



SCHOOL SISTERS of NOTRE DAME

PROVINCE OF AFRICA

TRANSFORMING THE WORLD THROUGH EDUCATION

Vol 9, No 7



Message from the Council

Dear sisters,

**The Perfect Gift of
Love!**

What can I call my perfect gift of love in this year 2019? How will I get to this level? Many questions flooded my mind as I reflect on the point of being and remaining sisters to each other. What a thought during this special period! But what does the word Love mean to me?

The First Letter of John: "Let us love one another, because love is of God; everyone who loves is begotten by God. . . . If God so loved us we also must love one another" (4:7, 11). This seems so easy but in practice it can be very challenging. Particularly, when it touches on the stretchy part where we do not really like to invest in, but what is important for us to know is that "just as our experience of God's love can make us more loving, so also our efforts at becoming more loving and kind can open us up to God's love. As we put forth the effort to love one another, we find it easier to see Jesus in our brothers and sisters. We find ourselves feeling closer to the Lord and his love." Pope Francis.

As an SSND, I/we are called and challenged to live :-

"In mutual responsibility;

- a.) We commit ourselves to communal prayer as an indispensable foundation to our community life,*
- b.) We create a climate for spiritual growth.*
- c.) We trust one another presuming the good will*
- d.) We strive to love enough to point out failures...*

Through these points, we are continuously called to this great responsibility of giving each other the perfect gift of love by the manner we live out the paragraph above. We do know that it is not an easy task considering our different personalities, nevertheless, this is the aspect of love we are faced with in living our call as school sisters of Notre Dame.

Sisters, as conscious as we are of our own imperfections, we are called beyond dwelling on the self and listen anew to the Biblical invitation to us to be perfect just as the heavenly father is perfect! We are invited daily to work towards this goal of perfection and this is a life-long process as we all know. So as we reflect on this call, I equally invite us to be on the same journey of living and offering to each other this gift of love through the support in community and the mentoring that we offer one another! We are at a place where we are called to mutual responsibility in living

YAS. Our call as SSND in the Province is to assist each other live this mandate despite its challenges. This might be the only gift we can offer each other in community. The aspect of it perfection may not easily be obtainable, but our sincere efforts and commitment in living the life while inviting others to welcome and embrace the significant values found therein. When we are faithful to the table of dialogue and we do not turn away out of fear for the possible consequence, then our

love though imperfect, will be perfected by the God who desires for us to offer each other our perfect gift of love. May God help us as we strive daily to offer sincere love to others wherever and whenever this is needed.

Sister Grace



Congregational Feasts in February to May

February 13, 1834 Death date of Father Sebastian Job

March 8, 1833 Death date of Bishop Wittmann

March 25, 1986 YOU ARE SENT approved

April 10, 1836 First novices received in Neunburg vorm Wald

May 9, 1879 Death date of Mother Theresa

FEBRUARY happy Birthday sisters

Dorothy Enang Feb. 6
 Novice Maureen Wekesa Feb. 6
 Maryann Ekam Feb 14
 Elizabeth Blok Feb 24
 Rosanne Rustermeier Feb 24

MARCH sisters

Elizabeth Ejura March 3
 Lilian Awuonda March 5
 Sarah Tanjo March 9
 Petronella Muteshi March 19
 Esther Alaam March 20
 Patience Age March 29
 Antoinette Cornelius Mar 30

APRIL

Norah Anne Oyagi April 2
 Mary Mayi- Ojo Abuh April 3
 Irene Brookman April 3
 Magdalene Akpan April 4
 Beatrice Chepngeno April 4
 Marie Mendy April 10
 Estera Krol April 12
 Sarah Kipsang Apr. 12
 Elizabeth Newman April 13
 Lucy Kwalimwa April 14
 Novice Lucy Waigwa April 16
 Vera Owoh April 23
 Elis Viebeck April 26
 Novice Frances Okafor April 28



SHALOM



Encontering the Other!

By S.Emelia Agana

"**W**e are the presences of Christ" words from David Hass song tell the story of our encounter with the children in Chiraa - Ahyiyem village. The Shalom club members of Notre Dame Senior High School in Ghana have taken the spirit of shalom beyond building peace and harmony to sharing the gifts of self with our brothers and sisters in need. "Christ has no hands on earth but ours, our joy is to be His joy". The Shalom Club of Notre Dame Girls Senior High School, Ghana made words from the lyrics of this song sang by David Hass come alive on the 9th of February, 2019.

As part of our annual shalom activities we undertook an outreach program to reach out to the less fortunate. A team of seven girls and their patrons went to a village called Chiraa- Ahyiyem to make a donation of assorted items which the girls gathered had gathered from the school community for poor children. It was an eye opener and a touching experience for both the village children and the students from our school who, for the first time, saw children in a village setting. During our interaction, we realized that, though basic education is free for all children of school age, a lot of these little ones do not have access to the free education in Ghana. When we asked why, we were told they could not afford writing materials, school uniforms and sandals.

This touched many of us, who immediate made some contribution there, so that books and school uniforms would be bought for about five of the children to begin their school.

We plan to make subsequent follow ups on the progress of the children. This experience remained in the hearts of the students as we returned to school. The students said the village could be a place for them to visit anytime they get the opportunity. This encounter was appreciated by both students and the village children. For our students, it has been a great learning experience, as they observed that losing a parent or both parents can be a great hindrance to one's success in life. We imitate the words of Mother Theresa, "Let us share in such a way that the poor may once again find hope".

At the end of our visit we could see big smiles on the faces of the little children. The Shalom Club of



SISTERS HELLEN AND EMELIA AND SOME STUDENTS FROM NOTRE DAME SCHOOL BROUGHT SOME GOODIES FOR THE VILLAGE CHILDREN IN CHIRAA- AHYIYEM

Notre Dame Girls brought hope to the lives of these precious children. All is not lost! We left the village with these words of our Mother, "Content with little, we go into the smallest

villages and the poorest cottages whither the Lord calls us". (Blessed Theresa of Jesus)

Vocation

LOVE GIVES EVERYTHING FREELY, AGAIN AND AGAIN

By S. Monica Benedict



Sisters Grace Okon, Sister Priscilla Onwuka and Sister Dorothy Ime Enang at their Jubilee Celebration.

Saturday the 15th of December, 2019 was, indeed a day of celebration of a love that gives everything freely as our sisters, Priscilla Chinedu Onwuka, Dorothy Ime Enang and Grace Ekaette Okon celebrated 25 years of fidelity and service to God's people in religious life.

The silver jubilee celebration which was the second of its kind in the Province of African began with mass presided by Most Reverend Dr. Camillus Umoh, the Bishop of Ikot Ekpene diocese. In a homily given at the mass the jubilarians were encouraged to keep up the spirit of gratitude and commitment to their call and also see 25 years of religious life as the starting point to attaining golden jubilee.

The celebration was attended by families, friends, staff and students of the schools where the celebrants had worked and where some of them are still working. The jubilee celebration was marked with cultural dance, speeches made by individuals and groups in appreciation to the celebrants of the impact they made in their lives and presentations of gifts by the invited guests and the old girls of Notre Dame Girls' Urua Edet Obot.

The joy of the celebrants knew no bounds as they express their gratitude to God for His faithfulness and love to them over the past 25 years of their religious call.

"The joy of the celebrants knew no bounds as they express their gratitude to God for His faithfulness and love to them over the past 25 years of their religious call."



Sisters Dorothy, Grace and Priscilla ready for the day.

Feature

A ZEBRA WITH STRIPES.

By Uzoamaka Moneme, SSND.

Culture is described as a way of life. It includes our values, beliefs, customs, language, and traditions. Through our culture, we develop a sense of belonging, and an ability to relate with one another.

There is an African proverb which says “: a person without culture is like a Zebra without stripes”. Zebras are only identified by their stripes and thus without the stripes one cannot tell if the animal is a zebra or a donkey. In our constitution (YAS) we are encouraged to find unity in our diverse cultures. There is the invitation to live interculturally and to work towards the ultimate goal of unity.” By our unity especially evidenced where we live and serve together internationally, we witness to the possibility of overcoming national and cultural barriers.”(GD#36).

Every year at Notre Dame Secondary School Mkar we hold our cultural day celebration. This Cultural day celebration aims at re-awakening the minds and consciousness of the students and staff of Notre Dame school on the richness of the different cultures we have in our school community. It gives us opportunities to celebrate this diversity and notice how inter-related we are. Above all, it affords us opportunities to appreciate the beauty of each culture and marvel at the work of the Creator who made this diversity and saw it was good.

In this spirit, Notre Dame Secondary School Mkar converged on the 4th November 2018 to celebrate her annual Cultural Day Celebration. There were various activities that marked the day these included cultural dances and drama competition, food presentation, and a beauty contest, a miss culture competition.



The occasion which attracted guests from far and wide was highly applauded as a means of handing down our cultural roots to the next generation. Many guests and members of the community who came to the celebration commended the beauty of these presentations and hoped that it would continue because it shapes the young people who will almost always now find themselves in today's multicultural society and need the skills to see and appreciate beauty in diversity.

“A person without culture is like a Zebra without stripes.”

African Proverb

Vocation

Celebrating the gift of God's call

By S. Namulanda Joan

In Jesus is our hope...in Him we find all. YAS C#13

Saturday the 29th December, saw the sisters of the Kenya area, postulants, the family of Sister Lilian and our neighbours from the religious communities around our formation house in Kisumu, gather at Our Lady of Good Counsel Formation House to celebrate the profession of vows of Sr Lilian Awuonda Gor

In a simple and yet very beautiful mass celebrated by Fr Leo Mwenda a Dominican Frair. Sr Lilian made her simple vows and was joyfully welcomed back into the larger SSND community.

The beautiful occasion also provided an opportunity for the young men and women in formation to collaborate in preparing the music for the celebration and hence form the choir. The choir was composed of our postulants, the novices of the Franciscan Sisters of St. Ann, Dominican Frair novices and novices from the congregation of Brothers of Our Lady of Perpetual Help.

These young people put time, energy and personal sacrifice in their preparation which included learning new songs in different languages. Their singing and instruments greatly added to the solemnity and beauty of the occasion.

The theme of the day, specially chosen by Sister Lilian Gor was "*In Jesus is our hope ..in him we find all*" was the basis of the reflection given by S. Joyce Nyakwama our provincial leader.



Sisters Lilian Gor sings her thanksgiving song during the occasion of her profession of vows.

It was a joyfilled day and all of us present shared in the joy of S. Lillian's commitment to God and our SSND community. For our Sister Lilian, this commitment was a response to a faithful God who she has experienced as one who continuously invites us into a deeper relationship.

In thanksgiving, Sister Lillian beautifully sang the words of Psalmist

from Psalm 139 "*Endless is your love for me*" The words of this psalm summed up her experience of a faithful God whose love is endlessly seeking us out. It is with this faithful God that we have made a commitment to serve and live our calling as a School Sisters of Notre Dame.

The next part of the celebration was o marked by sharing of food and cake cutting as a sign of love and family. Sr Lilian is missioned to Likuyani community in Kakamega Diocese. There she will continue with her ministry as a teacher.

MINISTRY

Children, Friends of Jesus!

By S. Elizabeth Blok

"LET THE CHILDREN COME TO ME. DO NOT STOP THEM, FOR IT IS TO SUCH AS THESE THAT THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN BELONGS".

They are indeed so precious for Jesus.

It is a joy to minister to children. Their simplicity, trust, friendship, spontaneity, enthusiasm, smiles, hugs, gratitude is always amazing. What they need is to be loved, encouraged and cared for. "Only by love we will win the love of the children and draw their hearts to God" (MT)

From the very beginning of my arrival to Mbribit Itam community I met few children at the church at St. Agnes station. It was a happy moment of greeting each other and getting to know ourselves. I felt welcomed and at home. The next day children in bigger number came to the convent to see me, to share stories and asked questions. The idea came to form the group and meet regularly. We called ourselves Notre Dame children. We are now four years in function. The activities are many, we pray, sing, act dramas, make different items, go for visitations, do the volunteer work, celebrate life and feasts. Anytime there is program in the parish we are asked to present something suitable for the occasion. The willingness, zeal and ability of children always are giving me energy and joy to take extra efforts to accept the

requests, achieve the goals and contribute to the development and growth of each member.

Every year we present the Nativity play during Christmas in the parish, different outstations and for different groups. During Easter we act the story about resurrection. We also performed for Pentecost, Holy Family feast, for our Parish Choir we acted the life of St. Cecilia and of course we acted Caroline's dream about our Foundress Blessed Mother Theresa during her feast.

All children are so eager to take different

roles and be part of presentation. I truly admire them.

In our practical skills we made lots of beautiful rosaries, necklaces with cross and medals, bangles, key holders, crosses for drivers, flowers, greetings cards, gifts boxes and many different useful crafts.

Children are busy, but also proud of themselves.

For our annual parties

we bake the cakes, biscuits and cook rice. We have music, we dance and play different games. The relationship is built to love one another. All we do is for greater the glory of God and in honor of Mary our mother. I am sure children enjoy the various activities and also benefit from them.

They are learning along with getting proper training of good attitude and moral values. The spiritual exercises help them to deepen the faith and commitment to the church as good Catholics.

I believe strongly that this is what our charism is all about. I am convinced that: "If we trust God and dare all for the kingdom, the world can and will be transformed".



Sister Elizabeth Blok with the Notre Dame children ready to celebrate the day.

Feature

A Song makes
you
feel a thought.

“They beleive that that they are doing God’s work with their own gift, what about you?”

By Uzoamaka Moneme, SSND.

Our Foundress Blessed Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger insisted that music and arts be part of the school curriculum, and also because of our Catholic tradition. In carrying on this beautiful legacy Notre Dame Secondary School Mkar encourages her students to take up this gift bequeathed them. This led to the formation of Angelic Voices Choir of Notre Dame Secondary School, Mkar. The students have excelled at various competions and most importantly discovered their God given gift.



Beautiful voices and beautiful faces of the Angelic Voices Choir of Notre Dame.

It is therefore, a joy to see these students moved and dedicated to choir activities. Here there gifts are expressed and used in God’s service. We can all learn from this dedication, commitment and free disposal of the the use



The Angelic Voices Choir of Notre Dame Secondary School, Mkar.

*It is said;
Words make you think a thought,
Music makes you feel a feeling,
A song makes you feel a thought.*

E. Y. Harbury

of our God given gifts from these girls at Mkar. They believe that they are doing God’s work with their own gift, what about you?

CREATIVE

CLASH OF ENGLISH (Part 1)

Have you ever found yourself thinking hard and searching your **braintionary** for the right word to use for an occasion? Have you caught yourself confused about a spelling **you're** very sure you knew so well? You'll all agree with me that there are times English drives us crazy: Spellings, grammar, concord, words that sound the same but are spelt differently; words that sound the same but have different meanings (homonyms and homophones), etc. it is really a menace and I've been thinking and finally decided to voice out my frustrations. Let me begin with **box**, and the plural is **boxes**. But when it comes to **ox**, the plural should be **oxen** not **oxes**. One **fowl** is **goose** and two are **geese**, yet the plural of **moose** shouldn't be **meese**. You may find a lone **mouse** and a whole lot of **mice** but the plural of **house** is **houses** not hice. If the plural of **man** is **men** then why isn't the plural of **pan pen**? When I show you a **foot** and you show me two **feet**, will you show me two **beet** if I showed you a **boot**? If one is **tooth** and a whole set is **teeth** why should my English teacher mark me wrong if I wrote the plural of **booth** as **beeth**? I can freely say those when I mean the plural of that but I'm forbidden to say **hose** when there are more than one **hat**. Why do we speak of a **brother** and of **brethren** but then we can't say the same about **mother** and **methren**? The masculine pronouns are **he, his and him**; wouldn't it be less stressful to have the feminine as **she, shis and shim**? So you see I wouldn't be wrong if I said English is the trickiest thing you ever did see.

Let's take a look at this Poem

(PRONUNCIATION)

Why is **break** not rhymed with **freak**?
Tell me why it's **sew** and **few**?
And the verse maker can't rhyme **horse** with **worse**
Beard isn't pronounced the same as **heard**.
Cord is called differently from **word**.
Cow is cow but low is **low**.
Shoe is never rhymed with **foe**.
...thought of **hose, dose** and **lose**?
Think of **comb, tomb** and **bomb**.
How 'bout **doll** and **roll** or **home** and **some**?
Since **pay** is rhymed with **say**,
Why not **paid** with **said** I pray?
Think of **blood, food** and **good**.
Mould is not pronounced like **could**.
Wherefore **done** but **gone** and **lone**—
Is there any reason known?
To sum it all, it seems to me,
Sound and letters don't agree.
Now tell me why you get upset...
When your students don't just get
Your English topics all at once!

Picturesque



Sisters of the Nigeria Area joined by the provincial council to celebrate the Silver Jubilee of Sr Dorothy Enang, S.Grace Okon and S. Priscilla Onwuka .



Sisters Theodora, Uzoamaka and Monica Benedict joined in song on the special day.



Sisters of the Kenya area L-R Sisters Joan Mukhwana, Merceline Anyega, Joyce Nyakwama , Marie Mendy, Lilian Gor, Norah Oyago Beatrice , Chepngeno Sarah Chepkorir ,Judy Cheptoo, Janet Odey, Eunice Dagi Joy Monica Abado, Monica Juma, Mary Mburu .
kneeling S. Edna Chepkoech, Jacinta Ondeng and Sister Mara Frundt.



Sisters

Sister Joyce Nyakwama the provincial leader and Father Leo Mwenda pose with Sister Lillian Gor on her vows day.

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“Peace is not in unity in similarity but unity in diversity, in the comparison and conciliation of differences”
—~
Mikhail Gorbachev”

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