

Theme of the year 2023 – 2024  
“Whom are you looking for?”

## International Editorial

### *A new year ... for real!*



We know it well the date for the start of the New Year has been set using a completely arbitrary manner. Of course, we are celebrating this passage in a particular way, but if we consider all this objectively, we realize that nothing really differentiates December 31st from January 1st. And yet, we are striving to see the New Year as an opening chapter in the book of our lives.

We therefore wish you a **Happy and Holy New Year.**

The Church is not left out since it has established a feast in honor of the Virgin Mary. It is the solemnity of Saint Mary, Mother of God. It closes the Octave of Christmas, these eight days celebrating the Nativity of the Lord with splendor. At the same time, it opens the New Year and places it under the protection of Mary.

How can we pass up the opportunity to finally experience a truly new year? Some of us are taking good resolutions at the beginning of January which are not lasting very long. They are undoubtedly a little bit difficult to keep, even if they start with a good intention.

So, at the beginning of the year, **we are going to take a good resolution, together!** We are going to be even more faithful than usual to the daily meditation of our Mystery of the Rosary and to our monthly meeting at home. We think this resolution does not go far enough? Here's another: **our Team will invite two new people before Easter.** Are we ready to take on this challenge?

So we will live a truly new year, in loyalty and joy, in our Teams, all over the world.

**Christine PETTINARI**  
International Coordinator

**Br. Louis-Marie ARIÑO-DURAND, o.p**  
International Chaplain

### Meeting the Rosary teams of Gabon

Gabon is a country located in Central Africa with an area of 267,000 km<sup>2</sup> and 2,000,000 inhabitants, endowed with great wealth in water, forests and minerals. High rate of Christians, but with the proliferation of evangelical churches and Islam, it becomes difficult to have precise statistics on the subject. Here is a presentation of the Rosary Teams in Gabon following the various events of their progress.

#### Joyful Event

An event: The joy of the 25th anniversary of the presence of a Home of Charity in Gabon is at the origin of the creation of 15 teams in the Archdiocese of Libreville in September 2001. A presence of the Rosary Teams was also reported in the city of Port Gentil, economic capital of Gabon, in the 90s by a Gabonese woman who had discovered the Movement during a stay in France.

#### Luminous Event

An event: Of the 15 initial parish teams from October 2001, **7 teams** survived in 2005.

**The first particularity of the EDR in Gabon:** the teams are placed under the protection of a name of the Virgin Mary or a saint:

**ND of the Angels, ND of the Assumption, ND of Lourdes, ND of Mercy, ND of Misericordia, ND of Perpetual Help and ND of La Salette.**

Since 2006, thanks to missionary work, **73 Rosary Teams have been affiliated throughout Gabon** (Archdiocese of Libreville, dioceses of Mouila, Franceville, Oyem and the Apostolic Vicariate of Makokou)

**The second particularity:** Gabon has developed a Dominican spirituality movement with no presence of the Order in Gabon, while the border countries have convents and Dominican houses. The establishment of the organization unfolded as the Movement progressed: Team Manager, Deanery/Sector Manager, Diocesan and National Manager. All dioceses have diocesan chaplains appointed by the various Bishops of Gabon which has 5 dioceses. Only the diocese of Franceville has not yet fully integrated the large EDR family.

#### Sorrowful Events

An event: First, the departure of the promoter of the EDR for serious health reasons in 2002. At that time, neither complete knowledge of the Movement, nor elements of contact with the International Coordination because Father François was in charge.



*RT of Gabon at Lourdes in 2012*

Then, the closure of the Our Lady of the Rosary parish at the Home of Charity and the difficult acceptance of prayer at home by some members of the clergy slightly slowed down the missionary momentum.

Finally, the death of Father François on March 26<sup>th</sup>, 2021 represented a very strong sign for the celebrations of the 20th anniversary of the Movement in Libreville, in the presence of the Archbishop Emeritus, Mgr. Basile MVE ENGONE, the Vicars General of the dioceses of Libreville and 'Oyem, priests from the diocese of Mouila and Brother LEHO BOVARY, a Dominican who came from Pointe Noire for the occasion.

## Glorious Event



An event: The official presentation of the Movement in 2009 to the Archbishop of Libreville, Mgr Basile MVE ENGONE, and the visit in 2011 of the international coordinator, **Mrs. Marie-France SEILLIER**, was an excellent lever for the recognition of the Movement in Gabon.

In 2014, the visit of the international chaplain, **Br. Gilles DANROC, o.p.**, was a continuation of the confirmation of respect for the spirituality of the EDR in Gabon and an encouragement to continue the mission in the northern areas.



In June 2022 in Lambaréné the joint visit of **Br. Louis-Marie ARIÑO-DURAND, o.p, international chaplain, and Chantal COURTIN**, international coordinator of the EDR, proved to be the highest point of this recognition which was confirmed in September 2022 by the entry of Gabon into the New Dominican Province, St Charles LWANGA, recently erected in Central Africa.

*Lambaréné - 2022*

This commitment in faith to love God and to make Him known in hope and charity is the fruit of the various events experienced. And long life to the Rosary Teams all over the world in simplicity and depth. Glory be to God.

“Mary, be the hostess who welcome people in my home.”



*The very first teams*

**Roselyne PEPA, National Coordinator of the Rosary Teams of Gabon**



# CELEBRATE AS A TEAM

## "Whom are you looking for?" 1<sup>st</sup> Glorious Mystery – Resurrection Luke 15:1-10

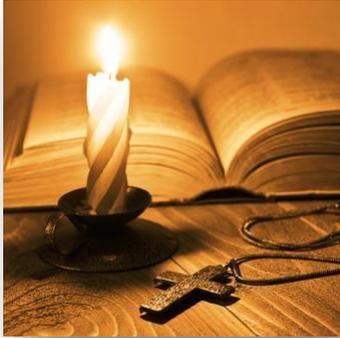


L - Person in charge or the person who receives at home and leads the prayer  
1- 1<sup>st</sup> reader 2- 2<sup>nd</sup> reader 3- Cantor A- All together



### Welcome

The person who receives says **Father Eyquem's prayer to the Virgin.**



L. The crowds are coming to see Jesus. They are seeking for his companionship and approach him. During this celebration, we will join them to meet Jesus and listen to him.

1. To be united with him and better understand his Word, let us trace upon ourselves the sign of the Cross.

**3+A. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**



### Prayer to the Holy Spirit

L. Holy Spirit, you who open our hearts to the understanding of the Scriptures, may you give us the opportunity to savour the teaching of Jesus in order to live from it.

**3+A. Come, Spirit of holiness,  
Come, Spirit of light,  
Come, Spirit of fire,  
Come and embrace us.**

OR ANOTHER HYMN

2. Holy Spirit, you who gather together those who are scattered, may you grant us to be attentive to those who are far from the Lord.

**3+A. Come, Spirit of holiness...**



*Our Lady of Pontmain - France*



### Invocation to Mary

L. Mary, you are the exemplary disciple of your Son. Grant us to seek His will and do it joyfully.

**3+A. Hail, our Lady, we sing to you,  
Hail, our mother, we pray to you. (V 153)**

1. Mary, you are the mother of all men. May you intercede to your Son so that none of your children will be lost.

**3+A. Hail, our Lady...**



### Listening to the Word of God

Luke 15:1-10

**2. <sup>01</sup> The tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to listen to him, <sup>02</sup> but the Pharisees and scribes began to complain, saying, "This man welcomes sinners and eats with them." <sup>03</sup> So to them he addressed this parable. <sup>04</sup> "What man among you having a hundred sheep and losing one of them would not leave**



*the ninety-nine in the desert and go after the lost one until he finds it? <sup>05</sup>And when he does find it, he sets it on his shoulders with great joy <sup>06</sup>and, upon his arrival home, he calls together his friends and neighbors and says to them, 'Rejoice with me because I have found my lost sheep.' <sup>07</sup>I tell you, in just the same way there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous people who have no need of repentance. <sup>08</sup>"Or what woman having ten coins and losing one would not light a lamp and sweep the house, searching carefully until she finds it? <sup>09</sup>And when she does find it, she calls together her friends and neighbors and says to them, 'Rejoice with me because I have found the coin that I lost.' <sup>10</sup>In just the same way, I tell you, there will be rejoicing among the angels of God over one sinner who repents."*

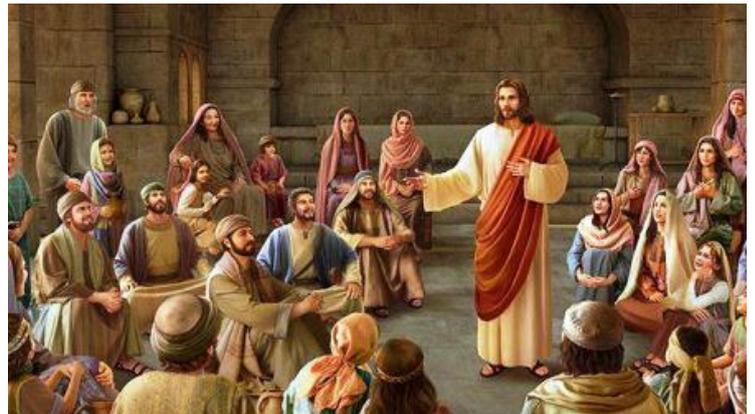
## L. Let's welcome silently the Word of God.



### Reflection on the Word

L. Jesus, even if he happens sometimes to like solitude, was seeking the company of men. There are many stories in the Gospel of encounters between the Lord and unexpected characters. Particular emphasis is placed on meals that Jesus shares with the Pharisees, his disciples or one or another public sinner.

1. Jesus' contemporaries are coming to him and are seeking his companionship. He is not choosing those who listen to him. He knows exactly why he went out: to go to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel." (Mt 15:24). This is the reason why, wherever he goes, he sows the Word. The grain of the Good News will grow in the earth of the hearts receiving it.



2. The heart and arms of Jesus are wide open to those willing to join him and experience true conversion. He welcomes everyone and does not select those to whom he addresses. The texts particularly emphasize the look that Jesus casts on the ones who are coming to him. It is a look full of compassion and mercy, happy to welcome those seeking God.

**3+A. Keep me, my God, my strength is in you;**

**OR ANOTHER HYMN**

**Keep me, my God, my happiness is you. (bis)**

L. However, those approaching Jesus are not undifferentiated anonymous people. They are a crowd, certainly, but Jesus knows each one personally. Once they come forward, a special relationship is established. Jesus allows his interlocutor to exist personally before him, with all that he is.

1. In this way, Jesus is the Good Shepherd of his people: his sheep, "he calls each one by its name." (Jn 10:3). They form a flock, but at the same time, they exist individually for the shepherd. Their identity is not lost in the crowd since the One driving them develops a personal relationship with each one of them.

2. If one is missing, not only does he do like God in the garden of Genesis calling for Adam: "Where are you?" (Gen 3:9), but he goes looking for it. And he doesn't come back until he finds it. In his joy, he forgets worry and fatigue and tenderly takes it on his shoulders.

**3+A. Keep me, my God...**





L. Once the lost one is found, what a joy! It is the joy of the shepherd who finds his sheep. It is the joy of the woman who finds the silver coin she had lost. There was suddenly a lack, a gap, which was filled because we found what was lost, with an overabundance of joy.

1. This joy of the shepherd and the woman is not experienced alone. It is a joy we share with those around us and it multiplies because it becomes the joy of all. The one sharing this joy loses nothing. Quite on the contrary. By sowing joy around him, he makes it flourish and multiply. Joy is contagious, much more than sadness.

2. The joy of the parable is an illustration of the joy experienced at the conversion of the sinner. Far beyond the physical surroundings of the one who sees the converted sinner, it is the joy of heaven and earth that bursts forth. It is the joy of those who are witnesses of this return to the Lord. It is the joy celebrating forgiveness, given and received.

**3+A. Keep me, my God...**



### Reflection for our life

L. Our Team gathers around Jesus to listen to him with Mary. We are those sinners finding themselves around him. All in search of the Lord our God, we want to hear his Word, to understand it better, to let it shape our lives to finally be able to give it to those around us.

1. Let us therefore be careful not to close the door of our heart or house. In our hearts we are welcoming the Word of God. It is calling us to conversion and joy. In our house, we gather with the other members of our Team. The door is open to everyone who has heard the Lord's invitation through us.

2. One day we were invited to join a Rosary Team. That day, it was Jesus who came to get us and gave us his Mother. It is in fact Mary who receives us. We ask it of her through Father Eyquem's prayer at the beginning of each of our meetings. She is the hostess and leads us to Jesus.

**3+A. Change your hearts, believe the Good News,  
Change your life, believe that God loves you.**

OR ANOTHER HYMN

L. Our Rosary Team is a group which is not uniform. Each person composing it, is a treasure and, like the silver coin, is valuable in the eyes of God. Certainly, we are addressing our prayer to the Lord together, but it is individually that his Word is received and comes to join us in what we are deep down.

1. So everybody should be welcomed as they are. Besides, don't we worry if one of us is missing, especially if he is weaker or marginalized? Over time, we are familiarizing ourselves with each other. A fraternal bond is created and it is then that my teammates become valuable in my eyes.

2. Respecting the specificity of each one, with his sufferings and joys, we are invited to manifest a presence both discreet and delicate which is a reflection of God's love and tenderness.



**L. In silence, let us pray for those who are absent and ask God to renew the way we see each other in our Team**

**3+A. Change your hearts...**



L. When we are welcoming a new member into our Team, we don't know where he is on his journey toward God. Sometimes, being among us is the source of a true and beautiful conversion. What a joy, then, when the one who has joined us finds the Lord! All together we can rejoice.

1. We can experience happy conversions within our Teams! These conversions are often unexpected. The time of praise and intercession at our meeting then takes on its full dimension. The joy of the Lord is also ours and it can only be communicative and stimulating. It's up to us to radiate this joy!



*Our Lady of the poor - Banneux - Belgium*

2. A sheep is coming home: what a joy for those who supported it throughout the days with their attention and prayers! It is the joy of heaven and earth that bursts forth. We can only share this joy with those around us when we return home.

**L. Let us share the joy of a conversion, ours or the one of a member who has been welcomed**

**3+A. Change your hearts...**



### **Prayer of praise and intercession**

L. Blessed are You Lord, our Father, you want all men to be saved

**3+A. Blessed are you, Lord, OR ANOTHER HYMN  
God of tenderness and love!**

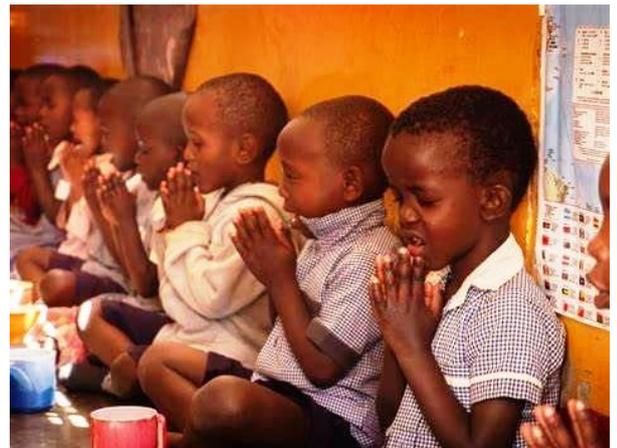
1. Blessed are you, Lord Jesus, you go looking for the one who was lost.

**3+A. Blessed are you, Lord,  
God of tenderness and love!**

2. Blessed are you, Holy Spirit, you let us say in entire confidence:

**3+A. Our Father who art in heaven...**

L. Mary, you rejoiced with Elisabeth, allow us to know the joy of conversion.



**3+A. Hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou amongst women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus, *who goes looking for us.***

**Holy Mary, Mother of God...**

**L. With Pope Francis let us pray** that the Spirit may help us to recognize the gift of different charisms within the Christian community, and to discover the richness of different ritual traditions in the heart of the Catholic Church

**3+A. Hail Mary full of grace... *(with the clause)***

L. Each of us is invited to complete the decade by presenting his personal intentions and those of the world.

**A. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit...**





## Sending on mission

L. There is joy among the angels of God over one sinner who converts.

1. May this joy be the joy of our ceaseless return to the Lord and let us share it so that our joy be perfect!

**3+A. Blessed be the name of God,  
from century to century,  
may he be blessed! (bis)**      OR ANOTHER HYMN



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