

RENEWAL OF VOWS AND CELEBRATION OF THE SOLEMNITY OF IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF VIRGIN MARY

The doctrine of the Immaculate Conception is the doctrine that the Virgin Mary was conceived without original sin, the twist in our nature that makes our will tend not to follow what it knows to be right. This is a great feast day for us, as a congregation, for we are called *Brothers of Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary*. We venerate and honour her name in all our apostolates.

Our celebration of the feast of Immaculate Conception, this year, was combined with the renewal of religious vows of Bro. Bonaventure Kasiya and official welcoming of the aspirants who have joined our formation house in Mzedi. The celebration took place on 7th December at Mzedi Formation House. We started with Holy Mass at 3:00pm which was led by the Parish Priest of Mzedi Parish, Fr. Alfred Nsope DP.



Bro. Bonaventure Kasiya renewing his vows.

In his homily, he encouraged the congregation to nurture faith in our hearts. Immaculate Conception, being a dogma, has to be understood beyond our natural reasoning. It is supernatural, and has to be treated with faith. Our lives as brothers have been placed under her special protection; and this becomes evident in our prayers and reflections¹. In taking the evangelical counsel, we pronounce that we are letting our faith transcend our reasoning on what religious life is all about. We always tend to keep our trust in God's unlimited love though we continue to be people who fall short of ideal².

The Provincial Superior, Bro. Lawrences Sitima, shared in his speech that we need to embrace our religious life and value our evangelical counsel. He said, with reference from the book: *Is Religious Life relevant today?*, that our religious vows are made in public. This does not mean that they are made to a person, the congregation present or to the fellow brothers; but to God himself. The fulfilment of these evangelical counsels is not to please the people present on our professions; but, rather keeping the covenant we made with the Lord that we shall remain faithful with Him in our life. The church and the congregation only helps us in giving a conducive environment to embrace the vows we have made. He encouraged Bro. Bonaventure and the entire congregation to be committed to their religious vows.

During mass, after the magnificat, the aspirants were called to share their vocation stories. We have five aspirants namely Master Mandala of Nguludi Parish – Blantyre Archdiocese, Boniface Mangulama of Limbe

¹ FIC Constitutions: Article 75

² Ibid 73

Cathedral – Blantyre Archdiocese, Richard Ganizani of of Mtendere Parish – Dedza Diocese, Cosmas Ng’omayacheza of Chiphwanya Parish – Dedza Diocese and Collins Winiko of Mayaka Parish – Zomba Diocese. We wish them well as they discern towards positive response to their call to religious life and the life of brotherhood through the congregation of Brothers FIC.



The Provincial Superior, Bro. Lawrence Sitima (second from right) together with the aspirants at Mzedi after the mass. From left: Richard Ganizani, Master Mandala, Collins Winiko, Cosmas Ng’omayacheza and Boniface Mangulama.

Compiled by Bro. Gasper Kalisto FIC

On behalf of the Provincial Council - Malawi