

# White Fathers - White Sisters



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Alistair Malloy - pages 5 & 7.

Bill Turnbull WF - pages 23 & 24.

Centre Spread - An evening scene on Lake Bangweulu at Lubwe.

**WHITE FATHERS**

Registered Charity No. 233302

**ENGLAND AND WALES**  
129 Lichfield Road,  
Sutton Coldfield,  
West Midlands, B74 2SA  
Tel: 0121 308 0226  
Fax: 0121 323 2476  
E-mail:  
suttonlink@dial.pipex.com

**SCOTLAND**  
9 Milrig Road,  
Rutherglen,  
Glasgow, G73 2NG  
Tel: 0141 613 0209  
Fax: 0141 647 5321  
E-mail:  
wfscotland@care4free.net

**WHITE SISTERS**

Registered Charity No. 228983

**ENGLAND, WALES AND SCOTLAND**  
5 Charlbury Grove,  
Ealing,  
London, W5 2DY  
Tel: 020 8997 7912

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Any further enquiries concerning the magazine should be addressed to:

The Editor, The White Fathers, 129, Lichfield Road, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands, England. B74 2SA.



**EDITORIAL**

The first part of this issue concentrates on Zambia. There are three articles: '*Zambia - Looking Back*' by Alistair Malloy, '*On the Front Line: Zambia Indebted for her Anti-Apartheid Stance*', and '*The Land Issue in Zambia and Beyond*' by Fr. Jean-Luc Gouiller W.F. Together with the Editor's Notes these articles give a good idea of the challenges which face the country, from the poverty experienced by the majority of the population to the political uncertainty. Zambia ended 2001 in the turmoil caused by the Elections, let us hope that it can build upon the strengths it has and move forward.

Sr. Mary Lampard W.S. tells some of the history of the White Sisters in '*Our First African Sister*'. Links with the past, and the first African White Sister, are made with Sabine Dakouo and their mutual country of origin Mali.

In the '*Home and Away*' section we make links with various parts of Africa. '*Malawi After the 1999 Elections*' relates more about the situation in Malawi. This article gives more background to the last issue. We also see how people benefit from the work of the White Sisters in Ghana and Ethiopia.

We would like to express our thanks to ACTSA (Action for Southern Africa) for allowing us to reproduce the challenging article '*On the Front Line: Zambia Indebted for her Anti-Apartheid Stance*'.

suttonlink@dial.pipex.com    <http://www.thewhitefathers.org.uk>    wfscotland@care4free.net

**To Help Our Missionary Work  
Please Remember Us In Your Will**

*Where there's a will, there's a way*

**White Fathers**

"I give to the **Society of Missionaries of Africa (White Fathers)** the sum of ..... free of duty, and I declare that the receipt of the Father Provincial of the Society in Great Britain, who now resides at 42 Stormont Road, Highgate, London, N6 4NP, shall be a good discharge."

White Fathers' Registered Charity No. 233302

**White Sisters**

"I give to the **Missionary Sisters of our Lady of Africa (White Sisters)** the sum of ..... free of duty, and I declare that the receipt of the Sister Provincial of the Congregation in Great Britain, who now resides at 25 Waldemar Avenue, Ealing, London, W13 9PZ, shall be a good discharge."

White Sisters' Registered Charity No. 228983

# Zambia - Looking Back

By Alistair Malloy

In the following pages Alistair Malloy reflects on the time he spent as a lay missionary with the Volunteer Missionary Movement (VMM) in Zambia. The VMM is an organisation which has sent over 1,600 people to share their lives and skills with the peoples of Africa. Alistair Malloy is the Scottish Co-ordinator for the VMM and works in their Glasgow Office. The VMM also have offices in Dublin and Liverpool.

For years I had thought about going overseas to do something 'worthwhile'. When the Volunteer Missionary Movement said that they had a project for me in the Zambian bush I was over the moon - it was really going to happen!

After some months of preparing, including a three-week intensive course, I wound up my career at home and set off for a new life in Zambia ... which was where exactly? I didn't know any Africans and the reality set in as the plane approached Lusaka Airport. As I looked out of the window I could see lots of people walking, some carrying loads on their heads and then I realised - I'm going to have to talk with these people! I found it hard enough speaking with English folk with my broad Scottish accent!

Before I arrived, I had no real idea about Africa, only notions and pre-conceptions gathered from the TV and newspapers. How wide of the mark they were! Zambia was not a place full of suffering and despair. And I never saw, or even heard of a single violent situation in all my time there. It was a very welcoming place, peaceful and moving along at a much slower pace of life than back home in Scotland.

The first few days lasted years and the next two years, days. Slowly, I got to know every face and every name in the school, (it was a small school!) and I began to adapt to village

life, albeit in an academic environment, and slowly my eyes opened to the graces of this life that exist in some of the most deprived parts of our planet, yet rarely seem to surface in my home town. The respect that is shown - respect for elders, people in positions of responsibility - teachers, parents, priests, grandparents. Why, even the new Chemistry and Maths teacher!

The local people expressed their gratitude that I had chosen to come and live in their community which they saw as a 'sacrifice' on my part. Every time I was introduced to someone new "this is Mr Malloy, he has come from Scotland and is a teacher at the school", the reply to me would be "thank you, sir".

One of the first things to impress upon me was peoples' relationship with God - their closeness to God - their faith seemed to leap out at every opportunity - when preparing to eat, when working, singing, dancing, and praying - God seemed to permeate their whole lives. Beautiful! Their inspiration inspired me, and also made me feel rather silly in being conservative with my own faith.

My part of Zambia, the rural north, was a place where children grow up with innocence and without commercialism and spend their free time laughing and playing with each other, in a seemingly endless, contented state. Sharing in stories, traditional music and dance, local beer and cuisine are some of the treasures of community life away from the big cities. Be it family, extended family or local community, there is always someone there for advice or support. Traditional values are not, as yet, up for ransom in this rural part of the world.

The villagers always had time to talk or discuss matters - not in a lazy way, but in a

'willing to give their time unselfishly' way. Almost everyone I knew rose around 4am to start farming their small patch of land in preparation for the harvest or the planting. People worked very hard, even the little ones, who had chores to do in the morning, like sweeping up or fetching water, before running off to school.

The missionaries I encountered were a most powerful witness to God's love - they were enduring poverty, hardship, service and obedience in their self-sacrifice and in their serving.

The vibrancy of the Catholic Church in Zambia can be part-attributed to the never-ending service of the missionaries, who, as well as bringing the gospel message to people, also involve themselves in very direct, practical ways in the daily lives of their communities, like teaching, providing health care and passing on skills.

It was a wonderful sight to see a White Father in the bush (and I *mean* bush!) on a motorbike heading to almost inaccessible villages to celebrate Mass and deliver medicines. It was a wonderful sight to see a White Father in a pickup bringing promised and much needed fertiliser or tools to a community. These men just go about God's business quietly and relentlessly.

The visible Faith - people would walk for hours to attend Mass, maybe available only once a month, or less. Almost all of the rural parishes, schools and clinics were set up by the missionaries. Most are now locally run.

After some months I finally started to recognise the poverty that was all around me. Not

starvation, but hunger and malnutrition. Not no schools and no clinics, but few schools, few books, few medicines. Generally, the lack of choice and the lack of voice to do anything about it.

The world's economics favour rich nations, they are a great injustice to the poor. From afar, Zambians are being forced to remain poor.

In Zambia, when only one in fifty children finishes their schooling, there can be little hope for alleviating poverty in the near future.

In my last few weeks there, I tried to make sense of my time in Africa.

I left Zambia happy. Happy in the realisation that the people I knew were close to God, in every sense. Their openly expressed faith was a joy to witness, a joy to be part of, and despite not having material comforts, or even



The VMM may be contacted on the following phone numbers: England: 0151 291 3438  
Scotland: 0141 554 1554 Ireland: 01 837 6565. The e-mail address is [vmmeurgo@iol.ie](mailto:vmmeurgo@iol.ie)  
and their web site is [www.vmm.cjb.net](http://www.vmm.cjb.net)



Picture above: Alistair at Lubushi

sufficient basic human needs, they had that which is most precious - their Faith.

I had an emotional send-off and landed back home in a daze which lasted three or more months. Settling back in at home was a bumpy ride and needed to be taken slowly. I didn't want to let Africa go. Many returned volunteers don't. Many stay in touch, or are involved in some way, continuing to be a missionary at home, working for a fairer world. Campaigning against Third World debt and unfair trade rules is a start to a route out of poverty. I still keep in touch, and involved,

as an employee of VMM, preparing the next generation of volunteers who have accepted the privilege and challenge of sharing their lives and skills with others less fortunate.

I thank God for those years where I lived out the dream, pray that it continues and hope that others get a chance to experience it for themselves.

I would also like to thank the missionary Fathers, Brothers and Sisters in Zambia who made me feel very welcome in their communities whenever I turned up unannounced in need of advice, support or just a good feed.

## On the Front Line: Zambia Indebted for Her Anti-Apartheid Stance

Zambia played a leading role in the struggle against apartheid-South Africa, and against minority racist rule in other countries in the Southern African region. Support for the liberation movements cost Zambia dearly in economic and human terms. To meet these costs Zambia borrowed heavily, and is now one of the poorest countries in the world, crippled by debt. Life expectancy and living standards are falling, and health and education services are in crisis.

While full of praise, the international community has failed to acknowledge or compensate

Zambia for the huge costs of her brave stance against racist regimes. Despite having qualified for debt relief in 2000, Zambia is still expected to spend up to a quarter of her annual budget on repaying rich creditors.

### STANDING UP TO APARTHEID

Since gaining independence from Britain in 1964, Zambia played a proud part in supporting the struggle to end racist rule in South Africa, Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), South West Africa (now Namibia) and Portuguese Mozambique and Angola. Zambia provided a secure base for most of the liberation movements of the

region, and supported them morally, politically, materially and financially.

The Zambian President Kenneth Kaunda used every opportunity to argue on the international stage for an end to apartheid. Lusaka hosted many liberation movements of the region and Kaunda even gave refuge to exiled liberation leaders at State House. [01]

QUOTE: "When on freedom day we count the heroes of our struggle, the city of Lusaka would rank amongst our most gallant heroes. Because of the importance of this city in the freedom struggle of the people in South Africa and elsewhere, it no longer belongs to Zambia alone. It belongs to our continent as a whole." - Nelson Mandela, visiting Lusaka, Zambia, in 1990.

### PAYING THE PRICE

In August 1999 the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission reported that, "The majority of the victims of the South African government's attempts to maintain itself in power were outside of South Africa. Tens of thousands of people in the region died as a direct or indirect result of the South African government's aggressive intent towards its neighbours. The lives and livelihoods of hundreds of thousands of others were disrupted by the systematic targeting of infrastructure in some of the poorest nations of Africa."

FACT: From 1964 - 1990 there were up to 100,000 war-related deaths in Zambia.

Zambia's efforts, while helping free the world of a great scourge, had immense detrimental effects on her own development. The human and humanitarian costs to Zambia's stand against apartheid were vast. Rhodesia, Portuguese forces, and South Africa made repeated raids against Zambia, systematically destroying her infrastructure and her people. From 1965 until 1989 villages and people

*APARTHEID DEBT* - This briefing has been produced by Jubilee-Zambia and ACTSA as a member of ENIASA [August, 2001]. It is based on 'Zambia Against Apartheid: A Case on Apartheid-Caused Debt' written by Gabriel C Banda for ACTSA and the Zambian Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection. The full report is available from ACTSA or Jubilee-Zambia at the addresses below.

As a campaign movement, Jubilee-Zambia has been demanding the total cancellation of Zambia's foreign debt. It started in 1998 through a network of various civil society organisations including trade unions, student groups, academic institutions, business and commercial associations, women's groups and the church. Since its inception, Jubilee-Zambia has focused on raising local, national and international attention on the debt problem that Zambia is facing by looking at the historical, economical, social and cultural aspects of the crisis.

ENIASA is the network of organisations within the European Union working to promote international solidarity with Southern Africa. ENIASA, like most of its 16 member organisations including ACTSA, was born out of the anti-apartheid movement and since 1995 has worked in support of peace, democracy and development in Southern Africa.

European Network for Information and Action on Southern Africa (ENIASA), C/o Action for Southern Africa, 28 Penton Street, London, N1 9SA. Web: <http://www.eniasa.org/>. This Briefing may be found at [http://www.actsa.org/debt\\_zambia.htm](http://www.actsa.org/debt_zambia.htm) and publications at <http://www.actsa.org/publications.html>.



Jubilee-Zambia Campaign, Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection, PO Box: 37774, Lusaka, Zambia. Web: <http://www.jctr.org.zm/>. Also see: Jubilee 2000 South Africa - <http://www.aidc.org.za/j2000>.

Editor's Note 01 Kenneth David Kaunda, of the United National Independence Party (UNIP), became Prime Minister of Northern Rhodesia in the elections of January, 1963. On Independence, the 24th. October, 1964, the country was renamed Zambia and Kenneth Kaunda became its President. He remained in office for 27 years until the first multiparty elections held on the 31st. October, 1991, when Frederick Chiluba, and the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD) defeated UNIP. Chiluba became President on the 2nd. November, 1991. The 'Front Line States' (FLS) was a political alliance of Angola, Botswana, Mozambique, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The FLS opposed apartheid and colonialism and was coordinated in the 'Lusaka Manifesto' of 1969, which was later adopted by the OAU. Picture above: From left to right - Luc Bouisset, a Canadian White Father Associate teaching at Lubushi, Fr. Martin Grenier W.F., who is now in India, and Alistair



suspected of aiding freedom fighters were attacked, with many losing their lives. Landmines planted by the racist regimes contributed to the death toll, and thousands of Zambians were injured.

The struggle against racist regimes in Southern Africa led to displacement and the creation of refugees in the region and beyond. Zambians from the border areas were particularly affected, having to flee their homes, withstand increased hardship, and create new lives elsewhere in the country.

From the 1960s until the late 1980s Zambia received thousands of refugees fleeing racist conflict in the region and by the mid-1980s was estimated to be hosting 300,000 refugees. Zambia lived up to her obligation to support these refugees, both morally and materially, by diverting scarce resources to ensure their protection. [02]

The economic costs of Zambia's opposition to apartheid were devastating. At independence in 1964, Zambia had been one of the most prosperous nations in sub-Saharan Africa, with abundant natural and mineral resources. But her trade was closely linked with Rhodesia, South Africa, and Portuguese Angola and Mozambique. When Zambia implemented sanctions against these racist regimes, and experienced counter-sanctions from them, the losses for her economy were immense. [03]

Zambia had to disengage from her former trading and economic partners, and quickly es-

tablish alternative links. This had both immediate and long-term effects, and the trade losses Zambia suffered amounted to billions of dollars. New trade routes had to be built so that imports and exports could be re-routed. Initially oil imports and copper exports were airlifted through Tanzania at great expense. Later Zambia built a road, railway and oil pipeline to distant Dar es Salaam in Tanzania, to avoid transporting goods through Rhodesia to Mozambican and South African ports. [04]

Zambia simultaneously enhanced her own capacity to fulfil some of her needs and decrease her dependence on racist regimes. She increased her national capacity in coal, petroleum and electricity by opening coal mines and building power stations. She invested heavily in other projects to strengthen the economy against apartheid pressure, investing in the support of food and farm production and establishing factories and sugar estates.

**FACT: Zambia's stance against apartheid is estimated to have cost over US\$19 billion.**

Zambia also had to spend heavily to carry out extensive repairs to infrastructure damaged in raids, and to fund the extra military and defence expenditure required to confront apartheid. As Lt Gen Benjamin Mibenge asserted, "Our economic development was stunted because resources which we should otherwise have spent on development had to go into defending ourselves."

**QUOTE: "The cost was enormous in terms of life which was lost by those who were bombed**

*Editor's Notes* 02 Zambia has more than 250,000 refugees, 260,000 (IRIN 06/11/2001), the largest number in Southern Africa. They have mainly fled from the civil wars in Angola and the Democratic Republic of Congo. The Government believes that about 130,000 of the refugees are living throughout Zambia and do not have identification particulars. Refugees continue to arrive in Western Province from Angola. In October, 2001, the number increased from an average of a thousand a month to 3,500 in a few days. (IRIN 08 & 22/10/2001 and 02/11/2001)

03 At independence everything boded well as Zambia was the third largest copper producing country, after the United States and the Soviet Union, and potentially one of Africa's richest countries. Zambia's economy mainly relied on its mineral resources, especially on copper, and other resources were developed. Mining activities still include coal, cobalt, copper, gems (amethyst, aquamarines, diamond, emeralds, and tourmalines), gold, lead, silver, and zinc. Zambia is now the world's fourth largest copper producing country and has 6% of the world's copper reserves. Copper prices collapsed in 1975, but still accounted for half of Zambia's export earnings in the early 1990s - the output was 260,000mt. in 1999. Relying so much on copper still brings its problems. In mid-November, 2001, the London-based *Economist*



*Intelligence Unit (EIU)* said that: 'We (the EIU) have lowered our forecast of real GDP (gross domestic product) growth in 2002 to 4.3% despite increased mining output, because of weak copper demand and output,' said the EIU. 'The rate of real GDP growth is forecast to pick up to 4.6% in 2003.' (IRIN 14/11/2001)



{and} those who were maimed by landmines along the border." - General Kingsley Chinkuli, Former Zambia Army and Zambia National Defence Force Commander.

**STILL PAYING THE PRICE ...**

Zambia used her own resources to finance much of her support for the liberation struggles. Without these extra costs the advances made since independence would have been sustained much longer. In addition, Zambia had to borrow heavily to meet her economic and defence needs, pushing her into debt. Although some financial support came as grants, many loans were given as part of international 'solidarity'. These loans and other have nevertheless become a great burden.

04 During this time Zambia also used to transport copper by road through Malawi to link with the railway lines through Mozambique to the ports of Nacala and Maputo. This was until the lines were close by RENAMO actions during the civil war and the TAZARA (Tanzania-Zambia Railway Authority) railway was built.

The effects of Zambia's heroic contribution to the anti-apartheid cause are still felt today. Landmines and bombs are still killing and maiming people. This has made it impossible to redevelop some border areas, and has prevented the return of displaced people. Until now, some local people remain unsettled.

**FACT: Zambia's apartheid-caused debt is estimated to be US\$5.34 billion**

Worst of all, the debts incurred over the period when Zambia was devoting herself to the liberation struggle are now draining her coffers and stifling development. In a country where more than four-fifths of the population live below the poverty line, and where the AIDS epidemic has reached massive proportions, debt payments swallow up to a quarter of the national budget. [05]



## NEW DEBT DEAL NEEDED IN ZAMBIA:

- \* One in five children never reaches their fifth birthday.
- \* One in three primary-aged children is not in school.
- \* Life expectancy is 37 years and falling.
- \* 13% of Zambian children are orphans, the highest proportion in the world.
- \* In the last 10 years all poverty and development indicators have worsened

Much of Zambia's debt was incurred due to the costs of the struggle against racist regimes in Southern Africa. Zambia is one of the poorest countries in sub-Saharan Africa, and in recent years she has been unable to repay the amount the creditors demand. She has used aid money to pay debts, and borrowed further to pay off old loans. Zambia's future debt repayments will still be more than she currently spends on health and education combined. Although the G7 richest countries have all promised to cancel 100% of Zambia's debts, her greatest debts will continue to be to the IMF and the World Bank.

**FACT:** The IMF and World Bank will jointly collect US\$ 89 million in 2001, more than 50% of the total debt payments that Zambia will make.

In December 2000, Zambia finally qualified for debt relief under the World Bank and IMF's 'Heavily Indebted Poor Countries' (HIPC) scheme, first launched in 1996. Zambia fulfilled most of the conditions for getting debt relief under HIPC, including implementing

policies which actually hurt the poorest people, such as removing food subsidies, slashing health and education budgets, and privatising national assets including the copper mines.

When the IMF board met in December 2000 to discuss Zambia's debt, they were faced with an embarrassing problem. If they applied the usual HIPC rules, Zambia would face a sudden sharp rise in debt payments on receiving debt relief. This was because payments had become due on an IMF loan of US\$2.2 billion that Zambia received in 1992/3 - a loan given to help repay old debts. So the IMF rewrote its own rules to allow greater 'front-loading' of Zambia's debt relief. This means that more debt will be cancelled earlier, but future payments will rise to compensate and thus be even less sustainable. [06]

### DEBT REPAYMENTS BEFORE AND AFTER HIPC 'RELIEF'

Zambia's average annual repayments

- \* 1998-1999 = US\$141.5 million
- \* 2001-2005 = US\$174 million

Even after receiving debt relief, Zambia will pay on average US\$174 million a year to creditors. That's US\$17 for every man, woman and child in Zambia. The total budget for spending on health and education in 2000 was US\$11 per person.

### THE CAMPAIGN

Civil society groups and the Zambian government are demanding 100% debt cancellation. Zambia wants to spend its scarce resources

fighting poverty, tackling the AIDS crisis and addressing genuine development needs, instead of servicing rich country creditors. The country's biggest creditors, the IMF and World Bank, have ignored this call. The HIPC scheme has failed to solve Zambia's debt crisis, and Zambia's people are still paying the price for their fight against apartheid.

The European Network for Information and Action on Southern Africa (ENIASA) joins with campaigners in Zambia in demanding that the costs of Zambia's front line stand against apartheid are acknowledged.

### WE DEMAND THAT EUROPEAN GOVERNMENTS

- \* immediately cancel Zambia's debts to them.
- \* use their influence on the boards of the IMF and World Bank to press for 100% cancellation of Zambia's debt.

QUOTE: "Our incurring debt has not primarily been our fault and hence 'forgiveness' is not what we are seeking but justice" - Zambian Church leaders, August 1998.

QUOTE: "It will be public opinion and public outrage that will bring about change to

cancel the debt" - Kenneth Kaunda, first President of Zambia.

## The Land Issue in Zambia and Beyond

By Fr. Jean-Luc Gouiller W.F.

I was born in the Centre East of France at the foot of the first hills of the Jura Mountains, on a small farm which my parents rented on a tenancy agreement from a very understanding landowner of the French provincial nobility living in Paris. All the same, we loved the land we lived on and cultivated. I believe that my rural background and our situation of tenants had prepared me to be sensitive to the situation of land tenure in Zambia. I realised it as soon as I arrived in Eastern Zambia, in 1966. It would however take me time before I could have a reasonably clear grasp of the

land tenure systems in the newly independent Zambia.

### SITUATION AT THE TIME OF INDEPENDENCE, IN 1964

Basically, at the time of Independence, in 1964, there were three categories of land in Zambia: the Reserves, Trust Land and State Land (formerly Crown Land). The land in the Reserves was for the Natives and covered about 24% of the country. Trust Land consisted of large tracts of good and less good land - nearly 70% of the country - and was kept aside *in trust* for the future needs of the local population.

*Editor's Notes 05 In October, 2001, the Government launched a new range of antiretroviral drugs which are made in India. It is estimated that 20% of the population, two million people, are infected by HIV/AIDS. (IRIN 11/10/2001)*  
*06 Zambia's creditors granted US\$3.8bn. as debt relief under the HIPC initiative. Without HIPC terms Zambia's debt servicing would be US\$420m. for 2001. The Government estimates that payments will be US\$158m., but debt campaigners think the figure to be about US\$170m.. According to OXFAM this means spending three times the amount that is spent on primary education. Under HIPC terms the 'additional resources' are to be used as part of a poverty reduction plan. A local HIPC monitoring team is supposed to witness disbursements and provide accountability, but its role is not clearly defined. Jubilee-Zambia has alleged that the Finance Ministry officials take the group to be a 'rubber stamp'. Government and the debt campaigners have different priorities and the latter are concerned about the lack of transparency and that HIPC savings may be squandered. According to the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) external debt is expected to rise to about US\$5.96bn. in 2002 and US\$6bn. in 2003, and that 'the debt-servicing ratio will remain high at 36.4% in 2002 and 37.1% in 2003, as Zambia will be repaying a recent International Monetary Fund (IMF) loan.' (IRIN 14/11/2001)*

This article appeared in the 'Petit Echo' no. 926 of October, 2001  
Picture above: Kenneth Kaunda during the time of his Presidency

State Land was for settlers involved in large scale commercial farming. It covered about 6% of the country. The colonial companies and settlers of the past would have liked much more land to be put aside as Crown Land. But not as many settlers had arrived as in Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) or South Africa for instance, and some colonial administrators had been opposed to increasing the amount of Crown Land. [01]

At the time of Independence, Reserves were clearly under the traditional - or customary - land tenure system. It had its own laws, most of them unwritten for a long time but not less real. Little by little some parts of the Trust Land had gone back to the local population and at the same time gone under the traditional authorities, while some other parts were classified as forest reserves, national parks, game management areas, agricultural settlement schemes for local indigenous farmers, etc. As for State Land, it was either under a *leasehold* type of tenure (renting) or under *freehold* with its variations, following written laws which had been brought by the British colonial governors and which had their origin in English feudalism. People who had some land on a freehold type of tenure were considered as real *owners* of their land. As regards the customary land tenure system it is not easy to define its origin. To say for

instance that it is *communal* is a bit simplistic. Apart from probably a very few exceptions, traditional chiefs are not the *owners* of the land but guardians or, to use a modern word, *trustees*. [02]

### CHANGES IN 1975

An important change concerning land tenure in Zambia happened in 1975. Because of some land scandals, the Government of Dr. Kenneth Kaunda announced the suppression of the freehold type of tenure still in force for State Land and its conversion into statutory *leasehold* covenants. The new measures were embodied into an adhoc *Land Act*. This meant that, from then on, nobody in Zambia could *own* land in the real sense of the term. Even those on State Land could only *hold* it on *lease* (rent), usually for 99 years. The new Act clearly stated also that bare, undeveloped, land would cease to have value. These new measures were very much in line with the principles of Kaunda's *Humanism*, themselves inspired by traditional culture, socialism and biblical values.

However these new measures of the 1975 Act did not eliminate problems. They even reappeared in strength when the Zambian copper gave less income to the country and when it became clear that agriculture would have to produce more of the national income. [03]

*Editor's Notes 01 Today Zambia still suffers from the past - both colonial and post/neo-colonial - and links with other countries in Southern Africa, such as when between 1891 and 1923 Zambia was administered by the South Africa Company. Part of the suffering may be blamed upon the colonial past when the British wanted to continue their rule by establishing an economic/country 'Federation of Rhodesia' in 1953. The 'Federation' was between Northern Rhodesia (Zambia), Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) and Nyasaland (Malawi) and at a time when some West African countries were already gaining independence. Because of Zambia's mineral wealth it attracted many expatriates who exploited the resources. After much opposition, especially from Zambia and Malawi, the 'Federation' under the government of Lord Malvern and Sir Roy Welensky, and the control of the white minority, was eventually dissolved in 1963. Despite this, there has always been migration of people between the countries, looking for land, work and to make a living.*

*02 - Population: 7,818,447 (1990 census), 9,770,199 (2001 est.). Population density of 34 persons per sq.mi. (13 per sq.kn.). Age structure: 0-14 years 47.36% (male 2,324,128, female 2,303,349); 15-64 years 50.14% (male 2,433,250, female 2,465,747); 65 years and over 2.5% (male 105,694, female 138,031).\**

*Birth rate: 41.46 births/1,000 population.\**

*Death rate: 21.97 deaths/1,000 population.\**

*Infant mortality rate: 90.89 deaths/1,000 live births.\**

*Life expectancy at birth: total population 37.29 years (male 37.06 years, female 37.53 years).\**

*Main Ethnic Groups and Languages: There are about 70 indigenous ethnic groups and languages they include: Bemba, Kaonde, Lozi, Lunda, Luvale, Ngoni, Nyanja, and Tonga.*

*Religions: Christian 50%-75%, Muslim and Hindu 24%-49%, indigenous beliefs 1%.*

### A NEW GOVERNMENT IN 1990

The wind of change came around 1990, with the coming of multiparty democracy, the fall of communism and socialist systems, and, in Zambia, a new Government. The new Zambian Government decided to move away from State centralisation. Liberalisation and privatisation would be fully implemented. New economic

policies, directed by international institutions (IMF, World Bank ...) became the norm and globalisation a reality. According to these new policies, land has simply become a *commodity* among others in the market- and profit-orientated economy, a *thing* to be bought and to be used for production and profit. The call for *investors* from outside makes it more obvious still. It

*Editor's Note 03 - The Economy - Agriculture: Some 75% of the working population is engaged in agriculture, mainly subsistence farming. Despite this agricultural is not fully developed and results in food shortages, especially when the weather varies. The main produce are cassava (tapioca), cattle, coffee, cotton, eggs, flowers, goats, groundnuts (peanuts), hides, maize (the staple food), milk, millet, pigs, poultry, rice, sorghum, soya beans, sugarcane, sunflower seeds, sweet potatoes, tobacco, vegetables, and wheat. Towards the end of 2001 the World Food Programme (WFP) estimated that 'chronic malnutrition' was already at 60%, up from 41% in 1991. WFP said that US\$18m. in food aid would be needed to feed 1.3m. people between December, 2001, and March, 2002. The main cause for this is the reduced harvests which have been experienced in southern Africa. This has the knock on effect of raised maize prices, which are beyond the reach of many of the country's population, and a resultant fewer meals being eaten, and belongings being sold to buy food. (IRIN 16/11/2001)*

*Main industries: chemicals, construction, copper mining and processing, fertilizer, food processing and beverages, metals and metal products, textiles, and vehicle assembly.*

*Exports: US\$928m. (f.o.b.) which include cobalt, copper, electricity, lead, tobacco, zinc. They go to: Japan, Saudi Arabia, India, Thailand, South Africa, US, Malaysia.\**

*Imports: US\$1.05bn. (f.o.b.) which include cereals, chemicals and related products, clothing, electricity, fertilizer; foodstuffs, fuels, machinery, petroleum and petroleum products, and transportation equipment. They come from: South Africa 48%, Saudi Arabia, UK, Zimbabwe.\**

*GDP: purchasing power parity US\$8.5bn.; real growth rate: 4%; per capita purchasing power parity - US\$880.\**

*GDP composition by sector: agriculture 18%, industry 27%, services 55%. (1999 est.)*

*GDP: US\$3.8bn. (US\$204 per head). The annual growth is 2% and inflation is around 43.9%.*

*\* = 2001 estimate. Picture above: Repairing the granary before the harvest*

creates a supply-and-demand offer system which fosters value for land and leads easily to speculation and corruption. It aims at getting the best land for the intended ventures, to the detriment of those who live on it and by it. Concern for people comes second. [04]

Though the new Lands Act re-stated that all land in Zambia was vested in the President of the country, the Government had to re-assert the role of customary authorities. According to the Act, any land holder can now get title-deeds. However only the Ministry of Lands can issue these title-deeds. Another new element is that foreign investors can now easily apply for land. With this new Lands Act and consequent policies, Zambian family farming, which still produces the bulk of the food needed in Zambia, is on the losing side, and poverty is increasing in villages. [05]

*Editor's Notes 04* In a statement read by Lawrence Clarke, the *World Bank* representative, Zambia's donors told the Government that 'Improved governance is one of the key elements for poverty reduction, because it helps to improve the functioning of public institutions'. The statement said that 'bad governance, lack of economic growth, low incomes, severe disease and huge external debt burden were cited as some of the root causes of poverty in Zambia' and that the real incomes in Zambia were at their worst since independence in 1964, while earnings in the informal sector 'are meagre and unsustainable'. (IRIN 17/10/2001)

In the run up to the elections, October, 2001, President Chiluba gave the reaction of many Zambians to the *IMF* and *World Bank* when he told a crowd that the opposition is a puppet of Western donors. "The donors want to put in a puppet government. Defend the sovereignty of the country. We should not permit a foreigner to run this country." (IRIN 01/10/2001) He later said "We will welcome observers and not discoverers. Zambia is already discovered," Chiluba was quoted as saying. "We need no wise men from the east or the west to tell us what system of government is suitable for Zambians." (IRIN 25/10/2001)

05 Poverty continues to be a major problem in Zambia. The Zambian Government has launched the *Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP)* which is a joint four-year poverty eradication programme with the *World Bank* and the *IMF*, together with input from local *civil society*. The Government estimates that 73% of Zambians, mainly in rural areas, were 'poverty-stricken and had no access to basic commodities such as clean water and sanitation'. They live on less than one US dollar a day. By following the *PRSP* it is hoped that poverty will be wiped out in 10 years. (IRIN 16 & 17/10/2001)

The Catholic Church called on the Government 'to let poverty alleviation strategies guide the way it spends money' when preparing the 2002 budget. On the 6th. November, 2001, the *Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (CCJP)* said in a statement: 'While we support Government's efforts in development, we challenge it to use the *Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP)* as a guide line in this year's budget. ... 'The *CCJP* recommends that the budget be rural based, and that relief money be used for women and children's projects. The budget should now be focused on the needs of the poor, and ensure that there is equity and equality in the distribution of the wealth of the nation'. The *CCJP* want the Government to increase its budgetary allocation to social welfare, health and education, and to further develop agriculture and food security. The *CCJP* also called for the international financial institutions to completely cancel Zambia's debt. As they said the 'worsening poverty situation has been attributed to the huge external debt. The continuous payment of the interest has meant reduced social, health and education facilities.' (IRIN 07/11/2001)

*Editor's Note [06]* Land issues were brought up in the election run up and still reflect the colonial past. Referring to the situation in Zimbabwe Frederick Chiluba said: "Your friends in Zimbabwe, the members of (the ruling) *ZANU-PF*, they have been voting for the ruling party against the party funded by the donors because they want their land." (IRIN 01/10/2001)

## A GENERAL PROBLEM IN ALL SOUTHERN AFRICA

During the nineties, all over Southern Africa the land issue became crucial. There is a very strong felt need to have alternatives to the *Western* system of land allocation or tenure. Some very serious research is being done in that direction. Where traditional authorities still have a genuine *authority*, they should be involved, in collaboration with the Government, in the official allocation of title deeds. If traditional authorities are not in place anymore then local communities must be involved. Land is much more than just a commodity among others. It is related to the past and the ancestors, to the present and to the future and the generations to come. It is at the core of the whole culture of the people concerned. It is also to be approached with the vision coming from both tradition and modern understanding. The Bible and our Christian understanding of

Creation have a lot to tell us about land which is lent to us by God and of which we are just guardians. [06]

## CONCLUSION

In colonial times many expatriate settlers were allowed to obtain large tracts of land. The Zimbabwe situation, or the South African one, come easily to mind. However there are also countries in Southern Africa which had plenty of land for their own people, like in Mozambique and Zambia. During the last decade or so, market-orientated policies have meant a consistent call for *investors*, seen as a quick solution for economic growth, as if the solution can come mostly from outside. It has been to the detriment of other policies which should aim at building on local farmers, because, in the long run, this is what would enhance the potential of rural areas, the fight against rural poverty and the building up of a balanced rural society. Hopefully, Africa shall not become like some parts of Latin America.

*The Elections of the 27th. December, 2001:* At the time of going to print the results of the Presidential and Parliamentary Elections were announced and Levy Mwanawasa, of the *Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD)*, sworn in as the new President. Some opposition parties and observers said there was 'cause for concern' due to irregularities, possible abuse of public resources in campaigning and a bias in the state media towards the *MMD*. About 2.6m. people registered to vote but only 1.75 million votes were cast in the 5,000 polling stations. *Parliamentary Seats Won: FDD* 12 seats (8.11%), *HP* 4 seats (2.7%), *IND* 1 seat (0.68%), *MMD* 68 seats (45.95%), *PF* 1 seat (0.68%), *UNIP* 13 seats (8.78%), *UPND* 48 seats (32.43%), and *ZRP* 1 seat (0.68%). The *AZ*, *NCC*, *NLD*, and *SDP* won no seats.

PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES	PARTY	TOTAL VOTES
Kaunda, Tilyenji C.	United National Independence Party (UNIP)	175,330 (10.15%)
Konnie, Gwendoline C.	Social Democratic Party (SDP)	10,169 (0.59%)
Mazoka, Anderson K.	United Party For National Development (UPND)	468,812 (27.15%)
Mbikusita-Lewanika, Inonge (Dr)	Agenda For Zambia (AZ)	9,826 (0.57%)
Miyanda, Godfrey K. (Brig.Gen)	Heritage Party (HP)	140,415 (8.13%)
Mumba, Nevers S. (Dr)	National Citizens Coalition (NCC)	38,531 (2.23%)
Mwanawasa, Levy P.	Movement For Multiparty Democracy (MMD)	503,589 (29.16%)
Mwila, Benjamin Y.	Zambia Republican Party (ZRP)	85,015 (4.92%)
Sata, Michael C.	Partiriotic Front (PF)	58,680 (3.4%)
Shamapande, Yobert K. (Dr)	National Leadership For Development (NLD)	9,256 (0.54%)
Tembo, Christon S. (Lt.Gen)	Forum For Democracy and Development (FDD)	227,162 (13.16%)

Sources include: BBC Country Profile on Africa <http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/world/africa/default.stm>; CIA World Fact Book 2001 <http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/za.html>; Electoral Commission of Zambia <http://www.elections.org.zm/results/index.php> and [seatswonout.php](http://www.elections.org.zm/seatswonout.php); Encarta Encyclopedia Zambia Article <http://encarta.msn.com/find/Concise.asp?ti=0685B000>; Nations of the Commonwealth Zambia Profile <http://www.tbc.gov.bc.ca/cwgames/country/Zambia/zambia.html>; The UN Integrated Regional Information Network (IRIN); Lonely Planet Guide <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/destinations/africa/zambia/>; Zambian National Tourist Board <http://www.africa-insites.com/zambia/info/Default.htm>.

Picture above: similar children to these are the ones who will benefit from the 'additional resources' gained from the HIPC terms

# Our First African Sister

By Sr. Mary Lampard W.S.

A century ago our first African Sister entered the Congregation of the [Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of Africa](#) - and how different things were then! A black face on the streets of Paris was virtually unknown. No African Sisterhood had been founded; still less was there any idea of African vocations to our own Congregation.

How then did it happen that a girl called [Habibou](#) of the Tokolor tribe in Mali (which was then part of the [French Sudan](#)) should become our very first African candidate, in 1902?

When [Habibou](#) was born in 1878 or thereabouts, the colonial power, France, was facing military opposition in West Africa on two fronts. During the fighting a certain French officer came across a poor woman with two little daughters. He looked after them with great kindness until he was recalled to France, when he offered to take them with him. The mother and elder daughter did not want to go but little [Habibou](#) accepted the offer and went with her benefactor

to Paris, where she was received into his family and treated like a child of the house. She went everywhere with the children, to catechism, to church, for walks and to school. Thus she absorbed a certain French Catholic culture and education ... yet remained a true little African.

With charming simplicity she later told the story of those days. "This lady must have been thoroughly ashamed of me. I was always getting into hot water. One Sunday after Mass we went into a confectioner's shop. I snatched the little cakes set out on plates, and started eating them, while my benefactress had her back turned as she was choosing something for our dessert. When the shop assistant pointed out what I was up to, Mrs. X replied kindly, "That will be a sale for you", and paid for what I had already devoured. She later told me gently not to do that again; that was not how little French girls behaved. I was full of remorse and promised never to do it again ... yet the following Sunday

when we went to the confectioner's I repeated my misdeeds all over again."

From Paris the family moved to Bordeaux and it was there that she was prepared for Baptism by a Dominican priest. She took the name of [Zita](#). The Father considered her so totally open to God's grace that he asked the Congregation to accept her as a candidate. The family who had adopted her loved her dearly, warmhearted and generous as she was, and

it was a real sorrow for them when she left them to enter the postulate at Marseilles in 1902.

The other postulants were at first taken aback to find an African among them, but she soon won over all hearts by her frankness and love of fun. Because she was so uncomplicated she could get away with anything and told her companions their weak points without giving any offence.

She knew how to laugh at herself too; sometimes when the postulants went for a walk in the streets of Marseilles, people would laugh and joke about her; but [Zita](#), instead of getting angry laughed heartily herself.

On New Year's Day 1903, a Missionary of Africa came to visit the community. One can guess what a joy it was for [Zita](#) to hear about her country. However, she could not accept that the Bambara tribesfolk, who were rapidly becoming Christians, were better than her own Tokolor tribe. "The Bambara don't believe in anything," she told the Father. "That's why they are converting to Christianity. The Tokolor, on the contrary, believe in the one God and practise their religion. That is why their conversion takes more time; but, once Christian, they will be stronger in faith than the others. "For sure," she added, "I shall go to the Sudan and they will be converted".

A few months later [Zita](#) went with the other postulants to St. Charles, the Mother House in Algeria and there received the novice's habit and was given the name [Sister Marie Gondanes](#). Everyone found her delightful: a real little Sudanese with but one desire - to do God's Will. Although she was "all thumbs", she was

ever ready to help and eagerly sought out the most disagreeable jobs. It was her place, she said. The Sisters had been so charitable in receiving her into the novitiate that it was only right for her to serve them. She was thoughtful for others and anxious to please. What she feared above all was to fail in obedience.

Soon, sad to say, [Sr. Marie Gondanes](#) fell ill. As she always wanted to obey the Superior, it was not easy to look after her unless one prefixed a recommendation with the words, "Mother says you are to do this or that". Without that preliminary phrase, she would ask "Did Mother say so?"

One day the nurse said to her, "Stay in bed to say the Angelus". "But we're supposed to be kneeling," came the reply. "You are too ill to get up." "Did Mother say so?"

Another time: "You must not go to Mass this morning." "Does the Father know?" "Mother says so." This phrase silenced all objections on her lips.

Mere du Crucifix, the Superior, was going away for a week, so she took care to tell [Sr. Gondanes](#) that the Sister Nurse would give all the necessary permissions in her place.

Picture above: Mangoes, maize and vegetables on sale in Mali



Picture above: A road in the rainy season



In spite of the good care she was given, it was clear that she was not getting any better and the Chaplain began preparing her for death. But the little patient, with her usual simple spontaneity said to him, "Father, I am not going to die. I have to go to the Sudan to convert the Africans."

"Do you think you will do that better than the others?" the priest asked. "Yes" came the reply, "because I am of our nobility and we would never allow a slave into the family. When the Africans see me among the Sisters, dressed like them, eating with them, though I am not of their race, they will say to themselves, 'How can such a thing happen?' And I will answer them: 'It is because Someone came to this earth, who said that all people are brothers and sisters. He was Jesus Christ Our Lord'. Hearing that they will be converted. But I am the only one who can say that. Another Sister could not say it."

It was this hope of being an apostle that had led [Sr. Gondanes](#) to our Congregation and which kept up her courage in all difficulties. She always hoped that since God had called her for this apostolate, he would give her the opportunity of realizing it.

On June 21st. 1903, [Sr. Gondanes](#) was transferred to the Infirmary at St. Charles, which was

used as a Sanatorium. Ten days later she received the Sacrament of the Sick and had the joy of pronouncing her Vows. With very great generosity she made the sacrifice of going to heaven without passing through her beloved Sudan. "Going to heaven", she said, "is a good thing; but to work for God would have been a good thing too".

Rev. Mother Marie Salome, our first Superior General, asked her one day if she were not afraid to die. "I've never died, Rev. Mother" she replied merrily, "so I don't know what it feels like." A few days later Rev. Mother Salome went to France and [Sr. Gondanes](#) was better; the attack of fever which had greatly enfeebled her was not repeated. "I can't die," she said. "Rev. Mother charged me to pray for her during her absence and I must obey."

On the morning of Sept. 12th. the Sister in the next room to [Sr. Gondanes](#), like her suffering from T.B., left this life. The funeral was to take place the following day in the afternoon. [Sr. Gondanes](#) knew nothing of all this, but realized that something unusual was happening. She enquired about the Sister, asking if she was in more pain. She was told - too bluntly perhaps - that she was dead. She straightened up in bed suddenly, as if from an electric shock.

With blood coming from her mouth, she called "Mother! Mother! Go and fetch Mother!" When Mere du Crucifix arrived, she was coughing up blood profusely. "Mother!" she cried out, "I was going to die and you were not there". Mere du Crucifix comforted her and then calmly Sr. Marie Gondanes gave up her spirit to God, who alone knows how he has answered her ardent desire to save the souls of her people in the Sudan.

#### TODAY - ANOTHER SISTER FROM MALI

Nearly one hundred years were to pass before another young woman from Mali joined our Congregation. She left us after a few years .

Finally on March 25th. 2000, [Sabine Dakouo](#) made her first vows as a [Missionary Sister of Our Lady of Africa](#). She comes from one of the few Christian families living in Mali, a largely Muslim country. From childhood she wanted to give herself to the service of God and felt drawn by the gentleness of the Sisters she met - and by their admirable clothes!

She went to a Vocations Centre in search of God's Will for her. For the first time she heard of the religious-missionary vocation. This was presented by a [Missionary Sister of Our Lady of Africa](#) - without a religious costume! She was deeply impressed by the challenge of going beyond the frontiers of her own country, to live in another culture and in community with Sisters of many nations, a sign of the universality of God's Plan of salvation.

While continuing her studies, Sabine remained in touch with the [MSOLA](#) for seven more years, until she started her formation in one of our communities. At the end of her novitiate in Ouagadougou, Sabine with four others of different races and nations committed herself to the love and service of Jesus Christ and of the peoples of Africa.

She is at present in the Congo, in Goma, where she is struggling to learn Kiswahili and devoting herself to the welfare of young people. In an article which she called 'Life is not dead in the Republic of Congo', she expresses her admiration for the faith and vitality of the Congolese Christians, who have suffered so much and yet retained their hope and dynamism. The missionary charism is being handed on from generation to generation!

# HOME AND AWAY

FR. JOHN SANDOM WRITES

The generous hospitality of both clergy and their Parishioners on the occasion of a **mission appeal** never ceases to amaze me. The least I can do is to offer my help when they need a break. So when I'm not on an **appeal** I'm often on supply. All kinds of surprises can happen when the Parish Priest is away.

Before he left for his holidays, the Parish Priest I was replacing handed over the keys and ran through a few details, ending "Since you were last here we've introduced some girls as altar servers, but there are only a few of them and they come only on Sundays". The scouts were away at camp and all the boy servers were with them.

Sunday came and I waited the arrival of the girls. In these days of **political correctness** I was wondering how to address them. **Altar girls** might not be acceptable, **Serviettes** perhaps, but that sounded a bit odd. Several minutes later I still hadn't found a solution, when there was a patter of lady-like feet and my arm was gently touched. I beheld a very diminutive female. "Father" she said, "I thought I'd better warn you, I'm one of the new **liturgical operatives!**" So now I know.

The White Fathers' Web Site (UK): <http://www.thewhitefathers.org.uk>

The White Fathers' Magazine and Information England and Wales: [suttonlink@dial.pipex.com](mailto:suttonlink@dial.pipex.com)

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## MALAWI AFTER THE 1999 ELECTIONS



The following are thoughts on the situation in Malawi since the Elections held on the 15th. September, 1999. They follow on from the last issue, and elaborate on some of the points of concern raised in those articles.

These elections were the real test of the democratic progress of the Country. By general consent of foreign observers and local people the test was a success: the elections went on smoothly. Some disturbances came afterwards due to the disappointment of the losers: the **Malawi Congress Party (MCP)** and the **Alliance for Democracy (AFORD)** which were expecting a victory and some doubts about the counting of votes. In the North two village mosques were burned down.

The Catholic Bishops and Public Affair Committee (PAC) made an appeal to the public for the acceptance of the results of the voting and the cessation of any type of violence. The new Government was taken to task to prove its good will by fulfilling its promises by alleviating the poverty of the people and strengthening the democratic process. For this purpose Local Election were scheduled to take place 'soon'.

**First Disappointment** - Local Elections were postponed until September, 2000. This meant that in the meantime **District Commissioners (DC)** continued to be directed by the central Government. Accusations were levelled against DCs of decisions being taken on the basis of personal interest without consulting the people. The Constitution, Provision 146.2 states: '**Local Government Authorities are responsible for the representation of the people ... people should**

**be helped to take responsibility for their own future**'.

The Minister of State, Mr. Uladi Mussa, stressed that in these Local Elections people would not contest on political lines. This did not happen. Local Elections took place among the apathy of the voters. Only 14% of the people entitled to vote cast their ballot. **The main reasons?** Biased media coverage, political intimidation and harassment, lack of registration papers in remote areas, especially in the North of the Country, and the poor quality of the candidates. With such poor participation normally this electoral exercise should have been declared null and void. But, realistically, which donor country would finance a

Picture above: Girls waiting to help out at Kanyama church celebrations, Dedza Parish

second round of votes? The result was a great boost for **United Democratic Front (UDF)** candidates ...

#### IGNORING THE CONSTITUTION, DECEMBER 2000 - JANUARY 2001

The Malawi Constitution says that the Parliament of Malawi is composed of the National Assembly, the Senate and the Presidency. During the sittings of December, 2000, and January, 2001, the National Assembly decided to remove and delete the Senate (until then it existed only on paper). The reason given was the scarcity of funds. Somebody, probably with reason, suspected a political agenda behind this kind of move, the move being clearly unconstitutional.

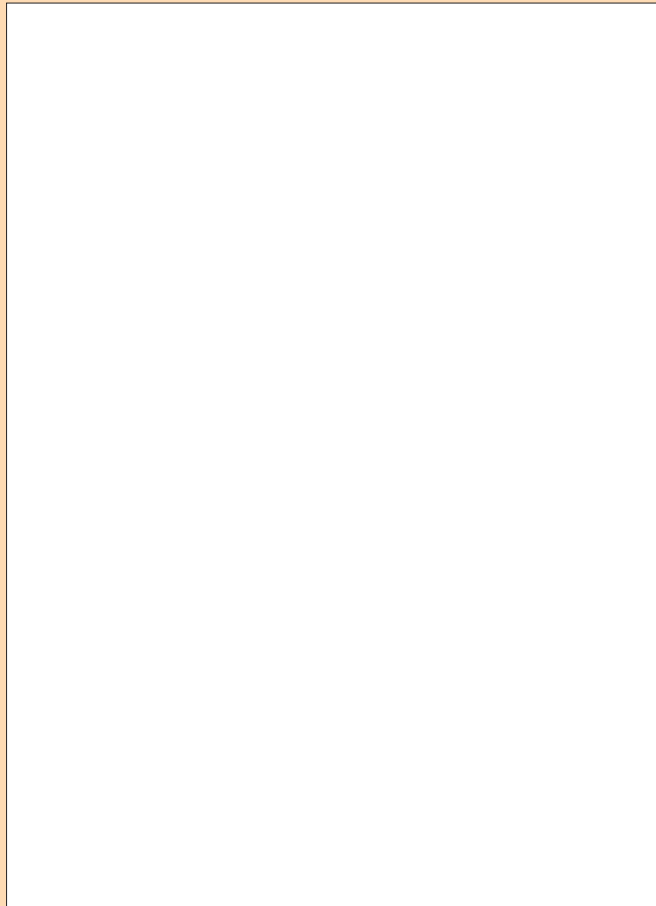
Another fact which could prove the suspicion is the treatment reserved for the MP Brown Mpingangira, his wife, also an MP, and two other MPs, who defected from the **UDF** ranks to form their own party, the **National Democratic Alliance (NDA)**. This defection was a response to clear signs that the President was preparing the ground for a third term of Office. This could have been a positive move in the interest of the Country and for Democracy, but everything was done to discredit the **dissidents**. On the 25th. March a letter of the Catholic Bishops, 'Celebrating the Centenary' appealed to the Parliament to 'safeguard the sovereignty of the people'.

#### A WORSENING SOCIO-POLITICAL SITUATION

**The Social Situation** - The programme of poverty alleviation did not bear significant benefits for the people. Some poor people were helped with

the 'starter packs', consisting of 10 kilograms of maize seeds and a 10 kilograms fertilizer bag. The following year, 2001, we passed from poverty alleviation to poverty eradication. We don't see many results of this.

**What is Increasing is Corruption and Fraud** - Many cases are reported of mismanagement of funds but no trials give results. For example there was a hole on the budget for the Ministry of Education of 187 millions of Malawi Kwacha (MK). Nobody was condemned. A Minister was sacked but no condemnation. Other similar scandals involving big names come up but nothing is happens. On the other hand when



a woman had stolen a million Kwachas she got a 15 years prison sentence. More recently two young men were caught stealing a bag of maize and they received a six years prison sentence! The people know that **big people** who steal more are going around free. Bribing to get a permit quickly has become common practice.

With all this the MPs voted unanimously for an increase in their allowances! Then civil servants working in Hospitals and Teachers started demonstrating and striking for an increase in their salaries. The President had promised that no civil servant would receive less than 5,000.00 MK per month but the promise was not kept. The Finance Ministry said that there is no money (the MPs of course are not too many ... and can influence an election).

#### POLITICAL RETROGRESSION

**Third term for President Muluzi.** The President never spoke clearly of his intention to stand as a presidential candidate. When rumours spread about such a possibility, the Danish Ambassador was reported as saying that in this case the EU would withdraw funds. The President reacted angrily stating that this was a matter of the **UDF** and the Malawian People. In the Pastoral Letter of the Catholic Bishops the issue was not addressed in clear terms, but it was said that the Government was bound to follow the Constitution and that if changes were needed it should be a matter of a national referendum.

The **CCAP** came up with a strong letter clearly condemning the idea of a third term in office for the President and criticizing other aspects of the socio-political life. The Rev. Bishop James Tengatenga of the Anglican Church, speaking at Mzuzu University on the 5th. July, 2001, asked for the Constitution to be respected concerning a third term in Office. After the ceremony a group of **youth** from the **Young Democrats** stopped the car in which the Bishop was with

the Rev. Kalebe, of the Nkhoma Synod, and started beating up the latter. The target of the violence was clearly the Bishop whom they did not recognize.

**Who are the Young Democrats?** It is not clear who founded them, but they have become a disturbing feature in the political life of Malawi. It is a new branch of **UDF** who should advance Democracy but are more famous for enforcing the policy of the **UDF** Party. Their means are not always democratic. They have shown up at Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Blantyre, to attack nurses who were on strike. They turned up at the Ministry of Health on Capital Hill while the President was making a speech on the occasion of the presentation of the Budget and started ransacking property, bullying, and roughing up people believed to be sympathizers of the **National Democratic Alliance**. Have we gone back to the Red Shirts (Malawi Youth) of the time of Banda? One wonders.

#### POLITICAL CONSTITUTIONAL CRISIS

In the last months of the 2001 a serious constitutional crisis developed. The General Assembly recommended the removal of three High Court Judges. It is clearly not in their competence and power to do so. The first of the Judges is Judge D. Mwangulu, accused of being incompetent and arrogant. A second is Justice Chimasula Phiri, accused of some unknown misbehaviour. The third is Justice Chipeta who had a disagreement with Mr. Fahad Mussa, the Director of Public Prosecution. It is good to know that Justice Chipeta is judging the case of Sulaimana involved in an alleged coup to overthrow the government. No written statement, in all the three cases, has been presented by the MPs who introduced the motion in the General Assembly. We are awaiting to hear how the President will solve this delicate situation. Let us hope that it will be for the good of the country and all Malawians, rather than just the privileged few.

## SISTER CONNIE GEMME

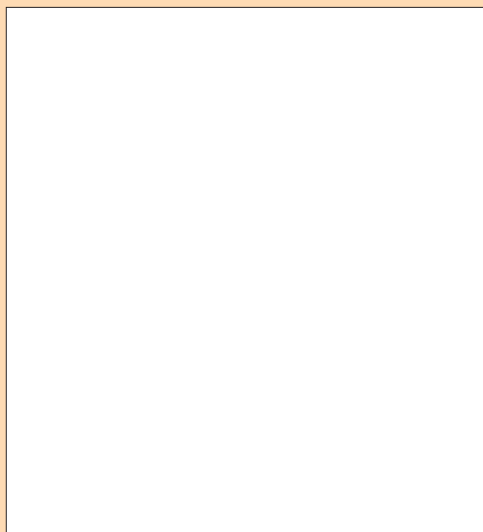


sends news from Ghana, about the good results of her project COLWOD (Collaboration with Women in Distress). The aim of this organization is to make

women self-reliant in order to improve their quality of life and avoid being lured out of their homeland by money-making traffickers of women.

## THE STORY OF MENA

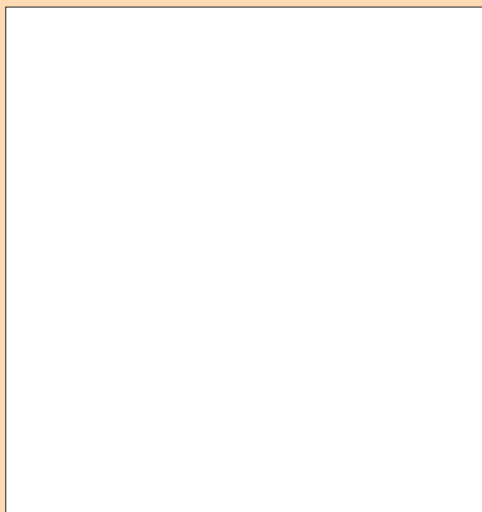
Mena no longer has to thumb-print her documents. Her son taught her to sign her name.



Mena's sister, a trained seamstress, sews various items with the cloth Mena dyes. These items are very popular and sell well.

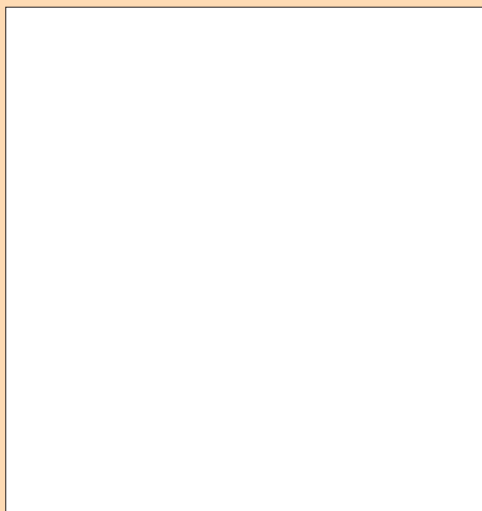
From a friend, Mena learned a new method of doing her batik work, using bread flour, chemicals and lace before applying the dyes to the white cloth.

Mena will soon have her own shop where she can display and sell her goods and thus care for her family by an honest living instead of going out on the streets at night.



A neighbour who was helped by COLWOD with a loan to purchase plastic containers for sale, works with Mena's family.

Another of Mena's sisters who was selling ice water and pomade made by Mena, has now been sent by her to train as a hairdresser. This is sure proof that Mena is succeeding well in her business and is now able to help her whole family.



## THE STORY OF AMY AND JENNIFER

Jennifer is a Canadian volunteer who is a seamstress and knows how to do batik work. On



arrival at Tamale, Ghana, she was assigned to help Amy, a woman helped by COLWOD, but who finds it hard to make a success of her skills and keeps coming back for help.

Jennifer has helped her to save up enough money from the work she did to set herself up in her own business. Jennifer will go on helping her until her business is well established on her own compound.

## ALOYSIUS BEEBWA



is a student of the Missionaries of Africa (White Fathers) at St. Edward's College, Totteridge, London. He took the Missionary Oath and was ordained to the Diaconate in December 2001. Part of his training was a period of apostolic experience in Ethiopia. There he heard the name of Madeleine Dierckx on everyone's lips. In October 2001, she was in London and visited St. Edward's College, where Aloysius finally met her. He describes their meeting in an open letter to friends:

Today was a day for me to remember. I walked into our common room and found a guest. I had never met her before, but as soon as I saw her, I thought, "Well, that's it! She resembles the person I used to see on the photos in Ethiopia.

She is Sr. Madeleine, a Belgian Missionary Sister of Our Lady of Africa (White Sister)." At the moment she is Regional Superior of the MSOLA in Belgium. Why was it special for me?

Sr. Madeleine arrived in Ethiopia on 23rd. July, 1976. She was living in the Eparchy of Adigrat. She spent time in Zalambessa bordering on Eritrea. At the time she was there, the whole place was under the scourge of war. There were no services and as the years went by, things became increasingly difficult. During those years she was in community with Sr. Pierre Renaud, Suzanne Plouffe, Dolores Forcier and Begoña Inarra.

The MSOLA stayed on in spite of the troubles. The Sisters used to visit the villages. They

Picture above: Amy and Jennifer ready to print a new cloth

Pictures above: Left: Mena and her son (standing) who has taught her to sign her name. Top Right: Mena's sister sows with the cloth Mena dyes. Bottom Right: Mena's sister selling ice water.

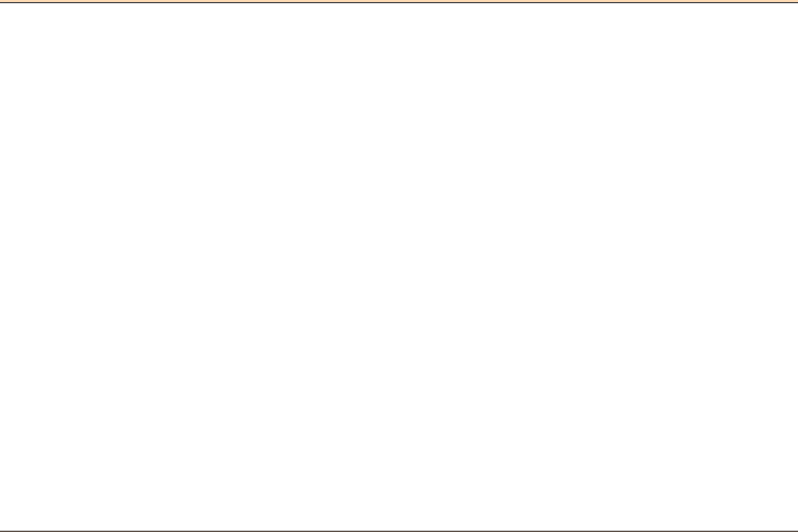
sometimes walked 15 kilometers and more in one go. They regularly went to the Orthodox churches for the Offices. In this way they made friends with the people and their priests. They would attend such ceremonies as marriages and funerals, **Sr. Madeleine** recalls. **Sr. Madeleine** was a jack of all trades in many ways. She does not dramatise when she speaks. She talks about her experiences with incredible simplicity. I heard her name so many times in Adigrat when I was there for the two-year experience.

She and her fellow-Sisters worked with women. They ventured into health care. It seems **Sr. Madeleine** treated and operated some 10,000 patients with eye problems. Do not forget the victims of polio. Remember her work with expectant mothers and the 'under five children'. So there was this mother and Child Clinic, a clinic for epileptic patients and also general medical work.



**Sr. Begoña** was interested in the liturgy. She studied Ge'ez, the ancient liturgical language, and began translating texts from that language into Tigrinya, the local spoken tongue. (In fact, when I was on a visit to Massawa, Eritrea, in 1997, an Eritrean religious asked if he could find some of that translated work.) **Sr. Dolores** was mainly in women's promotion. She gave sewing classes to groups of girls. **Srs. Pierrette, Suzanne** and **Begoña** were mostly in charge of the formation of girls aspiring to join religious life. The war made this work very limited.

Today we caught up on Ethiopia. We recalled the people's unique spirituality and theology, which at times is not easily understood by most of us with a Latin background. We spoke about the struggle for freedom in the Horn of Africa, the challenging geography, the fasting, the liturgy, the coffee ceremony, the hospitality etc. We knew many people in common. She remembered my Tigray teacher, Mr. Tadese Tefere,



who spent years in an Addis Ababa prison under the DERG regime.

I told her that the life and work of the Sisters were still very much alive in people's minds and much appreciated, even though they are no longer in Ethiopia. Many people had asked me about the Sisters who had been in Zalambessa. (In the recent border conflict Zalambessa was turned into dust!)

Many realized that these women were not tourists, they were not traders, they were not politicians; they were God-fearing people, they were apostles who struggled to learn Tigrinya, to heal, to listen, to pray and to contribute to the education of the younger generations. They were friends. After all, they had dared to stay when it was hot soup! People felt supported by the presence of the **MSOLA** when things seemed hopeless for many in the north of the country.

I was so pleased to meet this woman who, together with the others received much from Ethiopia and also gave much. One day, perhaps they may return to begin again ... or rather to continue.

Considering the circumstances in which they lived and left, the five **White Sisters** deserve a special trip to trace their marks in Ethiopia. It would be wonderful to meet people who are now in a different situation where much of what the five Sisters had planted has been destroyed by the border conflict.

I had heard so much of what the **MSOLA** had lived and done in the Eparchy of Adigrat that I was longing to meet some of them and hear about their experiences straight from the horse's mouth, if you will pardon the expression. Today part of my Ethiopian puzzle has been filled in. I am sure that the other Sisters, whom I hope to meet at some stage, God willing, will tell me more. Today has been wonderful.

**Sr. Madeleine** left Ethiopia at the peak of the revolution on Good Friday 1991. That was after 15 years there. She left in the night, on foot and by mule through the river Mereb which runs by the border of Eritrea and Tigray. She was unable to say good-bye to her friends.

**Sr. Madeleine** has a **Missionary of Africa** brother in Mali. Her other brother is a Jesuit in the Congo. Her mother is 94 years old. Adigrat has a new Bishop, Abba (now Abune) Tesfay Modhin. He would have been a young priest when the **MSOLA** left.

We thank God for **Srs. Madeleine, Pierrette, Suzanne, Dolores** and **Begoña** who gave those years of service to the people of Ethiopia. God bless, Aloysius Beebwa

# Let Us Pray

For the following  
who have died recently:

Mr L Cafferty, 234 St Georges Road, Preston.  
Mr John Carragher, 87 Welford Road, Solihull, West Midlands.  
Mr Clifton, 38 Bevisland, Swindon.  
Mr Bernard Cotton, 63 Kelfield Avenue, Harborne, Birmingham.  
Harry Coxell, 7 Greenacres Court, Braddocks Close, Hurstead, Rochdale, Lancs.  
Mrs Susan Dickie, 46 Dunn Place, Winchburgh, West Lothian.  
Joan Duffy, Lime Tree Grove, Thorne, Doncaster.  
Mrs Minnie Dunn, 2 Cochrane Terrace, Edinburgh.  
Mr Everingham, 7 Willingale Avenue, Rayleigh, Essex.  
Mrs Jean Ezzi, Tollgate House, South Street, Armadale, West Lothian.  
Mr G Farmer, 34 The Forge, Braidpark Road, Giffnock, Glasgow.  
Christina Ferguson, 50 Strathview Park, Glasgow.  
Miss Margaret Glencross, 11 Copland Street, Dalbeattie.  
Mr Andrew Horan, 14 Warnford Street, Wigan, Lancs.  
Mrs R Kane, Kineton Manor Nursing Home, Kineton, Warwick.  
Mrs Silvia Liverani, 13 Beaumont Gate, Glasgow.  
Mrs M McNulty, 39 Barrmill Road, Glasgow.  
Mr Donald Lee, Seaview Nursing Home, Saltburn, Cleveland.  
Mr John Lennon, 29 Poplar Avenue, Johnstone.  
Mrs Lydia McGregor, 42 Richmond Avenue, Burscough, Ormskirk, Lancs.  
Mr H A McGrillen, 53 Hillfoot Crescent, Ballynahinch, Co.Down.  
Mr John McLaughlin, 16 Oxfangs Terrace, Edinburgh.  
Mr Edward McManus, 9 Cuthbert Harrowing House, Fann Street, London.  
Mrs Anne Murray, 18 York Avenue, Bamford, Rochdale.  
Mr William Maddocks, 14 Dakin Walk, Northwood, Kirby.  
Mr Peter Marsden, 64 Caldecott Road, Blackley, Manchester.  
Mr Kenneth Mogridge, 19a Church Road, Willington, Bedford.  
Patricia Naulty, 47 Prince Edward Street, Queenspark, Glasgow.  
Mrs Alice Peacock, 92 Mill Road, Burgess Hill, West Sussex.

Mrs Kathleen Percival, 46 Kenton Crescent, Newcastle upon Tyne.  
Mrs Maria Mercy Pereira, 17 Mayflower Road, Shirley, Southampton.  
Mr Michael Rooney, 28 Shandon Gardens, Dublin, Eire.  
Mr T Scott, 3 Arthur Street, Whitburn, Sunderland.  
Mrs Kathleen Starkey, 14 Banbury Drive, West Timperley, Altrincham, Cheshire (mother of fr. Denis Starkey W.F.)  
Mrs Elizabeth Stowe, 13 Browns Crescent, Annbank, Ayr.  
Miss S Turner, St Anne's Court, Layhams Road, West Wickham, Kent.  
Mr D Walsh, 29 Bedford Avenue, Little Chalfont, Amersham, Bucks.  
Miss M Wilkinson, 96 Bruce Avenue, Hornchurch, Essex.

## † THE OBITUARY LISTS †

Please note that the latest dates for receiving names to be included in the Obituary List are as follows:

Issue No.	Months	Latest Date
364	June-July 2002	10th. March, 2002
365	Aug.-Sept. 2002	16th. May, 2002
366	Oct.-Nov. 2002	16th. July, 2002
367	Dec.-Jan, 2003	16th. September, 2002
368	Feb.-March, 2003	16th. November, 2002

We hope that we will be able to keep to these dates. On occasions, due to technical reasons in the production of the magazine, we may have to close the Obituary List a day or two early.

If this does happen please accept our apologies and be assured that we will certainly include all the names received in the next issue.

*“Come, you whom my Father has blessed,  
take for your heritage  
the kingdom prepared for you  
since the foundation of the world”.* (Mt. 25.34)

**May they rest in peace**

# The White Sisters

Sister Madeleine  
became famous  
for the thousands of  
eye operations  
she performed  
in Ethiopia.

Please help us  
to continue serving  
the sick and  
the poor in Africa  
in line with  
the healing love  
of Christ.

Please address donations and enquiries to

**The Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of Africa**

5 Charlbury Grove,  
Ealing, London W5 2DY

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