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Montfort EurHope 02: A Confrere from Congo (RDC), Missionary in Belgium

BELGIUM - *The second article of the series "Montfort EurHope" is about the self-presentation of Ghislain KASEREKA, a Montfort Deacon from Congo, who will be ordained in Belgium on May 5, 2019.*

Who is Ghislain Kasereka Kavendivwa? Born on January 2, 1988 in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo in Butembo-Beni Diocese, I am a Montfortian who comes from a family of 7 children. My parents are Katembo Vake Bruno (deceased) and Masika Wilhelmine Sikulisimwa. I completed my primary and secondary school in Mulo Parish between 1995 and 2006. In 2007, I joined the Company of Mary in Kisangani, where I took my philosophical studies from 2008 to 2011. In 2012, I was in France as Montfortian Novice along with my fellow confreres. From 2013 to 2016, I was in Kenya for my theological studies. Afterwards, I was sent back to the Democratic Republic of Congo for pastoral experience. Then, from August to October 2017, I went back to France for the preparation for the final vows, which I made on the 26th of November 2017, in the solemnity of Christ the King of Universe. On the 24th of February, together with my two confreres, Jean Marie Claude and Louis Guelord, I was ordained Deacon in Kisangani-D.R. of Congo by Mgr. Marcel Utambi Tapa, the Archbishop of Kisangani.

My first months in Belgium. After spending 4 months (June to September 2018) in Burundi at the Montfortian Scholasticate of Gitega while waiting for my visa, I finally arrived in Belgium on October 1, 2018. Once again, I would like to extend my sincerest thanks to the congregation for making this possible. Upon touching the Belgian soil, I was greeted with a warm welcome. The confreres were happy to meet me and seeing them was a great joy on my part.

With new confreres in a new environment, an integration proved to be very indispensable. It started with a visit of almost all the confreres living here in Belgium as we get to know each other. After which, I got acquainted with some employees of 'Médiatrice et Reine', the Marian magazine of the Montfortians. Then, I started going to Leuven Language Institute for an intensive course on Dutch. At this very moment, I am already in the 3rd level course, and step by step, I am discovering the secrets of the Dutch language.

On December 6, 2018, I was officially welcomed into the delegation during the Delegation Assembly in Genk, in the presence of the Superior General and his Councillor. On January 18, 2019, Father Jos and I met the Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Mechelen-Brussel, Mgr. Koen Vanhoutte. From April 14 to 19, I was in Pontchâteau for a retreat. The date of my priestly ordination is set on May 5, 2019, the third Sunday of Easter and it will take place here in Leuven. So far, the preparations are in full swing.

Twice a month, I go to a university parish (Leo XIII) where I practice my diaconate in French while the other Sundays, I attend mass in Dutch. Hence, my integration is going well thus far, and I hope that we will continue together to walk in the footsteps of the apostles with full confidence to the Lord. In the Company of the Virgin Mary, may God take us into grace and bless us.

Good mission in the vineyard of the Lord and our heartfelt fraternal greetings to all!

Ghislain Kasereka, SMM