

Dear friends,

On this occasion of return to resuming activities, I desire to wish each and every one, a happy 2018 of resuming of activities. May this new academic, school, pastoral year of new activities as per the work domains of each one, be full of success, joy, fraternal collaboration, hope and mutual support in respect and promotion of the human dignity of each and everyone.

Yes, everyone says holiday time is a time of rest, encounter with the family, friends, etc.; time of meeting with one another; time of renewal of physical, moral and spiritual energy. Well, from May up to July 2018, I was at home in the Democratic Republic of Congo, for my holiday. I was very happy to see especially my mom Suzanne CHUNGU. Happy to be home, my 2018 holiday was busy therefore it was not really a time of rest.

Here are some few illustrated points regarding my 2018 holiday:

- I had to do a lot travel within the country (the DRC):
 1. To Kinshasa: for meetings related to the activities of my Foundation,
 2. To Lubumbashi - Kalemie and Kongolo: to either welcome or accompany my visitors, or meet with one or other authority to unblock one point or the other in connection with the Foundation, or again, for appointments in the SNCC (railways national society) offices to unblock a blockage related to the shipment of the foundation's 4th container;
- Joy and celebration in receiving and welcoming visitors :
 1. Nolwenn coming from France for two months of service in our hospital in Sola,
 2. Anne and Sister Claire coming from France for 8 days of life in Sola and finally,
 3. Lucas, Samuel and Yonni, three Kenyan medical technicians for a one-month medical technical mission in our hospital in Sola;
- Personal commitment for the smooth running of the Foundation. This commitment allowed me to:
 1. Carry out changes and reorganization of the hospital staff.
 2. Finish some activities of the Foundation that it has been a struggle to complete.
 3. Undertake a number of activities to enable the Foundation achieve a great step in the pursuit of its mission and its objectives in order to promote health and good living conditions for the population in the region. These include: - the construction of the 2nd house of the Foundation (15m/13.5), - the construction of two premises for the installation of two generators, - the launching of the transport of sand, gravel and stones for the construction of the water tower, - various purchases in Kongolo and to ensure their transport until Sola, etc.
 4. Plan a practical organization of activities after my departure,
 5. Create village committees to increase the participation of Kibungu people in the development activities that are carried out in their village by the Foundation;

- Trips around Sola:
 1. To enable us learn about the impact of our medical activities in the region,
 2. To improve on our commitment in promoting education through donations to school libraries and other specific supports,
 3. To meet with different representatives of the population on the effectiveness of the Foundation's activities on the population, etc.
- Welcoming, listening, visiting, conducting meetings:
 1. The reception of different people especially the needy, people living with disabilities and who are on crutches or wheelchairs were offered,
 2. Listening to anyone who wanted to share one or the other joy, difficulty, ordeal, discovery, etc., with me,
 3. Regular visits to the sick and in our hospital and to different families in Sola,
 4. Individual meetings with each staff member of the hospital and other people for one point or another ;
- Participation in the life of the parish :
 1. The Eucharistic celebration in communion with the parishioners,
 2. Visiting the priests and sisters of the parish,
 3. Moments of fraternal sharing (meals, exchanges, etc.);
- Participation in the social life of the Sola community:
 1. This was by extinguishing bush fires to avoid them burning and spreading to the houses.
 2. Encouraging the youth in the community to continue in their rhythm of the dynamism.
 3. To hope with the population (all ages) for peace, for a better future, for a definitive exit from a political situation not really controlled, for the improvement of the miserable social condition.
 4. To devote time for children: play with them, talk with them, dream with them.
 5. To meet the women in the Sola community and have conversations on different issues of their daily life.
- Participation in family life:
 1. The joy of spending time with mom, brothers and sisters,
 2. Family and individual meetings with family members on site in Sola;
- Maintain a time of prayer and personal recollection.

To maintain a similar pace, my days during my leave started at 5am and ended over midnight with a summary of the day.

Yes, my leave was so busy, so much so that, the day I left Sola for Kongolo to Kalemie and Lubumbashi, I arrived in Kongolo, 30 minutes after the departure of the plane that had to take me to Kalemie. But as they say, "There can be luck/good thing in misfortune", against all hope and conviction of the staff of the RVA, those who accompanied me from Sola to Kongolo and those of Kongolo who came to say goodbye, I managed after a difficult negotiation in English, French and Swahili, to have a place on board of a humanitarian plane, 3 hours after the departure of the UNHAS' plane. The delay in Kongolo was finally beneficial for me in Kalemie since the same day, I had a flight from Kalemie to Lubumbashi while I had to spend night in Kalemie and continue the next day to Lubumbashi. To my great surprise, once I had arrived in Lubumbashi, I learnt that the plane I had to take the next day from Kalemie to Lubumbashi was canceled. So, had it not been for the delay in Kongolo, I would be stuck in Kalemie for days missing my flight from Lubumbashi to Nairobi on July 25 and from Nairobi to Paris on July 28, 2018.

Not only was my family stay in the country very busy but also the 3 days spent in Nairobi, to greet one family after another and render a service that was entrusted to me.

I left Nairobi on July 28, I arrived in Paris on July 29 and two days later, on August 1, 2018, I was on the plane to Burkina Faso where with a young boy and a lady, we went on the initiative of the service of missionary and vocational animation that I am in charge, for a month discovering the Church of Burkina Faso and to share with the people on the ground, the life of the missionaries of Africa. Yes, one month for:

1. Living the experience of a dynamic and living Church by the number of young people there are in the Church of Burkina Faso,
2. Discovering a parts of Burkina Faso and its realities;
3. Sharing the "charism", mission, pastoral activities of missionaries of Africa (White Fathers) in a Sahelian country ;
4. Living with young people aspiring to become missionaries of Africa (White Fathers) from Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, Mali and Togo, the experience of the missionary of Africa camp in our philosophy training center: Maison Lavigerie, in Ouagadougou / Burkina Faso.

I then returned to Paris on August 30, 2018 and immediately resumed the parish ministry in Sainte Colette's parish, 19th arrondissement of Paris and in Saint Jacques de Montrouge parish, diocese of Nanterre, where I help from time to time with Mass celebrations.

Dear friends, wishing each and everyone a happy 2018 in resuming one's activities, I would like to express to all of you, my friendship. I also wish to request for your friendship, your prayers, your support so that this 2018 pastoral year, which may have changes in my case, may be rich in encounters, new adventures, pastoral investments to allow my sacerdotal motto: "Only a life lived for others, is worth living" continue to become a reality.

Norbert MWISHABONGO
Missionary of Africa (White Father)