



Three Montfortian Deacons ordained to Priesthood

BALAKA, Malawi - On the 11th of July 2020, three Montfortian deacons in Africa Anglophone were ordained to priesthood at St. Louis Catholic Church, Balaka parish in Balaka district.

The three deacons namely: Damian Abraham, SMM, Bernard Maganga, SMM and Innocent Mwanoka, SMM were ordained as priests by Bishop Montfort Stima of Mangochi Diocese as Archbishop Thomas Msusa, SMM of Blantyre archdiocese concelebrated in the very solemn Eucharistic celebration.

Bishop Montfort Stima, in his sermon, emphasized that in priesthood, obedience should always be at the center of our lives, obeying God and the superiors. He encouraged the deacons to emulate the first Montfortians whom with prayer, determination and selfless love for Malawi evangelized the whole Shire Vicariate, namely Chikwawa, Blantyre, Zomba and Mangochi dioceses. He was pleased with the presence of Archbishop Thomas Msusa.

In an interview with Luntha TV, Fr. Bernard said that he was happy that his dream of serving God as a Montfortian priest has been realized. He said with a smile, *"I am so happy that my dream of serving the Lord in His vineyard has been realized. I am grateful to God, my parents, formators, confreres, friends and relatives who have helped me to reach the altar of the Lord."*

Fr. Lonely Paul Mashonga, SMM, the Superior Delegate of Africa Anglophone Delegation, in his speech advised the newly ordained priests to serve the Lord in the Company of Mary with zeal, passion and always trusting in God Alone. He announced that Fr. Damian Michael Abraham, SMM will join the Nantipwiri community serving at Bvumbwe Parish in Blantyre archdiocese, Fr. Innocent Ignatius Mwanoka, SMM will join the Balaka Parish community in Mangochi diocese and Fr. Bernard Chifundo Maganga, SMM will join the Stima Parish community in Zomba diocese.

Among those present during the solemn celebration were about 60 priests, brothers of St. Gabriel from Zomba community, Daughters of Wisdom, almost all confreres working in Malawi, relatives and friends of the newly ordained priests. Amidst COVID-19 pandemic and strict preventive measures enforced by the government following the rise of COVID-19 cases, St. Louis de Montfort Church in Balaka was occupied by 350 congregants while many Christians remained outside the church. As of 14th July 2020, the total confirmed cases were 2497, with 795 recoveries and 40 total deaths. So far, 21,532 people have been tested against a total of 18 million people in the country.

Luntha TV broadcasted the Holy Mass live, its first time to do outside-broadcasting live coverage. With limited outdoor broadcasting equipment, it hired a mixer. Thanks to the financial support from the Delegation.

*Fr. Jailos Mpina, SMM
Balaka Parish Community*