



*Dear friends,*

From the heart of Africa from where I greet you, as I prepare myself to sing with you these words which express the joy of the Resurrection: *He is alive! He has truly come back to life!* Through this cry of victory, it is the paschal event that illuminates our faith and revives our hope in the midst of contexts marked by illness and suffering.

All over the world, women and men full of humanity are, each in their own way, signs of this hope. They take care of each other without discrimination. This is a strong message for our time. To this openness of solidarity, the Risen One invites us: "Go, therefore, to all people" (Cf. Mt 28:19).

■ Fr. Privat-Ignace Fouda Bieme, SDB, Regional Coordinator for Missionary Animation Africa-Madagascar

**PLEASE NOTE:** The Missions Sector is preparing the "BoscoFood" making available every week the recipe of a typical dish from a country where the Salesians are present. Each community is invited to prepare it and to help its members to broaden their cultural horizons.

## Cuisine as a Door to Cultures and Peoples

The word "cuisine" is commonly defined as a style or method of cooking that is characteristic of a particular country, region, or group. It is a style of cooking or food preparation using distinctive ingredients and techniques associated with the traditions and customs to create dishes unique to a specific culture or a particular geographic region. Traditional cuisine **reflects a people's unique history, lifestyle, values, and beliefs**. It is passed down from one generation to the next as an expression of cultural identity.

Every one of us is born into a culture. Hence, we grow up eating the cuisine of our cultures. Thus, our local cuisine becomes a part of who each of us are. In fact, continuing to prepare food from one's culture is an expression of affirming one's ethnicity. It also becomes the 'comfort food' we seek to cope with homesickness or in times of frustration and stress. Thus, one **way of appreciating our heritage** is by embracing our culture's food.

Culture is the way of living, thinking, and relating of a group of people. Since people evolve, cultures continually develop and evolve. Similarly, cuisines evolve continually, and new cuisines are **created by innovation and cultural interaction**. Many migrants make their traditional dishes in their new country. Since some ingredients needed to make traditional cuisine may not be readily available, alternative ingredients available are used to prepare traditional dishes. When migrants open restaurants, they also adapt their traditional cuisine to cater to a wider range of customers with distinct tastes and flavour preferences. These alterations create new flavours that still retain the cultural significance of the dish.

As the world becomes more globalised, cuisines from diverse cultures become easily available. This gives a great possibility to all to **become more informed about other cultures** by trying their cuisine. This should bring us to realise that each dish has a special place in the culture to which it belongs and is special to those who prepare it. Indeed, food is not only for nourishment. It is a door into a culture, and it should be appreciated as such.

■ Fr. Alfred Maravilla, SDB  
General Councillor for the Missions

### FOR REFLECTION AND SHARING

- Am I willing to try cuisines from other cultures?
- How can I help my community to open up to other cultures?



# BEING CLOSE TO THE SICK IN TOGO



*Fr. Cyrille, some Salesian presences in Togo are involved in health care. Who are those seeking assistance at your clinic?*

The "Maria Auxiliadora" dispensary, inaugurated on 11 February 2000, is a Salesian social work in response to the healthcare needs of the inhabitants of the Akodessewa district in the capital Lomé. This district, due to its proximity to the port, welcomes many other citizens of neighbouring countries (Burkina Faso, Niger, Mali, etc.). Our dispensary records an average of 1,500 patients per month. It is the first medical charitable centre in the district. The people who frequent our dispensary are mainly the inhabitants of our neighbourhood, parishioners, students from our Technical Training Centre, Confreres and many foreigners. The activities of the dispensary revolve around primary care for common diseases (malaria, malnutrition, anaemia, respiratory infections, parasites, etc.), to the follow-up of patients with certain chronic conditions (diabetes mellitus, arterial hypertension, sickle cell anaemia, etc.), support for the elderly, social cases and orphans due to AIDS.



*How do you ensure the personnel and financial sustenance of the clinic?*

Currently, the staffing for the dispensary includes a state nurse of Italian nationality, a local auxiliary nurse, a local nurse, two guardians and some Togolese, French and Italian volunteer trainees. Funding for the dispensary's activities comes mainly from the consultancy charges from patients and above all from donations from Italian, German and Spanish benefactors. The Salesians of Don Bosco accompany and assist the staff to care for the sick.



**Fr. Cyrille Agbomadi, SDB**

Salesian of Don Bosco since 2008, originally **from Togo**, currently is in charge of the Salesian community of San Domenico Savio of Akodessewa, is the parish priest of San Benedetto of Akodessewa and also the Provincial Councilor besides being the Chaplain of the **Maria Auxiliadora dispensary**.

*When the word "mission" is said, what does it mean to you?*

The word mission refers me directly to Jesus the Good Shepherd, ardent with love for the salvation of men, to availability, to the expression of an active pastoral charity, to the gift of self, to solidarity, to the desire to become, especially for young people of all the world who do not know Jesus, a sign of the Father's love and testimony of the Good News.

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## Salesians in Ukraine

Our Salesian confreres are among those who are risking their lives right now and need our prayers and help!

- The Salesians of the **UKR Vice Province** of the Byzantine rite are 26 and are located in several large cities: Kyiv, Lvov and Dnipro. From among them, there is a young practical trainee in Italy, at Castello di Godego, and another novice in Slovakia, in Poprad.
- The Polish Province of **Krakow (PLS)** has 14 confreres of the Roman rite in five houses in Ukraine in Odessa, Korostyshiv, Peremyshlany and Bibrka.



**APRIL  
SALESIAN  
MISSIONARY  
INTENTION**

**For our brothers and sisters  
in Ukraine**



For those who die and suffer in the war in Ukraine.  
So that the hearts of the responsible for this conflict may be touched by the love of Christ.

"We ask the Lord with insistence that Ukraine can to see fraternity flourish and overcome divisions." [Pope Francis' prayer]