd workshop came up with a plan for the next five years.

Three strategic issues came up in the SWOT analysis:

- To have one programme for the two areas – Borana and Gamo Gofa/South Omo.
- To have a funding strategy for the programme to ensure continuity of the works.
- To articulate our Pastoral and Development policies for each area.

OBJECTIVES

Following these strategic issues the following Objectives were then laid down for 2013-2017 during the 2nd workshop:

- That by 2017 we should have in place one programme for all our Development and Pastoral work. I must confess that this was the jewel of the entire Strategic Plan.
- That by 2017 there should be in place a funding strategy for all the programmes.
- That by 2017 we will have developed and implemented a Pastoral and Development policy.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

In order for us to realize these objectives the following practical suggestions were made:

1. The need for one organisational structure.
2. The urgent need for an effective Board.
3. To have a programme Manager and Finance Manager, as well as directors for the Development and Pastoral in Borana and Gamo Gofa/South Omo.

4. To have an Executive Committee to support the Programme Manager and a Management Committee for each of the operational areas.
5. Carry out an evaluation of all ongoing programmes and activities by the end of 2014 which will then form the basis for the integration of all projects into one programme.
6. One pastoral proposal and programme to be developed by 2015.

RISKS:

An action plan was then drawn up to form the schedule and time-line for the implementation of the various activities. A number of risks to the Strategic Plan were then highlighted and the management strategies that could be employed to avoid or minimise their effect. These included:

1. A possibility of a reduction of the number of Spiritans over the period of this plan. The participants decided that this risk could be avoided by ensuring that all key posts are held by Ethiopian staff and by trying to get Ethiopian Spiritans to work in the country.
2. The difficulty in getting sufficient funding to implement the entire programme. This could be avoided by increasing the number of project proposals written, by seeking multi-annual funding and the diversification of the funding base.
3. Commitment to the implementation of the programme could be enhanced if the Board were



instituted and mandated on time.

4. Ambiguity towards working with the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church could be avoided by the implementation of the exhortation of the head of the Catholic Church in Ethiopia, having an annual seminar for the Spiritans on Ecumenism, ensuring good quality of teaching in seminaries, especially in areas of missiology and ecumenism.

CONCLUSION

This is just but a summary of the many things that were discussed and forwarded for gradual implementation. The details of which are given in the booklet “Spiritan Community Outreach in Ethiopia (SCORE) 2013-2017”, copies of which will soon be available. We are all optimistic that when fully implemented the SCORE will put us on a new and sure path to growth, development and sustainability. Though doubts still linger with many of us we trust in the guidance and the power of the Holy Spirit to bring out the best in all of us.

Gerald Kimata CSSp

OUR ANNUAL RETREAT — THANK YOU GERARD!

In November we had the good fortune to welcome back to Ethiopia Gerard Majella Nnamunga, Superior of the Foundation of Uganda, this time as our retreat giver. Previously, in the days long before Unions of Circumscriptions were thought of, he had visited as Provincial of East Africa.

His working foundation was the Libermann's Commentary on John's Gospel, especially his commentary on the signs. His task was challenging because many of us have had years of exposures to Libermann but in very creative ways he kept us all absorbed and



Front: Boniface Muema, Gerald Kimata, Sebastian Samikannu, Gerard Nnamunga, Dida Wario, Martin Kelly.
Back: Iede de Lange, Dennis Bukonya, Anthony Nweke, Philippe Sidot, Emmanuel Fritsch.

in the end we were all renewed and re-freshed. Fr Gerard came in as a late replacement for Fr Hugh Fagan of Ireland who was advised by his doctor not to travel. We wish them both well and every blessing in the coming Christmas and New Year

This year we especially wish our three confreres in **South Sudan** a very happy first Christmas in the country. Two of them have very strong connections with Ethiopia. John Skinnader (Ireland) spent ten years here and Nolasco Mushi (Tanzania) did his PEP here. Not forgetting Sospeter Kiarie (Kenya), the pioneer of the mission to South Sudan

Happy Christmas 2012 እንኳን ለብርሃን ልደቱ አደረሳችሁ



*For while gentle silence enveloped all things,
 and night in its swift course was now half gone,
 your all-powerful word leaped from heaven, from the royal throne,
 into the midst of the land that was doomed
 Wis 18: 14-15*

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