



Missionary Fraternity of Mary **Newsletter**

The Joy of Vocation to the Priesthood

Deacon Julius Njuguna Mwai, (from Kenya)
The day of his Ordination to the Diaconate at the Metropolitan Cathedral of Santiago de Guatemala, in Guatemala City.



It is always our hope and prayer that our presence in the missions will result in new vocations to the priesthood within those missions. In our missionary work we have been blessed to see numerous conversions to Catholicism. In addition as a result of our Exodistas Juveniles or “youth” movement, many youth have either embraced the Catholic faith or in some cases young men have discovered their vocation to the priesthood. We are happy to report that such is the case in our mission in Kenya. **This is one such story, the story of Deacon Julius Njuguna Mwai.**

The Fraternity was first introduced to Deacon Julius as a young boy in our mission in Bura Tana in the Diocese of Garissa, Kenya. The Diocese of Garissa borders both Somalia and Ethiopia. Julius was seeking a better life and in his home area there were not many opportunities for education. His parents could not afford to pay for his studies, and therefore he traveled to Bura Tana where he was introduced to the Fraternity mission. Very soon he began participating in acolyte training at St. Jude Catholic Church which was staffed by Fraternity priests. As he continued to grow in his Catholic faith and while working alongside Fraternity priests he began to discern his vocation. After a period of living in Fraternity with the priests and adopting the spirituality of Exodus (a unique Fraternity Charism) it was time for him to continue his formation at the Missionary Fraternity of Mary Seminary in Guatemala City.

**In his own words:
"Remembering my calling to priesthood"**

Today I am happy to remember how far I have come in my journey. From the beginning God had something special prepared for me. He alone must be praised and be worshipped!

I recall from the Gospel of Mathew (9:13) which says, "For I did not come to call the righteous, but the sinners". I consider myself to be a sinner whom God called to work in his vineyard saving souls.



Deacon Julius at the beginning of his formation in Kenya

I come from a family of six, and I am the second born of the four boys my parents had. All of us were raised in the Catholic faith. I am indebted to my parents for raising us in the Catholic faith.

My calling I can say started when I was young. I used to admire how priests presided at mass. After Mass I used to dramatize what I used to see the priest doing. My uncle who is also a priest also played a role in my calling as he used to motivate me by saying that one day we may serve the Lord together on the altar.

As a young boy I always loved to serve at mass although after receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation I stayed away from the church for some years. God had a plan and in high school I was always chosen to lead a group called YCS (Young Catholic Students) in religious services whenever we could not have mass during the designated periods reserved for religious activities.

During our vacation breaks from school I spent some time visiting small Christian communities. This motivated me to return to the church. During some prayer meetings I felt myself called to share the message of the Gospel. I used to ask myself, "why me?". I continued to feel this strong calling to always join the community in prayer.

In 2006, I met two priests from Guatemala, Father José López and Father Jaime Charuc, missionaries of the Missionary Fraternity of Mary at the Bura-Tana mission in the Diocese of Garissa. Through their encouragement I started to serve as an acolyte, work youth, the church choir, and also collaborated in other church activities.

One day as I was painting the church, I remember very well Father José asked me what I was planning to do in the future, and I remember I told him that my wish was to be a doctor but if God has other plans, let His will be done.

From thereon I remember Father José always looked for me when he wanted something to be done. If he had construction, he used to call me to monitor the work. From that point on he slowly introduced to the Fraternity community and way of life.



In 2011 before the journey to Guatemala, Fraternity Priests visited Deacon Julius' Family at Mwea, Kenya

I left home and in 2008 I began my community life as an Aspirant with Fr. José López and Fr. Jaime Charuc. I stayed at the Bura Tana mission from 2008 until 2011 when it was decided that I should travel to Guatemala and begin my formation studies. After visiting my family I left Kenya and traveled to Guatemala in 2011.

The process has been challenging because I arrived in Guatemala in 2013 after staying in Venezuela waiting for the visa to Guatemala. It's in Venezuela that I started learning to speak Spanish. I have not returned to Kenya since leaving in 2011. I finished my studies in Philosophy and Theology at the Missionary Fraternity of Mary Seminary in Guatemala City.

I owe a debt of gratitude to Fr. José López who introduced me to the community and to Fr. Jaime Charuc who was my formator during my time as an Aspirant in Kenya. Also, I would like to thank the many benefactors of the Fraternity, the mission directors and parishes in the United States and Canada, because I believe if it was not for their contribution I couldn't have travelled to Guatemala or joined the Missionary Fraternity of Mary. I also thank the Fraternity community which gave me this opportunity to develop the call that God has for me.

At this moment the Missionary Fraternity of Mary has given me the opportunity to work with the young boys who have aspired to join the community by working as an assistant in formation at the minor seminary in Guatemala. Work in formation can be challenging but it is the time to bear fruit for the next generation of candidates for the priesthood at the Fraternity and in the universal church.

As a newly ordained Deacon working with the Aspirants I am relying on the Holy Spirit to guide and give me wisdom to do this work, to share with them my own calling and challenges on my road to ordination. Humbly I ask for your prayers so that we can all honor the call.

**Deacon Julius finished his studies of
Theology and Philosophy at Pablo VI Institute
In the Missionary Fraternity of Mary in Guatemala**





Deacon Julius with two Guatemalan women, giving him support on the day of his graduation at the Fraternity in Guatemala.

Deacon Julius this year was assigned to be the Vice formator for the Aspirants of the Fraternity in San Lucas Sacatepequez, Guatemala.

Deacon Julius with the Aspirants



Like Deacon Julius Njuguna, there are many young men who desire to be missionary priests. They need support. Please keep us in your prayers as we continue praying for you at the seminary in Guatemala.

OUR CURRENT NEEDS

- 1. Renovate the main courtyard in front of the chapel and replace the deteriorated tiles and paver blocks.**
- 2. Support our formation programs so that many young men who cannot afford to pay for their education are able to pursue ordination to the priesthood.**

All contributions are tax deductible and are used exclusively for the work of the Fraternity in Guatemala and its missions worldwide. For more information or to mail contributions, please send to:
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