

## Message from the Community

Welcome to the **Third Edition** of our Africa newsletter

Thank you for taking the time in this busy part of the year to read our Africa newsletter.

It comes with our love and thanks for your interest in and support of our Communities in Congo and Rwanda.

We are so aware of both the distance and the closeness of people on the African continent in this age of global technology, where we were able, with no time delay, to be present with the continent's responses to the death of their great Father, Mandela, just last week.

His greatness has made us aware of what one person with a vision and courage can do to change the course of history and to break down the barriers of poverty and oppression.

In praying in thanksgiving for all that his long life has meant to people throughout the world, we pray too that Congo too will give birth to daughters and sons who will bring hope and a vision of justice to a country where:

- 75% live below the poverty line
- more than half have no access to drinking water or to basic healthcare
- three out of every 10 children are poorly nourished
- up to 20% of children won't live past the age of 5, and nearly half will die before their 40th birthday.
- rape and sexual violence are used indiscriminately as weapons of war in what has been described as 'the rape capital of the world'.

Without a doubt, few people need your prayer and care more than the Congolese – thank you!

### Contents

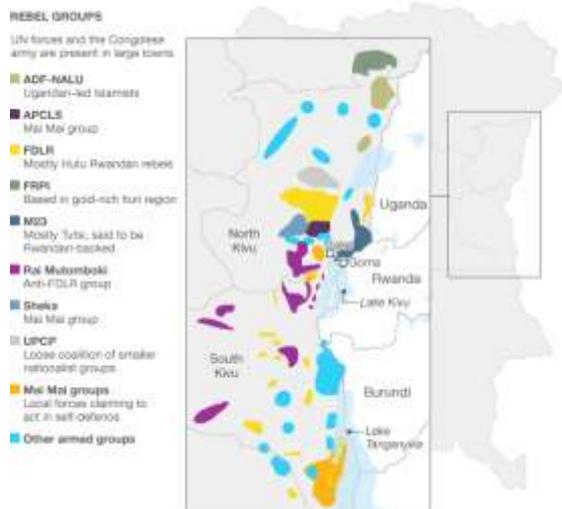
Message from the Community	1
Update on DR Congo	2
Nutritional centre in Mirhi	3
Visiting Sisters	4
Fundraising	6
Other News from the Pories	8

## Update on the DR Congo

In our last newsletter we reported on the M23 rebel group (mainly ethnic Tutsis) who had taken control of the mining city of Goma.

You will have seen recently in the news, reports that the group has surrendered to UN-backed Congolese armed forces.

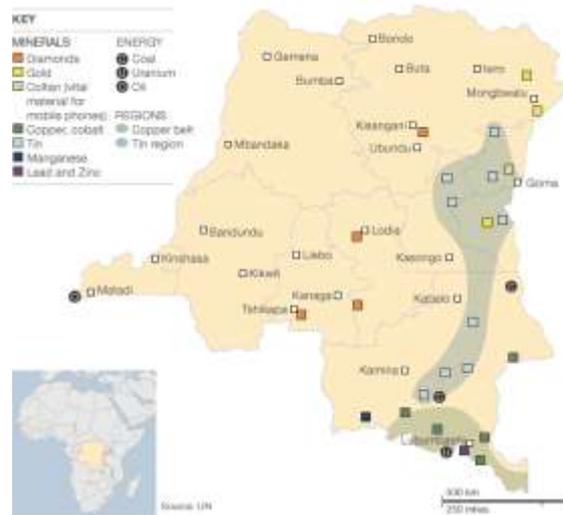
In our eyes, this may bring hope for peace. However, the situation in the area is complex. There are various political agendas at play; other armed groups operating in the area and many exiles from the conflict in Rwanda which all fuel continuing unrest in the area.



Eastern DR Congo is awash with a variety of different rebel groups. This is a snapshot of their locations in late 2012 ([www.bbcnews/world-africa](http://www.bbcnews/world-africa))

The rebels make money controlling the trade in the region's minerals including gold, tin, coltan (used in mobile phones

and other electronic goods), cassiterite (used in food packaging).



DR Congo has more than 70% of the world's coltan, 30% of the planet's diamond reserves and vast deposits of cobalt, copper and bauxite. This wealth however has attracted looters and fuelled the country's civil war ([www.bbcnews/world-africa](http://www.bbcnews/world-africa))

Rebels living in forests surrounding our Communities continue their attacks. Many local farmers have given up farming their land, after having been robbed of several harvests. Sexual violence is prevalent. Our Sisters in the area deal directly with the consequences of this. Girls taken by the rebels have sometimes managed to escape and returned to the villages but often pregnant and of course traumatized.

So the day-to-day situation for the people living in the area, we are told, remains largely unchanged and the effects of the conflict will continue for generations.

## Nutritional Centre in Mirhi, DR Congo

The Daughters of the Resurrection in Mirhi have sent us some photographs showing progress with the Nutritional Centre in Mirhi, DR Congo. You will remember we were raising funds to help them build the Centre which provides a facility to feed orphans and homeless families in the area.



*A group of the orphans who come every day to the Centre. The young man on the right has diabetes. We do not know how he will obtain his medication going in the future.*



*Great progress has been made! The Nutritional Centre also supplies accommodation for orphans*



*The entrance to Mirhi Convent with the Nutritional Centre in the background*



*Outside the Nutritional Centre*

The Sisters pass on their gratitude to all the fundraisers and to those who have prayed for them.

## Visiting Sisters

### S. Thérèse and S. Véronique



As many of you are aware we have been privileged to have had the company of S. Véronique and S. Thérèse over the past year and a half.

The Sisters came to England to improve their English and to deepen their understanding of the Order, its history and its government, with an eye to the future.

They have attended several gatherings of the Association in Europe and have spent time in our local communities and at New Hall School.



*S. Véronique, S. Thérèse and S. Agnes in Male*

S. Véronique told me “We are told by Members of the Association that it is beneficial to them to have us at their gatherings”. S. Thérèse commented “It is even more beneficial for us to be there. Having been able to visit various different locations, we have learned so much and can see the richness and diversity of the Association. Each Priory is unique; has its own character.”

“We have had personal contact with many of the Sisters in the Association – knowing the person, not just the name, is very important.” said S. Véronique.

The Sisters have been fortunate to have a number of dedicated ‘teachers’ during their stay who have helped them with their language skills and appreciation of our European culture and customs!



*S. Véronique and S. Thérèse with Pat Corry, one of their teachers*

“We believe we have made good progress in our English and thank you all for your help and patience”.

Thérèse and Véronique, along with other Members of the Community, were involved in a Year 12 Human and Spiritual Development day at New Hall in November this year.



They delivered one of a series of workshops, theirs about Africa, to a responsive young audience. After many searching questions about the political situation and much interest in the Sisters' role and views, they were asked whether they were looking forward to going home.



S. Thérèse said they have enjoyed their time in England but are looking forward of course to being back with their Sisters, their families and of course the African weather!

Thérèse and Véronique have naturally made contact with many people. They have been regular participants at

Wisdom Group, Shaftesbury (NHVS), CCC in Colchester, Fun Week, New Hall Prep and the Senior School and in the various Parish churches they attend. We will miss them when they depart from the UK early next year.

We take this opportunity to thank all of you who have made them so welcome.

A friend of the Community, Ann Bates wanted to capture the Sisters in oil. I think you will agree she did a tremendous job. See: [www.annbatespaintings.co.uk](http://www.annbatespaintings.co.uk) for further details.



*"These two Sisters are staying here in Colchester learning English. Their homes are in the Congo, where life is far from safe. On the day they visited my home it was warm and sunny. I had asked them to wear their blue dresses and aprons, although they prefer their subdued light brown ones which I think are kept for special days. I stood with my camera at their knee levels and took several photos on which this painting is based. The background of our garden was messy and so I set the painting against a pattern of colour to represent African hills with an ultramarine and titanium white mix for the sky."*

## Fundraising

Over the past year we have held various Fundraising events.

### Garden party and Concert

We are very grateful for the continued support of the Willis family who annually arrange a concert and garden party in Stock to raise money for our African Sisters.



*Garden Party at the Willis'*

This year their efforts raised well in excess of £2,000. Thank you to everyone who has contributed in any way.



*Concert at Stock Church*

## International Buffet Lunch

On Saturday, 26<sup>th</sup> October in Wivenhoe, an International Buffet Lunch was held organised by the St Vincent de Paul Society. S. Thérèse had inspired this group through her moving account of the work of the Community in DR Congo. She thanked both Fr Paul and the St Vincent de Paul Society for all their help and support.

The proceeds of the lunch and donations, in the region of £1,000, went toward the charitable work of our Sisters in Bukavu, DR Congo and specifically to help children with diabetes.



*Véronique and Thérèse with Fr Paul, Parish priest at the Wivenhoe church at the Charity Lunch*

## New Hall fundraising

We also thank New Hall School for their continued efforts to raise money for the Literacy Centre in Rwanda (Senior School) and the Primary

School, Ecole Mère Hadewjch, at Murhesa near Bukavu (Prep School).



*Senior School pupils at Fundraising event for Rwanda*



*S. Moira, S. Véronique, S. Thérèse and S. Margaret Mary with the Prep School*

### **Continued efforts to support the poorest of the poor**

There are other private donors and fundraisers all of whom we thank sincerely. Every penny of the money you raise goes directly to help those in need in the African communities.

**Finally, just a reminder about the Giving Machine.** Please think about using it for any last minute Christmas shopping and, of course, with any

internet shopping throughout the year. It costs you nothing, is simple to use and raises money for our charity which this year will go to the Nutritional Centre.

[www.thegivingmachine.co.uk](http://www.thegivingmachine.co.uk). You can see details of how to do this on our website on the Autumn 2012 Africa Fundraising flyer.

Think too about making the Daughters of the Resurrection your chosen charity this coming year. The money will go DIRECTLY to help those in need in eastern DRC and Rwanda. (Charity No: 229288).

You can use the DONATE button on our website.

[http://www.canonesses.co.uk/shop-\(plusdonate\)/](http://www.canonesses.co.uk/shop-(plusdonate)/).

With huge gratitude, love and prayer.

### **Dates for your diary: Fundraisers 2014**

Sunday 6th July: Stock Garden Party

Saturday 11th October: Concert in Stock

<p><i>Contact us:</i> <a href="mailto:crssuk@canonesses.co.uk">crssuk@canonesses.co.uk</a> <a href="http://www.canonesses.co.uk">www.canonesses.co.uk</a> Charity No: 229288</p>
--

## Other news from the Priories

### A new mission house in Kindu



*The Sisters praying at the tomb of Mère Hadewjch (their foundress from the Turnhout mission) before their departure to Kindu*

Major news from Mirhi is the departure of seven Sisters from the Priory to set up a new mission house in Kindu, which is a plane ride away from Bukavu.

S. Véronique reports “The Sisters arrived safely and have been warmly welcomed by the locals, which has filled them with joy. They are settling in well, but there is a lot of work to be done before they are well established in the area.”

We will watch their progress with interest.

### S. Antoinette’s groundbreaking research

S. Antoinette (DRC) came to Europe for the first time in November and was present at an Association meeting in Belgium. She has been working with a professor in Belgium and this has led to a water source being decontaminated permanently for a local village in the Kivu area.

She writes: “My final piece of study was on phytoremediation – a newly emerging branch of biotechnology - which is based on using green plants and their associated microorganisms to counteract the effects of toxic metals in disused mines and other environmental pollutants. The process can also be used to decontaminate polluted water sources and polluted air, by introducing particular plants to the contaminated area.”

She has worked on combating the effects of the uncontrolled looting of mineral and gold mines on the environment. She has discovered which plants can be introduced into the mining areas which will absorb the toxic fumes which have been causing illness and death around the mines. She has been successful in introducing these special types of plants into these areas so that the people no longer have to suffer and die because these plants are taking the toxins back into the ground.

We hope to report more about Sister Antoinette’s projects in the future.