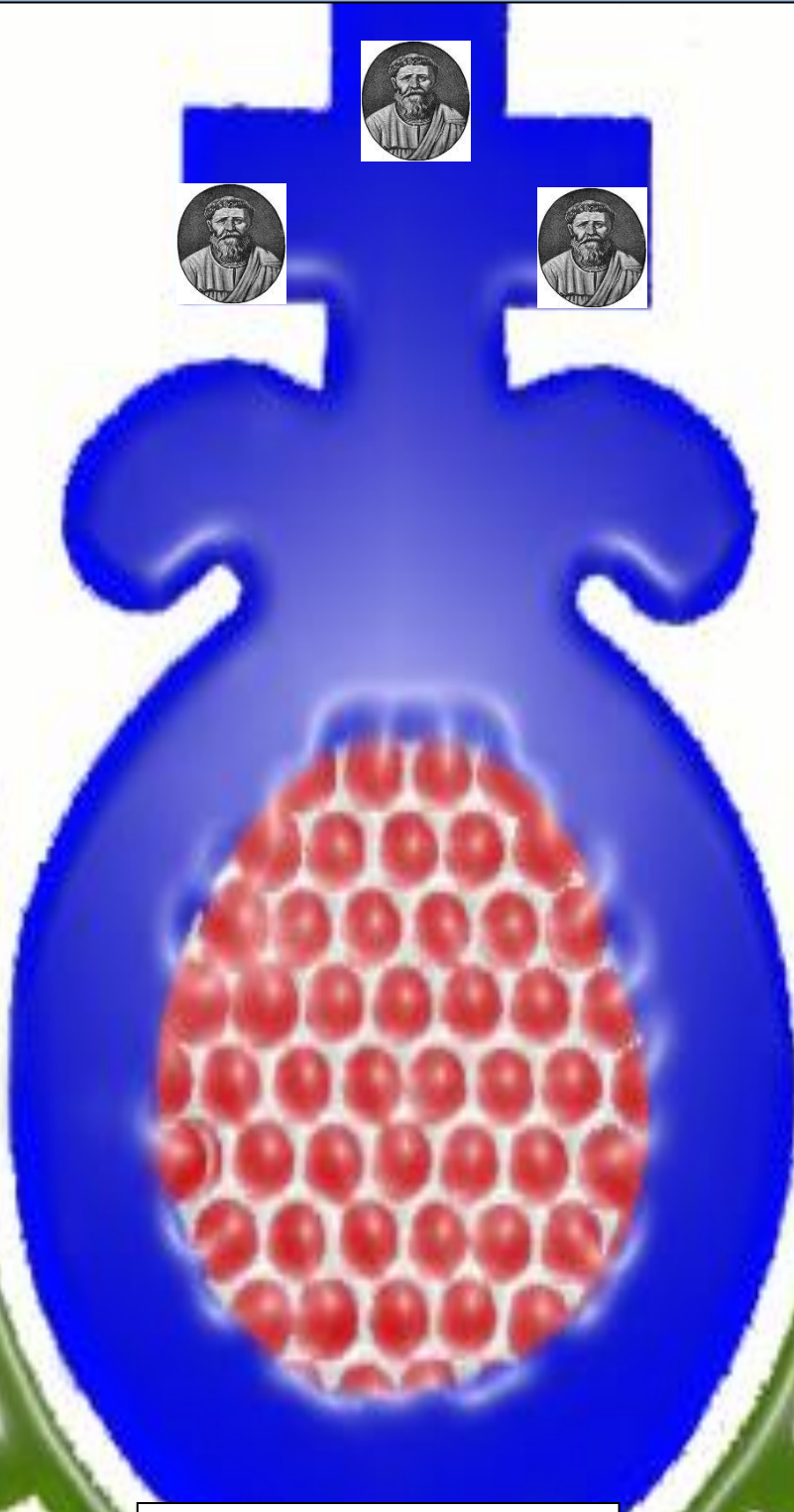




ST. AUGUSTINE PROVINCE OF AFRICA



August 2015
Special Edition

PANORAMA

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THE REAL COST OF DISCIPLESHIP

What does it mean to the brother of St. John of God?

To be a disciple of the Hospitaller Order of St. John of God in the life of the church is not a lip service but rather those who struggle to walk in the normal path. (Life style of service, sacrifice and humble submission to the service of the poor and needy and community members shows its true meaning).

As we are in the year of consecrated life, there are many activities going on since it was launched in January, 2015. Last week, Br. Henry Dumbuya from our Province and Br. Hugue from the Vice Province were welcomed into the Hospitaller family as they made their final religious vows in Nairobi-Kenya and also few days ago Br. Jacob Tambe was instituted into the Ministries of Lector and Acolyte in the church. During all this time Br. Pascal Ahedegnon, the General Councilor is going on with the canonical visit in the Province on behalf of the Prior General. This shows that our discipleship towards the Hospitaller Order of St. John of God is active in St Augustine Province of Africa.

FLASH BACK

Can you remember this question during your solemn profession when you were asked by the Provincial,

"Brother; do you desire to dedicate your whole life to the compassionate assistance to the sick and needy, undertaking by the vow of hospitality to extend to them every necessary assistance, even the most humble and at the risk of your own life?" And we all said "yes".

So my Brothers this pronouncement must not be a lip service because the standards set by Christ for those who accept His invitation are very high. That is why we have to continue to pray for our departed brothers and sisters due to the Ebola outbreak and also continue to give support to our brothers and sisters who up to date accept to be of service to the Order to serve the poor and needy of those affected areas.

WITNESS

Through the help of our benefactor, the whole Order, partners, prayers and other forms of support in the church, we as Hospitallers have shown the whole world that we believe in what we pronounce..."to the sick and needy, undertaking by the vow of hospitality to the

extend of giving them very necessary assistance, even the most humble and at the risk of our life”

My brothers and sisters, by this same time last year the entire Hospitaller family was crying, confused and people were afraid to visit our services in Liberia and Sierra Leone due to Ebola Virus.

Nevertheless, one year back by our firm faith in our strong discipleship in the Hospitaller Order of St. John of God, life is back in our services in Liberia and Sierra Leone. Today we are greatly regaining our strategic position in these countries as institutions with the complete answer to the issues of the poor and needy in health. This is very important for us because in the midst of trouble caused to us by the Ebola Virus we have at the same time taken the opportunity to express our true Hospitaller charism.

TIME TO REFLECT

We have to remain faithful to our commitment and prayers so that we continue to give the required support to the Hospitaller family of St. John of God and be true witnesses of the poor and needy by following the rules and regulation of the Province so that we build up institutions and leadership that will lead us to sustainability in the future.

And for those of us who are still dreaming that being a disciple of the Hospitaller family is seeking only your own interest, I invite you all for a deep reflection in praying to the spirit for God's Direction because the only way we can build a strong discipleship of the hospitaller Order in the St Augustine Province is by being committed to our engagement as religious Brothers, respect of our own rules and regulations and those of the church, respect each other, especially our Brothers in the same community. You can not claim to be champion of hospitality when you do not even consider the welfare of your own community members.

On this note we need to be tolerant and show practical examples of humility; then we shall be servants of the poor and needy. God bless you all

Rev. Br. Bartholomew KAMARA
(Provincial Superior)

SOLEMN PROFESSION IN NAIROBI



This year opened with special graces not only as a year dedicated to the consecrated life but a year particularly devoted to Hospitaller vocations. It is also in this year that the Pope encourages consecrated persons to be joyous and to share the joy of Christ. It is with such blessings that stemmed from this special year that our two Brothers had the opportunity to make their solemn profession. It was for them a coincident as joy meets joy. A year that is committed

to joy and a year that they are making profession, a moment of joy. The 6th of August 2015 was that great day of joy for Brothers Henry and Hugues who had the joy of making solemn profession.

The colorful occasion kicked off through a spiritual preparation of the brothers with a retreat directed by Br. Pascual Piles. After this singular moment of preparations followed the day of profession which was marked by the Solemn Mass presided by Bishop David Kamau, Auxiliary Bishop of Nairobi. The Bishop in His Homily reminded the brothers of the fact that they are called to serve Christ in those who suffer. This is done in a unique community of Brothers. He went on highlighting that the two Brothers are coming into an Order which has existed for over 500 years and will continue to exist. Therefore, they need to follow the Constitutions and not bring their own laws into the Order. In all, the respect of elders is therefore needed.

After the homily, the rite for solemn profession continued. We would like to note the presence of the Provincial Superior for St. Augustine Province of Africa, Br. Bartholomew K. and his secretary Br. Paulinus T. and the Vice-Provincial for Benin-Togo, Br. Boniface S. and Br. Nicolas N. his councilor. At the end of the rite was expression of joy as all welcomed them into the family of St. John of



God. At the end of the Mass, we all gathered for photos and then planting of two Granada trees offered by the NIC bank to symbolize their umbilical cords of the two brothers planted in the Hospitaller Order of St. John of God for the rest of their lives.

The celebration was crowned by lunch and the sharing of the feast cake and Champaign.

By Br Jacob Ketchen

VISIT OF BRO PASCAL PILES TO THE SCHOLASTICATE (2ND TO 11TH AUGUST 2015)



From the 2nd to 11th August, our former Prior General, Bro. Pascal Piles, now Chaplain and Novice Master in Spain paid a short visit to our Formation Center in Nairobi.

This visit was planned for him to come and direct the annual retreat of the brothers in this formation house. Fortunately, during this retreat **Bro Henry DUMBUYA** from Sierra Leone and **Bro Hugues ASSOU** from Togo were to prepare themselves for their solemn

profession on the 6th August. Thus, this time of spiritual renewal was shortened to four days, but well enriched by the experiences of Bro. Pascal Piles.

Throughout these few days, Bro Piles tried to emphasize on the necessity for us to be happy and grateful to God for Him having given us the grace of Hospitaller vocation. In explaining to us the “Gift of faith” he reminded each one of the brothers that our Hospitaller vocation must be a new experience each day in order to avoid the routine and monotony. Showing how our Mother Mary remained a model of hospitality as well as our Father John of God, Bro Piles called everyone to a life of simplicity and humility and opened a window to us on the future calling everyone to openness as the Holy Father Francis is teaching today, to look at the future as with more and new opportunities for a better hospitality.

At the closing of the retreat, Bro Leopold GNAMI on behalf of the community thanked him for his availability to come and nourish this period of our spiritual renewal, with his own experiences from being animator of the whole Order and especially for helping us to try to embrace our future with an open minded way of looking at hospitality.

On August 6, he then concelebrated with Bishop David KAMAU and many other priests, the solemn profession mass of Bro. Henry and Bro. Hugues. The following day, he travelled to Tigania with the two African Major Superiors Bro Bartholomew KAMARA and Bro Boniface SAMBEI who came with the secretary Bro Paulinus Toh KISAM and the counselor Bro Nicolas NSALE.

He left back to Spain on 12th August, reaffirming his joy to have received a warm welcome to the scholasticate in Nairobi and promised to be back soon in Africa by the grace of God.

Br. Hugues ASSOU, OH

Provincial visit to Tigania

The Brothers and the Community of Tigania hospital had a very good privilege this year to host the two Provincials, Rev. Br. Bartholomew Kamara and Rev. Br. Boniface SAMBIENI, the former Prior General Br. Pascal PILES. This is after having a very colorful solemn profession of Br. Henry Dumbuya and Br. Hugues Assou. The Provincial of the St Augustine Province of Africa, Br. Bartholomew KAMARA and his Secretary Br. Paulinus, together with the Vice Provincial of vice Province of St. Richard Pampuri, Br. Borniface SAMBIENI and his first councilor Br. Nicholas NSALE together with the former Prior General Br. Pascal PILES all descended to Tigania to have a view of how things are getting on. The journey from Nairobi to Tigania was very successful though the brothers had the experience of the Nairobi's huge traffic jam, but this made them to have a taste of how the hotbed land of opportunities can be sometimes.

In the company of these visitors were also our young brothers who have just arrived in Nairobi to start their spiritual year in Tangaza University college, they were accompanied by their formator Br. Leopold Gnami. In Tigania the visitors had humble time going round the hospital and interacting with both patients and staff of the hospital.

During the visit the Provincial and his Secretary held a closed door meeting with the management team of the hospital where he discussed various issues and listened to the challenges they are facing in the hospital for the moment. His sharing was very good where he recommended the hospital management for the good developments taking place in the hospital. He asked the management team to see to it that mutual love and understanding stands tall between the management team and the staff for the welfare of the hospital. He addressed most of the issues which were raised and he recommended the Management team to go ahead with the plans they have at hand.

After the hospital management meeting, the two Provincials held another meeting with the Brothers of the community, together with Brother Leopold Gnami from the community of Nairobi

IQCARE

As the visitors were going round the hospital, they were taken through a brief explanation on how the hospital system works under the name of IQCARE which is sponsored by the Alpha plus by Brother Atanasius. Alpha Plus is a non- governmental organization which supports EMR ACTIVITIES in all the hospitals in the country. They normally supply computer programmes and computers to the institutions under them and does a close follow up of the program and activities. The program runs under the umbrella of Future Group. This program helps us to capture all the details of the patient and network it so that we can reduce the cost by doing away with the paper work. The program makes every unit to be independent with its own data, but controlled by one server.

Each unit in the Hospital has its own computer and the staff that captures the information once the patient is received in that particular unit, the outpatient unit runs as a control Centre of the data, from first entry up to the pharmacy. Paperless method takes control though with a LAN network.

This program helps the director and accountant to monitor the daily cash flow or entry. It's easy and convenient for them to trace the lost fund since the program captures the date, time, amount, the person who received the patients and from which unit, if only the patient was registered from the first entry. The system saves times spent by patients moving from unit to unit to seek services.

Common supper

After the visit, the brothers and the community of sisters had fraternal supper together, in which brothers shared the small tokens which they had for the visitors.

After two day visit the brothers left happily for Nairobi to take their flights to their various destinations again.



By Br. Atanasius. (Tigania)

Institution of the Ministries of Lector and Acolyte to Brother Jacob TambeK. and the renewal of vows of three of our brothers in Nairobi community.

On the 15th August, 2015, on the solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary into heaven, our Brother Jacob K. was installed in the ministries of Lector and Acolyte and three of our brothers; Emmanuel Luanga, Samuel Mithi and Andrew Vitu renewed their temporal vows.

The celebration started at 6:30pm in the Chapel of the formation center of the Hospitaller Brothers of Saint John of God in Nairobi, Kenya. The Mass was presided by his Lordship, Bishop David Kamau and concelebrated by Fr. Raphael Teh.



After the Gospel reading, which was done by Fr. Raphael, the Superior of the community Br. Leopold, accompanied by Br. Hugue and Fr. Raphael, went in front of the altar to receive the vows of the brothers starting from Br. Andrew followed by Br. Samuel and then Br. Emmanuel Launga.

When the ceremony of the renewal of vows was over and before his Lordship began his sermon, Fr. Raphael put on track the first part of the rite to the ministries which is the call of the candidate who is to be instituted into the ministry of lector and acolyte to come forward Br. Jacob answered 'present' and joined them at the altar.

In his sermon, the Bishop underlined that: *“The seed of vocation to priesthood must be taken care of through the word of God and the Eucharist just as Mary took the word of God and make it her light - the center of her life”*

After his sermon, his Lordship prayed and blessed Br. Jacob by imposing his hands on him that he may grow in wisdom. The Bishop handed him the lectionary, saying: *“Take this book of Holy Scripture and be faithful in handing on the word of God, so that it may grow in the hearts of his people”* and then he gave him a vessel with bread to be consecrated, saying: *“Take this vessel with bread for the celebration of the Eucharist”*.

From then, Br. Jacob was installed in the ministries of lector and acolyte. He started administering his functions by helping at the preparation of the gifts, that is: presenting the ciborium with the bread and the chalice with the wine and after the consecration Br. Jacob received communion immediately after the Bishop and his concelebrant and help in the distribution of the communion to the faithful.

Who is a lector?

A lector is a minister in the church who participates in the church's mission of preaching the Gospel to the whole world. He is to assist as a reader and bearer of God's word and so take on a special office within the Christian community. He proclaims the word and sings or recites the psalms in the liturgical assembly, instruct people in the faith and prepare them to receive worthily the church's sacraments.

Who is an Acolyte?



Acolyte, (from Greek *akolouthos*, “server,” “companion,” or “follower”), in the Roman Catholic Church, a person is installed in a ministry in order to assist the deacon and priest in liturgical celebrations, especially the Eucharistic liturgy. When God's people gather to receive the word and sacraments, God gives them his gift of grace and the new life in Christ received in baptism. The acolyte provides leadership to the assembly of believers as he does the work entrusted specifically to an

acolyte. An acolyte has the responsibility of assisting the priest and deacon during liturgical celebrations, distribute Holy Communion to faithful and to the sick. He is to show love of Christ mystical body, to the people having attention to the sick and the weak.

By Br. Emmanuel Davies, Nairobi.

Review of the Contract with the Western European Province and St Augustine Province concerning Monze Services

From the 14th July 2015 during the canonical visit in Monze by the General Councillor Br Pascal Ahodegnon a very important meeting took place between the Western European Province represented by the Provincial Superior Rev. Br. Donatus Forkan, Rev. Br. Ronan Lennon and Mr. John Pepper and from St Augustine Province was the Provincial Superior, Rev. Br. Bartholomew Kamara, Br. Robert Chakana, Br. Gelasius Mweene, Br. Innocent Phiri, Br. Kedrick Simeenda, from General Curia Br Pascal Ahodegnon then Br Jacob Tambe who serves as the secretary. The aim of the meeting was to review the contract that was signed between the two Provinces which has already expired. At this meeting the following actions were agreed:

- That replicating the interprovincial conference, that took place in Muzuzu in February 2013, will be deferred.

- A task Group will be established to conduct a Needs Assessment in Lusaka
- Members include Br Robert, Br Innocent, Theresa Ghalainey Chairperson, Br. Michael Newman, Malawi; Kisa Mwafulirwa, Administration Manager and Christopher Mhone Umuzo program Co-ordinator.
- Their terms of reference will be developed by Theresa Ghalainey, Br Robert Chakana assistance from Jane McEvoy, Director of Strategic Implementation.

These terms of reference will focus on: need assessment in Lusaka, services on the Holy Family site in Monze, site and property on the holy Family site in Monze and identify areas of common purpose with Malawi. This exercise will require focused energy and the following dates have been agreed.

1. Mid October- Progress report
2. Mid- December- Interim or Final Report
3. End February- Final report

“VOCATION TO COMMUNITY”

“It is not good for man to be alone”(cf. Gn. 2: 18-23) Living together in a religious community from different background is not something that we ourselves formulate, rather it is natural. In the beginning man was made for community; his need for others was built into his very nature. Man, made in the image and likeness of the Triune God, finds his meaning in a unity of distinct persons, related in self-giving. On the most basic level of his existence man can live only by learning to live with others; he can become a person only in relation to other persons. What is true of man on the natural level is also true of him on the divine level. In the same token, we Christians can only come to God in Christ Jesus; we can only be one with Christ insofar as we are one with all human created in the image of God.

➤ **MAN’S NATURAL NEED OF COMMUNITY**

If we start with the most basic level of man’s continual existence, we find here a felt need for others. Existence is not something we possess, something we can claim or something we can hold on to. Rather, we experience that our existence is something we receive. Therefore, the realization of our being can only come through others. What kind of being are we? Who are we? Both questions call for existential answers, answers which can only be concretized in terms of our actual relations with other beings. If we are to know another must reveal himself; while it may at first glance seem strange, we can only know ourselves if another reveals us to ourselves. Moreover, man also comes to find his own meaning in and through others. “Unless my life has a meaning for others, it has no meaning for me.” What matters is what my life is for others that make me who I am and not my post.

➤ **MAN'S SUPERNATURAL CALL TO COMMUNITY**

What is true of man on the natural level of his being an embodied soul is also true on the level of his being a “partaker of the divine nature; “just as man can be a whole being with others, so too he can become a holy being only in relation to others. In fact, man’s natural need for community seems only a sign and symbol of that fulfillment in community which is the Church Triumphant in the Triune God. The Trinity itself is a community of three Divine Persons, Persons whose whole distinctness is founded in their relationships with each other. Just as the Church is a community signifying union with the Triune God and the unity of all men with each other, so too a religious congregation exists as a mystery-sign of the Church and of all men in the Church. Above all, it is a sign of the communal nature of the Church and of the communion of all men with each other. Moreover, Vatican II calls attention to specific sign functions of the religious community. It is to bear witness before the whole church, to reliving of the mystery of Christ’s life, to values which transcend the Earthly, to man’s perfect fulfillment in a life beyond this life.

Furthermore, the religious, then, is a sign of God and of man. It is previously stated that the meaning of God and the meaning of man are both communitarian. To live in the likeness of God, to re-present the life of the God-man (Christ), this is the challenge of a living community. For God is community and the more fully a man lives in community, the more he lives as God lives. The meaning of man is also communitarian. Man’s need for others is secured in a community of love, and this is what a religious community must signify, transcend love of men for each other, a love that goes beyond the natural and reaches up to the Triune God.

In summary, the religious community exists at the point of encounter between two great lines of force and destiny which are the Church and the world. The religious community is being called out of the total human community from which it arises and in whose service it acts and its being is a response, deep and creative to the call of the Word of God. The religious community sums up, symbolizes and it is an icon of the human community and of the Church. Preeminently, the spirit of every religious community must be the spirit of the Church. It is in this way that religious life is a necessary part of the Church. Religious congregations are necessary in terms of their functions as sign of community: the total self-giving of the divine life, the faith, hope and love of men, the ultimate fulfillment of man’s desires for perfect love in the community of Heaven. If we look at fullness of the Church, then religious life is necessary. For religious are the sign of the very flowering of the community. As long as they remain unborn, the community is incomplete.

By Br. Morris, Nairobi.

ARE THESE EVENTS? Renewal of Vows, Celebration of the First Anniversary of the Servant Heroes of God in Hospitality

When things happen in life, in the very existence of God's magnificent creatures, particularly humanity – the **IMAGO DEI** of God, one term to express it is “EVENTS”. What are events? One may ask. Is it cool bath that I immersed in it every day, twice or thrice a day? Is it my going to the market or my job side or my farm every day? Is it my listening to good music with the lyrics sinking deep down and overwhelming the rest my being? Is it my daily participation in the liturgical and devotional actions of the church? Is it my...? These are some of the things one may term as events. Are they good? Are they bad? Or better still, are they worst? What is an event? In a very simple term an event or events are happenings, remarkable happenings. However; for it to be one that is remarkable, it needs to have a certain degree of historicity in it. One that will call to memory even in the present, even as other events unfolds.

Let's take a brief look at the elected people of the Lord (the Israelites) and we can better understand the depths of events and how they call us to memory. In the life of the chosen people, event is **PROMISE, REDEEMING, RECALLING, LITURGY**. The promises are all the initiative of God, the redeeming nature or fulfillment is nothing other than God's. Nonetheless; the recalling and liturgical nature are the peoples **RECONNAISSANCE** and **RESPONSE** to the promise and its redemption. This is how Israel would live events-happenings. An adage goes thus “that gratitude is a child of memory”. It is only with remarkable events that such child (gratitude) reaches maturity. In the liberation account from Egypt as recounted by the second book of the Pentateuch (cf Ex. 5-14) so many things happened such as the triumphant crossing of the red sea on dry ground. When the Elected people had finally crossed the red sea with God's mighty hand dividing it into two, the people could not comprehend such magnificent deeds of their God; hence Moses in all gratitude in total recalling of such events led the people into joyous songs with chants, tambourines, harps, and the different musical instruments (cf. Ex.15:1ff). It is in this same line that the Psalmist in thanksgiving and praises would proclaim and call the people in their liturgical gatherings to give thanks and praises to the Lord, reason being; his mercies endured forever (cf. Ps. 136).

The New Testament too presents the same understanding of events as Promise, redeeming, recalling, and liturgy. This is seen in the life of our Blessed mother Mary, as expressed in her song of the Magnificat when she pays an intimate visit to her beloved cousin Elizabeth (cf. Lk 1: 46-56). Again, Zacharia's promise is one that cannot be overlooked when it comes to the understanding of why events are life's remarkable happenings.

It is in this light that on the 15th August, 2015, Br. Terrence T. Tita, renewed his vows in the Chapel of the Brothers here at the Provincial curia in Accra, Ghana. After the homily of the mass of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, presided by Fr. Peter Laast CSSp, the Provincial Superior of the St. Augustine Province of Africa Rev. Bro. Bartholomew Kamara called on Br. Terrence and asked him if he wanted to renew. To this Question Br. Terrence answered YES,

then knelt with right hand placed on the constitutions pronounced the formula of renewal and signed it.

On the 16th of August, 2015, here at the provincial curia, we recalled our brothers and sisters who died in Liberia and Sierra Leone as a result of the Ebola virus. In their different dates which they died, we recalled the first anniversary of their call in to the company of saints. Understanding events, by this time last year we were all mourning and weeping. But thanks to our faith, we believe that they have shed their blood for the sake of the same faith that you and I share and profess. The celebration began with the Eucharistic celebration which was presided by Br. John Oppong, and with active participation from the Brothers from Koforidua , Accra, and Asafo communities. The Hospitaller Sisters, the Spanish Ambassador, and friends and co-workers. In his homily, Br. John reminded all that we are celebrating life. That is the life of our brothers and sisters. That seemingly it can be seen that their passing on was something tragic, but with faith in Jesus Christ who calls us to eternal life in Him by the self-offering of his body and blood these brothers and sisters of ours have lived life to the full and share in the eternal life in Christ. Before the final Blessing, the Provincial superior was called upon to say some few words in which he explained his experiences in his visits to Liberia and Sierra Leone which he made around December last year when the infection rates were still very high. After the mass all were invited by the MC Br. Patrick Bung for some photos after which they all share a common meal as a sign communion with these brothers and sisters of ours whom we firmly believe are enjoy eternal communion with Christ.

These are all events, remarkable ones that we celebrate. Recalling them have moved us into a liturgical gathering were we chant and celebrate life in its fullness because of the promise of God in Christ. It is history, but remarkable one that we celebrate, that we have recalled and will continue to recall, hence will lead us into the chanting of songs of thanksgiving to God for a life well lived with the people he had entrusted on these our brothers and sisters who shares the eternal banquet. Therefore, are events **BAD**? Or Are they **GOOD**? Or are they **WORST**? Each of us can provide an answer. But one thing is sure, looking at the Psalms which are the recalling of events, we have those of thanksgiving, those of praises, those of supplication and those of petitions. These, mark events in the life of the Israelites. Therefore, one big question **HOW DO I JUDGE EVENTS AS THE IMAGO DIE OF GOD, AS A CHRISTIAN?**

**TERRENCE. T. TITA, OH
ACCRA.**

INFORMATION

1. 15th August 2015 Institution of the Ministries of Lector and Acolyte of Brother Jacob Tambe K.
2. The Vice Province Togo-Benin officially announced to support our Province with three brothers following an appeal made by the Definitory this year in March.
3. 29th August, 2015 Rev Br. Linus Tangu will celebrate 25 years as a religious in Batibo.
4. Also this month official appointment of Rev. Br. Benard BENDA as superior of Monrovia community.
5. Official opening of the new clinic at Amrahia Accra October 14th 2015 during the closure of the General Canonical Visit.