

DISCIPLES INFORMATION BULLETIN

\$5

*Missionary trip, an opportunity to
get close to the base.*



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Open Bible

"But the angel spoke, and said to the women: Fear not for....he is risen from the dead...." (Matt. 27, 5-6). Easter is a message of joy, of hope. The resurrection of Jesus is today a subject of victory for the church of Christ. It is a message which encourages Christians to continue to endure present suffering while working without letting up, for the victory that Jesus held over death is for those who believe and hope in Him. Notice here that the message of hope was delivered first to women. So there is no use weeping or being sorry about what a person must submit to as outrage. During good or bad times, women and men continue to hope, to work to transform the world. The church in general and each Christian wherever he is in particular must struggle until reaching victory; the transformation of the corrupt world. Let's do everything so that the message of the resurrection, of the victory of Christ over death materializes here and now. For God counts on our hands and our feet to save others everywhere around the world, our mouths to preach the Gospel, our heads to invent new techniques to evangelize the world. The Community of Disciples of Christ in Congo and its partners must be involved, hand in hand, without becoming discouraged in the face of different challenges of the world in order that the victory of Jesus Christ be effective, in order that God may reign on earth as it is in heaven.

Editorial

Dear readers: The most important event in the life of a Christian is certainly the resurrection of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, basis of the faith and of hope. An event which seals a new alliance between God and humans by the blood of His Son.

So Easter is a symbol of the victory of Jesus Christ over death and sin, but also a victory for all those who accept Jesus as Lord and Saviour and who confess that he is the Son of God.

The work that the Lord asks us to do on this earth in his Church is a ministry of victory. We will all pass away, but we must leave, through our deeds, a victorious and strong Church.

Easter is also a sign of love, the love of God for mankind, the love of Jesus Christ for men and the love of people for each other, their neighbor.

Easter also marks a new orientation for the Church. Every member of the Church is thus invited from now on to get to work so the Church will go forward. It is by the effort of each one of us that we will effectively have a Church that is strong materially, financially, and spiritually, according to the objective that we have fixed for ourselves through the vision that we have adopted at the last General Assembly of our Community.

By the new orientation, we must keep in mind the evident fact that the epoch of the mission is turned around. The new era is that of partnership. This comes back to say that



from now on our Church must work with great energy to evangelize the populations with local effort, for with our partners, each must bring a contribution for the building up of a strong and victorious church in the world. We must not be afraid to get involved in this new way, for Easter reminds us that we are victorious with Jesus Christ, the resurrected.

Happy Easter, and may God bless you!
Rev. Eliki Bonanga

The Community President visited 5 Posts on the Momboyo

Faithful to the recommendation of the General Assembly, which wants the Community President to make at least one visit each year to all the Community Posts, Rev. Eliki Bonanga, accompanied by the Community Vice-president, Rev. Clement Mputu Yonganga, undertook a missionary trip on the Momboyo

river from February 16 to March 5, 2008, visiting the posts of Longa/Ingende, Lotumbe,



Bongindji, Mangilombe and Ifumo. Following his custom, the Community President of the ECC/10-CDCC went to the parishes of these posts, visiting the parishes of Bokele, Ingende Center, Boteks, and Bempumba in the Post of Longa/Ingende; of Ifomi l'Oenga, Bompondo, Lotumbe Cener, and Nkasa in the Post of Lotumbe, Bokolongo, Bosuka, Eungu and Bongindji Center in the Post of Bongindji; Mangilombe Center in the Post of Mangilombe, and

Monkoto, Ifum'Isaka and Ifumo Befake in the post of Ifumo. These visits to the base raised enormous enthusiasm among the faithful of the parishes producing an effect of starting up again which, we are certain, will attract many other people to become members of the Church of the Disciples of Christ.

The local political administrative authorities were involved in the welcome of the Community President everywhere he went. It was the same for the traditional authorities who also shared in that welcome. Ecumenism was also shown between the Protestant church and the Roman Catholic church. We point out that the CDCC is the only Community of the Church of Christ in Congo which works in this part of Equator Province.

All the sectors of the life of the Church: evangelism, education, health, development, diaconate, youth, women and family were the object of particular attention by the Community President, and to the extent possible, solutions were found for certain problems that church members had.



Evangelism campaigns organized at the same time as musical evenings for young people with their chorales were another point of pride for this visit, for we saw people get rid of their fetishes and ask for intercession for their problems.

Also the vision of the Community of Disciples of Christ in Congo, from now until the year 2015, was explained in the posts

and a major campaign of awareness was organized in all the parishes in conformity with the new orientation of collecting the fees of members called "local effort." The

Community, in fact, made available to church members cards of 1,000, 500, and 300 Congo Francs which the members may obtain in order to participate in the functioning of the whole church from the parish up to the General Secretariat, including the posts. During this visit the Community President and his companions were able to appreciate the effort that the base (with respect to the deterioration of infrastructures left by the missionaries) are making now to install parishes worthy of the name. Construction of chapels in adobe brick, much more durable than the chapels with mud walls. Schools and Health Centers built according to the same model, and we are



sure that if these church members are able to overcome the poverty, accentuated by the wars which are still fresh in their memories, they will manage to create infrastructures that are much more durable in cement and metal roofing. They will even be able to equip their pastors with means of transportation so the Gospel will be preached everywhere. Briefly we say that: a pastor was ordained, four couples



were united for better or for worse before God, one Health Center was dedicated, one gravestone was placed on the grave of one of the pioneers of the Community of Disciples of Christ in Congo, Rev. Bakalandjwa, six children were presented for the blessing of God, four evangelistic campaigns were led and many meetings were held with different

groups of the church to permit a good understanding of the problems which arise at different levels of different parts of the church.

Natana Weteto

Pastors' Seminar on Preaching



Preaching, a formal way to spread the Word of God, is at the base of certain very destructive behaviors of the present day society in Congo Kinshasa. The cause of this unfortunate observation cannot be found in the Word of God itself, but in the manner that it is proclaimed. Under the financial incentive of the MEU, the two member Churches, namely the 10-CDCC and the 22-CADELU, by the intervention

of their respective Departments of Evangelization, organized a seminar which gathered 50 pastors, 25 coming from each Community. The good setting of the Mbandaka Girls' School housed this meeting with the goal of sharpening the art of preaching by the servants of God. In the presence of the Community Vice-President of the CDCC, Rev. Mputu Yonganga, and the Community Vice-President of the CADELU, Rev. Kondema, the opening remarks were made by the Community President of the CDCC, Rev. Eliki Bonanga. All during the seminar the pastors had to learn different techniques of interpretation of the Word of God. In order to assimilate the acquired ideas better, workshops of reflection were created and the results led to the joint session for discussion. We note that the seminar was led by two orators: Rev. Mputu Yonganga of the CDCC and Rev. Kondemo of the CADELU. One other thing that stood out, and not the least important, was the fact that an opportunity was given to seminar pastors to put into practice the ideas received. Sunday preceding the closure the seminar pastors were deployed to different parishes, both CDCC and CADELU, in order to preach the various sermons they had produced during the seminar. In order to be assured that the techniques of interpretation were really taken into account, the pastors chosen to preach were accompanied by two or three others, with the task of noting all the positive and negative points of the sermon. A meeting to critique everything that had been preached in the different parishes of the two Churches followed the evening of the same Sunday. Before the closing worship an outing for the pastors was organized at the Eala Botanical Garden, 12 kilometers from Mbandaka, in order to permit them to relax after this time of intense reflection. The seminar ended with the great satisfaction of all the pastors who expressed the desire to see such meetings occur at least once a year. This because they permit pastors of the two sister Communities to get to know one another, and they help the servants of God avoid errors in their preaching. The editors of the



Information Bulletin can only salute such initiative, because it limits the damage done in a society already destroyed by false messages.

E. Boango Nkolito

The Ordination Train has Picked up Speed



Formerly Pastors of the 10-CDCC had to work, after their theological training, 3 years for those with a graduate degree and 2 years for those with a license degree before being ordained.

This time is essentially a period during which the Community authorities observed the Pastors to confirm whether or not they have been called by God. This meant that some Pastors went up to five or even ten years without being ordained. But a decisive change took place at the time of the 2005 Assembly when a decision was adopted abolishing this period of observation. From then on

candidates for theological training must be well observed before their departure for training. This permitted the General Assembly of 2007 to decide, in its resolution No. 20/2007, on the ordination of 23 Pastors. As of now 18 have already been ordained, of which 5 are women.

The Post of Kinshasa has beaten the record of the number of candidates for ordination with four women out of five. We encourage this pace of the CDCC in the ordination of servants of God, for it is useless to send people for theological training then make them wait several years without being ordained. The ordination of women, a big step in the clergy policy of the Community of Disciples of Christ in Congo, has opened all the doors to women who can today occupy all the functions within the church.

Besides the fact that the 21st General Assembly raised the Rev. Christian Ikete Engetele to the rank of Department Head which permits her, not only to take part as member of the Administrative Committee, but also to act as interim to the Community President, we must note that by its decision No. 5 this same assembly recommended the nomination of a woman Pasteur Surveillant Principal.



As of today 13 women Pastors have been ordained and occupy elevated functions both in the administration of the Church and in the parishes.

E. Boango Nkolito

Rev. Sandra Gourdet on a Visit to the CDCC

We have spoken at length in our previous edition of this woman who does everything in the 10-CDCC. A true manager, Mrs. Sandra has succeeded to accompany the 10-CDCC with local initiatives under the leadership of the Community President, Rev. Eliki Bonanga, and to lead many of our former missionaries to be interested in their “child” born in 1898. The consequence of this is that visits of high leaders of the Disciples in the USA and Canada are signed up in her agenda since she has held the job of executive secretary for Africa of Global Ministries. Although costly, these repeated visits will reinforce the evangelization, and especially the reputation of the community. They are a true internal impulse and an opportunity for her to put her finger even more on the existing realities. We think that those who accompany her realize the daily difficulties, especially those she endured once in the interior of the CDCC; difficulties of transportation, of taking responsibility by the Servants of God, of the education of children, of the condition of women, of the precarious state of the life of children and pregnant women, etc.



During the trip at the beginning of the year 2008 Rev. Sandra Gourdet had the goal of visiting the base, especially the Posts of Bolenge, Boyeka and Monieka.

The Post of Bolenge, perhaps because of its proximity to Mbandaka, the headquarters, but also and especially because of its status as the first station of the Disciples in Congo, benefited from the visit of this servant of the Lord. It was for Mrs. Gourdet the opportunity to see again the places where, more than three decades ago, she had come as a young woman missionary to begin her ministry.

The Posts of Monieka and Boyeka were targeted as samples of two types of Posts that the CDCC knows: Posts created by the missionaries (Monieka) and Posts created after the missionaries (Boyeka). The Executive Secretary of Global Ministries for Africa observed personally the differences between these two kinds of posts. For the former, there are infrastructures deteriorating, while for the latter it is the crying insufficiency of infrastructures.

In conclusion, she concluded that the CDCC is in fact a workplace to be improved. This is the opportunity for the editors of the Information Bulletin to thank her and especially to be thankful for her good works.

O. Pekombe

Visit of a Delegation from South Dortmund to Bolenge



Years have passed, wounds have been bandaged, and that has permitted Rev. Dorothea and her delegation to have the courage to visit the present team of the Jumelage committee under the leadership of a woman, Pastor Ngoy Bofi.

We had the honor to accompany this important delegation and we have lived the offerings endured by it, very simply by love and nothing more. For how else to understand that people who live in acceptable material conditions can take the risk to find themselves brusquely in a motorized piece of wood under penetrating solar rays doubled with intemperate rain accompanied by waves and risky conditions of shelter. Truly it is by the love of God that this delegation came to visit us.

Rev. Dorothea was also carried away by the song “Moninga Pelisa Muinda Na Yo” which started up again each time that silence prevailed during all the travels. The visit of the delegation of South Dortmund will also remain a first because it covered practically the whole extent of the Post with Bibles and song books as support for evangelization, to give each parish. Our journal noted the support of the health center of with funds for the purchase of medicine. This prolonged the list of support of this kind having permitted the parishes along the river to open community pharmacies. The small gestures noticed at the time of this visit should serve as a lesson equaling notably the concern to preserve the flora and fauna observed by our brother, Andreas Dende, who was very worried about a living pangolin among the gifts of the Christians. He wanted to let it go.

This delegation saw for themselves African hospitality and the manifestation of joy of the members of the CDCC to give their guests what they are able to produce. However, one thing haunts the spirit of many Christians. It is the famous dossier of visas often refused to youth of the 10-CDCC by the German embassy which creates a gulf between brothers and sisters united in the Lord.

O. Pekombe



Rev. Lombe has returned from training

Rev. Frederic Lombe Bampele, Director of the Cabinet of the Community President, and Chief Editor of our bulletin, returned Saturday, April 19, to Mbandaka after a six month stay in England, in the city of Birmingham where he went to have training in the English language. The Community, being involved considerably in globalization, found itself at a disadvantage by the lack of knowledge of the English language. That's why it initiated a project of training of leaders in that language. Global Ministries agreed to support the project, and two leaders were designated, the Rev. Christiane Ikete Engetele who was to have her training in Kinshasa, and the Rev. Frederic Lombe who was to go to the land of Queen Elizabeth. The training that Rev. Lombe followed had four aspects: comprehension, reading, speaking, and

writing English. Having been accepted into the intermediate class, Frederic Lombe followed his training for three months, but the teachers, informed of the objective for which he had come to be trained, advised him to prolong his training for another trimester. That's what was done.

So Rev. Lombe has come back, but of what use will this costly training be if the church is not able to organize the training of other leaders. The editors of the Disciple Information Bulletin hope that a project following that of the training of this leader might be organized for other leaders of the CDCC. This task is not at all easy since the Community has a great many French speaking leaders. There are more than 800, pastors, teachers, doctors, needing to have training in the English language to be up to date in this world where everything seems to be in English. Doesn't a proverb say: "You must strike while the iron is hot"? We must profit while Rev. Frederic Lombe Bampele is still fresh from his training.
N. Weteto

Seminar About Forest Management



The forest has become today a commodity of worldwide importance that attracts the attention of everyone. Those most concerned by the rational management of the forest remain the populations that live there. Survival of the forest, a worldwide heritage, depends on their actions. If those who live in the forest can destroy it by the cutting down of the trees and all the other forms of consumption of the forest, we

must also recognize that big industries, with atmosphere pollution are the big destroyers of nature in general and forests in particular. In the forest regions of Equator province of the Democratic Republic of Congo, besides the wood consumption for



energy supply to the indigenous population, the big predators of the forest remain the exploiters that cut down the big trees and destroy the small ones by the fall of the big ones. The biggest drama is that the indigenous populations gain nothing from these exploitations in spite of the legal dispositions contained in the forest code. But, not only do the forest populations gain nothing, they also stop making use of forest products in the name of environmental conservation. A great deal is invested to protect the wildlife and the flora and all that to the great displeasure of the humans. Nevertheless, these big programs of conservation of nature are based on the destruction of thousands of kilometer of the forests. Why, in fact, do the more industrialized countries persevere in refusing to sign the agreements of reduction of pollution throughout the world? The conservation of nature to which we are subjected, is it not also the conservation of humans in view of globalization? Wouldn't tourists come from all the corners of the world to observe, not only a dense and natural forest, but also chimpanzees and other types of animals as well as the isolated man that would live as in the stone age? It is to put men first that the Congolese Institute for the Conservation of Nature (ICCN) organized, in Mbandaka, a seminar whose goal was to make the forest population the chief beneficiaries of the protection of nature in general and the forest in particular.

Monkoto, a Parish of the future



In 1947, the missionary Hobgood, Efoloko, I's ea Mbunga, installed, in incredible conditions the station of Ifumo, close to the colonial administrative station of the territory of Monkoto. Joseph Whitmer, Engondolo, came to strengthen the evangelization work by the construction of residences. But the work of the missionaries did not enter into the non-indigenous center of Monkoto. All

the activities were concentrated at Ifumo Bafake. Little by little, a prayer cell opened

right in the center of Monkoto and today this is an expansion parish that is installed there. A young theologian, Pastor Nguma, has been assigned and the construction of a chapel that will soon replace the old one is underway. With the will to build, in the tourist territory headquarters of Monkoto, a chapel to the height of the Community of the Disciples of Christ, one of the



main churches of Congo, the Christians of Monkoto mobilized to realize their everyday dream. This is why they all take turns to make bricks. Pastor Nguma is one of the rare young ones to master the technique of burning bricks and it is with burned bricks that he wants to construct his new chapel. To do this he does not have to go far to look for clay; he finds a supply right in the parish concession opposite the former chapel. He is strongly supported by the Pasteur Surveillant Principal, the Reverend Dieudonné Ekoto Inano, nicknamed Whitmer. And so the work of the manufacture of bricks is well advanced and soon the oven for the burning of the first batch will be ready. The big challenge that the Pastor Nguma and the Reverend Ekoto must overcome remains the purchase of sheet metal roofing for it would be unfortunate if the concerted local efforts in the manufacture of the bricks and their burning were not supported by gifts in sheet metal and that a chapel thus built were covered with ndele.

March, Women's Month



The organization of the United Nations consecrated the date of March 8 to the woman. But demonstrations are organized during the whole month of March. This year, the UN placed this month under the theme: "To invest in the woman and the girl," a theme that is appropriate in the Democratic Republic of the Congo since the basic law institutes parity between men and women in

the republican institutions. Now, it is evident that there is a big gap on the cultural, institutional, economic and political plan between men and women. But the woman would not know to clear the way for a place in the institutions except where she will be able to compete with the man from the viewpoint of competence. Note that from the viewpoint of education, there are more illiterate women than men. It is necessary that social institutions such as the church elaborate programs of literacy for women to help them catch up. On the cultural plan, the woman remains the principal agent of the transmission of tradition and it is she that perpetuates the customs that demote the woman to second place in comparison with man. A strong sensitization is necessary to bring the woman to play her role in socialization that takes into account the parity Man - Woman.

On the economic plan, the women, although chief agents of production just as much in the city as in the rural environments, do not profit from the fruit of their work in a proportional way. Even more, the access to credit remains practically the privilege of men, especially when the woman is married, in spite of all the legal disposals that seem to open to the woman an important access to credit. In any case, women strive to attain micro - credits since they have shown themselves better administratively than men during the period of big economic crisis in RD Congo that characterized the end of the regime of Mobutu and the beginning of the regime of Kabila (AFDL). In addition to all the strategies than the women could set up for their promotion, it is necessary to recognize that the promotion of women on the economic, cultural, and educational plan will serve as a spearhead for the political promotion of women. It is around this kind of problem that women had to reflect for this whole month, so that using the lobby they bring strength to invest really in the woman and in the girl, so that this theme does not remain a dead letter.



Revision of Legal Documents



In application of the recommendation n° 121 line 6 of the 21st Session of the general assembly of the Community of the Disciples of Christ in Congo, the Administrative Committee met with the office of the general assembly and the office of the legal commission, to harmonize the amendments to the Statutes and the Bylaws of the Community at the time of the next Assembly. This recommendation had

been made in view of many observed discrepancies in the application of the texts that were adopted in 2001. Item by item, these texts were examined with a fine tooth comb by specialists in Congolese Law and by the executives that apply these texts in the parishes and the posts of the Community. This work also involved the active participation of Mister Anderson Lubaku, auditor of the Church of Christ in Congo who accompanies the CDCC in its process of reforms, and Engineer Djimbonge Weye, one of the hired laymen that has a lot of experiences in the management of the organs of the Community.

All the suggestions made will be examined at the time of the next Board of directors. But we remember that discrepancies often originate from an imbalance between the traditional forces called to be in balance for the good functioning of the association. It is a matter of the organ of decision, organ of execution and organ of supervision. Whenever there is encroachment in the head of the organs or agents of the organs, conflicts follow that can block the good functioning of the Community. In addition, it is necessary to recognize that the lack of popularization of the texts that were adopted was also the basis of several institutional problems and conflicts between the organs and the officials. Several persons continued to manage the organs of the Community with the spirit of the former texts that were obsolete and already replaced. There is place to hope that this harmonization work that mobilized funds and energies will bring the Community to new horizons a lot more stable and more prosperous, especially in this moment where the CDCC has adopted a vision that she plans to realize from now till the year 2015.

Local Effort, a New Philosophy

Local effort, decided by the 21st General Assembly in its decision No. 29, is no longer a project, it has become a reality, and it is the Community President, the Rev. Eliki Bonanga in person, who went to the Mbandaka III parish to explain to the parish Pastors of Mbandaka and Bolenge how the operation should take place.



The new methodology is a correction of different attempts tried up till now and which have gone by many names since the famous operation Nehemiah which failed from lack of follow-up. For this new experience, Rev. Eliki explained, the posts will receive cards of participation in the local effort for a fee of the amount written on the card. The member who pays the amount indicated on the card is enrolled on a list in his parish. The parishes send the lists with

the funds to the post treasury which makes up the global list of all the parishes and sends it, with the funds, to the General Treasury. The General Treasury of the Community receives all the lists of the posts and makes up a general list which will be published annually with the names of all the members who have participated in the local effort, by parish and by post. As for the funds, they will be divided in such a manner that 40% remains in the parish for development projects, 20% goes to the church post, and 40% to the General Secretariat.

The success of the local effort will depend first of all on the good



understanding of the mechanism at all levels, of the seriousness in the leader of the people involved, namely the cashiers and the pastors of the parishes, the treasurers of the posts and the Supervising Pastors and the General Treasurer of the Community. Finally, the visibility of the actions resulting from local effort will be a stimulus for the continuity of the process.

As a process, it is not possible to hope for 100% success in the beginning, but with time and effort, local effort can one day sustain the budget of the Community.

N. Weteto

Uniform pay scale in the church posts



In execution of the Decision n° 79 of the 21st ordinary general assembly, the Engineer Djimbonge Weye, layman engaged in the Church Post of Kinshasa and one of the coordinators and instigators of the uniform scale for Pastors, explained the mechanism of the pay of the pastors of Kinshasa to the pastors of the church posts of Mbandaka and Bolenge. For the standardization of the pay of the pastors in the posts, it is necessary first to gather the post funds. Next it is necessary to elaborate a scale

that takes into account the qualification (training of the pastor being paid), classification of the parishes and function of the pastor in the parish. Thus, the pastors who have graduate theological degrees will have an even wage basis and according to the parish categories, that is, while taking account of their production, premiums will be granted to the tenured pastors and to the assistant pastors. Finally, a special premium for the effectiveness of the pastor will be granted to the ministers with greater performance, this is to say, those of which reports will show progress in all areas. This is the reason why it is necessary that the parishes transmit their monthly reports uniformly. A uniform card will be put at the disposal of the parish pastors. Putting into practice the uniform scale in the posts presents the advantage of guaranteeing the remuneration of the pastor, but also avoids pastors seeking to be assigned to the parishes that are more well-off. For it is evident that certain pastors who do not perform very well hide themselves in the strong parishes and win more solid salaries than those of the pastors undertaking evolving parishes that are less well off. It would be ideal if this system expands into the whole Community so that one day all pay of pastors is centralized at the level of the General Secretariat so that the ministers accept going to the remote parishes of the villages in order to bring the gospel and to put their knowledge to the service of the church. This meeting is the point of departure of a process that must spread to the level of the whole Community with a strong sensitization, for success depends on a good comprehension.

Natana Weteto

Rural parishes, abandoned?

The Community of Disciples of Christ is, from its beginning, one of the communities in Congo that is dedicated to the training of pastors. At first they were trained at Congo Christian Institute which turned out pastors – teachers. Then it was the preachers’ school of Bolenge, and afterwards the United School of Theology of Luluabourg (today Kananga). The Community sent young people to be trained at universities, especially in Europe, then in Congo, notably at the Congo Free University, the Higher Theological Institute of Bolenge, the Theological School of Kinshasa, and now today they are trained at the Congo Protestant University and the Protestant University of the Equator. Through all these efforts, the Community of Disciples of Christ in Congo counts, not only a large number of trained pastors, but also quite a few good pastors whose effectiveness cannot be doubted across the world. Those with doctoral, masters, and bachelors degrees are numerous and compete with each other in the big CDCC.

But paradoxically, in the villages the parishes are led by catechists, among whom some are “self-taught.” The big question that arises remains to know if the big CDCC has abandoned the rural parishes by refusing to designate trained pastors for them. The reply is simple, the pastors tell us. There are not only concerns related to their pay in the parishes where the Christians are very poor, but also their responsibility as parents requires them to remain in the urban parishes where their children can go to schools which offer different options, for in the villages where there is a single secondary school, it provides only a single option. That doesn’t leave the pastor’s children the choice of subjects in which they have aptitude for understanding. Also, the lack of appropriate health care for their children discourages the pastors, even if they would like to go work in the villages. So all this group of trained pastors jostle in the urban centers, notably Kinshasa and Mbandaka. It’s high time that in addition to the standardization of salaries in the posts, the CDCC think of supervising the children, not only of the pastors but also of the teachers and nurses and doctors who work in the interior of the Community, in rural areas. For 30 years, for example, the dormitory of Congo Christian Institute of Bolenge struggles bravely and stoically against deterioration. It only needs a good dining room and a coat of paint to make it livable. Once equipped, children could occupy it and permit their parents to accept going to work completely at ease in the villages.

Figurehead: Jean Bokeleale

1937. The minister John Bomenge had just noticed, for the second time, this elegant young man that he had seen, some months earlier, leading a party in Becimbola, a neighbor town of Ngondo, his natal town. He called him and convinced him to enter the school of the white people of Lotumbe. The young man, very trusting of him, saw in this invitation, an opportunity to learn to read and to write in order to get ahead of the other



young boys of the town that competed with him in leading parties, while the minister Bomenge saw in this elegant young man, proud and sure of himself, a leader of the Church. This young man was John Bokeleale who, the same year, entered the school of the missionaries at Lotumbe. He was brilliant in his studies and completed in two years primary school that usually took four years. He entered the Congo Christian Institute of Bolenge in 1939 and obtained his diploma from the secondary school in 1942 with the grade of A + which led the missionaries to keep him as a Congolese teacher. A meticulous man, Bokeleale collaborated with the missionaries in an impeccable way so well that it ended up, on the eve of the independence of the Democratic Republic of Congo, by his being called: "Half - white" which was a true privilege in that era.

When independence was announced, the missionaries, visionary and feeling that the Congolese would end up chasing the Belgians out, but also the white people organized and prepared the changeover while choosing the one that would lead the Church of the Disciples of Christ in Congo.

Bokeleale was designated, but as in all the sectors of social life in RDC, the lack of intellectual leaders was a considerable obstacle. Bokeleale had to be sent with all urgency to Europe to prepare his degree in Theology. So in 1961, when he left for his studies, Louis Ilela took his place to assume the interim. He had to work with the American missionaries until the return of John Bokeleale from his studies. For a degree that normally takes eight semesters, Bokeleale combined subjects and finished his studies in two years. He returned in 1963 and resumed his place at the head of the Community. He began his first mandate in an atmosphere of high tension for some Disciple leaders of public administration conferred to chase out the white missionaries and manage their church themselves. There was a group of 12 composed of young leaders of the era: Joseph Ekofo, Rock Elanga, John Entombodji, Laurent Bondole, Samuel Lotafe, Esaïe Efole, Zakarie Nkoko, Illiterate Rock Losangya, Dawel Yoka, Etienne Afino, Rock Mokondoko and André Ebale. They benefited from the services of a young leader. Joseph Ikete, as driver. On the recommendation of the missionaries, Bokeleale lowered the arm and accepted the claims of the 12 laymen. He was invited in consultation to the United States and definitively took the reins of the Disciples of Christ in Congo. His biggest preoccupation remained the granting to the Community of solid infrastructures. He constructed a new administrative building and bought a panoply of residences for the leaders. Making the promotion of women his strong point, Bokeleale John named a woman to the department of women; Rachel Iema and organized the women in a federation that was called in Lomongo "Eamanelo ea Bamato Bauma" (EBB), "Federation of all the women." Like a good visionary and to support this initiative, John Bokeleale constructed a school for girls in 1967, the high School nsang'ea Ndotsi, that is,

the high School of the Good news. Henceforth, the girls have a school at the level of the Congo Christian Institute established by the missionaries for the boys. With a pride that bordered on pomposity, Bokeleale bought a considerable fleet of automobiles and his leaders were all able to travel by car. Concerned to see his church forge ahead, he sent several young ones for training in all the domains: teaching, health (doctors), theology, etc. In 1968, he was elected, to the great despair of the Disciples, President of the Church of Christ in Congo. But he did not leave the Disciples orphans for he prepared three heirs apparent: Paul Elonda, Petrus Boyaka and Junior Mpombo. The latter was already working in the United School of Theology of Luluabourg, as Director while the two first succeeded him as General Secretary and Legal Representative (Paul Elonda) and Assistant General Secretary and Legal Substitute Representative (Petrus Boyaka).
(to be continued)