



# African MISSIONARY



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## The Times They Are A-Changin'



Back in the sixties, when I was a youngster, Bob Dylan had a famous hit song, "The Times They Are A-Changin'" - a song that reflected the spirit of the times. However, little did any of us at that time realise how dramatic and extensive those changes would be, or the impact they would have on the Church and its mission. Among the major changes we have seen over the past fifty years has been the shift in the global axis of

Christianity and its mission from the Northern to the Southern hemisphere. The SMA, including the Irish Province, has been part and parcel of this dramatic development, playing a major role not only in building up the Church in Africa but in receiving and training Africans for SMA mission. As the number of missionaries from the West continues to decline, the numbers of missionaries from Asia and Africa are increasing steadily and once-great mission-sending countries like France and Ireland are receiving

missionaries from the Churches they were instrumental in establishing. This is surely one of the significant and hopeful "signs of the times".

While the Church in Ireland is far from moribund, it is certainly in need of an injection of new life and energy - a missionary challenge if ever there was one. It is with a view to addressing this challenge that the Irish Province has recently invited African SMA priests to undertake mission in Ireland as part of the Province.

Fr Alphonse Sekongo [from the Ivory Coast] and Fr Ignatius Malwa [from Zambia] are the first African SMAs to embark on this venture. Fr Alphonse is now Assistant Priest in St Joseph's SMA parish, Blackrock Road, Cork and Fr Ignatius is soon due to take over responsibility for the Family Vocations Crusade [FVC] in Munster. I wish both of them every success and happiness as they undertake their new mission in Ireland.

**Fr Michael McCabe**, SMA Provincial Leader

### Fr Ignatius Malwa

Fr Ignatius Malwa SMA was born in Kabwe, Zambia, in 1980, the fifth of seven children. Kabwe is also the location of the SMA Formation House and the young Ignatius often met some of the SMA priests on the staff there. Near Kabwe is the Mpima Major seminary which SMA students attended for their Philosophy studies. He writes that, during his secondary schooling, "on many occasions I had to travel to the Copperbelt Province of Zambia where many SMA priests were based and I met some of them who influenced my path to the priesthood: Fr Michael Igoe and the late Fathers Fergus Conlan and Sexton Doran."

After completing his Philosophy studies he went to the SMA Spiritual course in Benin Republic and then spent a further year there learning about day-to-day life of an

SMA priest living with a French SMA priest. This is the SMA Stage [pastoral year] programme. Ignatius was then sent to the SMA seminary in Ivory Coast where he completed his Theology studies. "When I completed my Theology studies I returned to Zambia as a Deacon to live with four Irish SMA priests in Lusaka where I had a rich experience that has left good memories of community life."

Fr Ignatius was ordained in June 2008 and was appointed to northern Nigeria. "Fr John O'Keeffe introduced me to the culture and history of northern Nigeria whose early missionaries were principally Irish SMAs, though the first SMA missionaries were Fathers Waller and Belin [from France] and Father Mouren [Dutch] in 1906." According to our latest statistics there are now 55 SMA priests in Nigeria, of which 14 are from the Irish Province.



The others come from the British Province, Benin Republic, Ghana, India, Ivory Coast, Togo, Zambia and Nigeria itself.

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After completing his initiation period into mission life, Fr Ignatius was appointed to Kontagora Vicariate, under the leadership of Bishop Tim Carroll SMA [Cork]. This is an area of Primary Evangelization, i.e. where many people have never heard of Jesus Christ and the Christian message. The missionaries were involved in catechesis, establishing new Christian communities. Several parishes hosted hundreds of people [most non-Christian] for the annual "dry season course". The course had many elements: teaching many to read and write and learning basic medical care [especially for mothers]. On the religious side, Catechism classes were held for those preparing for sacraments and there was a programme of training lay people in leadership skills for use in the newly-formed communities. A second major activity during the Dry Season was, and still is, the programme of well-digging in various villages because most of them lacked clean water.

"I later transferred to Kano diocese and worked with Fr Tom Treacy [Galway] and then to Kachia in Kaduna Archdiocese where Fr John Haverty [Galway] introduced me to the many challenges of a town parish with 42 outstations in the rural area." Since then three new parishes have been established in the Kachia area and most of the outstations are now under the care of the new parishes. In 2010, Fr Ignatius was transferred to St Peter's parish in Kaduna City where Fr Dan O'Brien [Cork] was in charge. Kaduna has a large Muslim population. Ministry in this poor parish involved the formation of small Christian communities, which included training the women, especially widows, in various skills: sewing, tailoring, event decorations etc. in a bid to give them some independence. For our young people, most of whom were unemployed, we ran skill acquisition programmes, computer studies and awareness on drug abuse, etc.

Due to the numbers attending our five Sunday Masses we opened an outstation church, Immaculate Conception, a mile from St Peter's, with nearly 2,000 attending Sunday Mass there. Fr Mark Monaghan SMA [Tyrone] had already established a separate parish from the original St Peter's as the area continues to develop at a rapid rate.

In 2012 Fr Ignatius took over from Fr Dan as Parish Priest, a post he held until his appointment to Cork at the beginning of this year. "I have learnt a lot and had rich experiences from these missionaries. They have contributed immensely to my vocation and I follow their footsteps in trying to make the best out of my priesthood. And my priestly story cannot be complete without mentioning them." Nigerian-born Fr Matthew Bassah SMA succeeded Fr Ignatius in St Peter's.

Since arriving in Ireland last January, Fr Ignatius has been learning about the Family Vocations Crusade [FVC] which is the lynchpin of the support for our SMA seminarians. Originally formed to support the training of Irish SMA seminarians, the FVC family is now the spiritual and financial backbone of the SMA training programmes in eight African countries, India, Philippines and Poland. Its 10,000 plus members come from every county in Ireland. Averaging 20 new priests a year the Society has been

richly blessed with young men who want to continue the missionary work begun by the SMA Founder, Bishop de Brésillac, in 1856.

The cost of educating and accommodating these young men (in 2016, 300+ seminarians) is more than €1.7 million per year. Most of them come from less affluent communities and so they are dependent on the generosity of the international SMA support base to help them to fulfil their missionary vocation. From the beginning in 1959 the FVC has been lay-based – begun by a group of lay people who knew our seminary in Dromantine, Newry. With the late Fr John-Joe Conlon they travelled all over Ulster establishing FVC groups to sponsor the education of the seminarians in Dromantine. As FVC members they commit themselves to pray for and help fund the training of SMA missionaries worldwide.

Thank God there are still people willing to establish new FVC groups in all parts of Ireland. If you are interested in helping support our seminarians please contact your local SMA House [details on back cover].

Fr Ignatius will soon learn the highways and byways of Munster as he travels to meet those Sponsors who organize the groups in the different areas. We wish him well in his new ministry!

**Fr Alphonse Sekongo SMA**

is Curate in St Joseph's SMA parish, Blackrock Road, Cork.



Fr Alphonse Sekongo SMA

Born in 1979 in the Ivory Coast, one of three children in the Sekongo family, he is fluent in four languages: Senoufo, Hausa, French and English.

In 2002 he began three years Philosophy studies with the SMA and then went for an academic year to Benin Republic before going to

Nigeria for a further year of pastoral experience [called 'Stage'] in Kontagora, with Fr Donall O'Catháin SMA [from Cork City]. From 2007 he studied theology in Ibadan, Nigeria and was ordained a priest there in 2011 by the then bishop of Killaloe [and a former SMA Superior General], Bishop Kieran O'Reilly SMA. Fr Alphonse was appointed as Assistant Priest in Our Lady, Queen of Peace parish in Madina, Accra. Last September he came to Ireland to begin a new chapter in his missionary life.

Considering the challenges this posed, Fr Alphonse recalled what a French SMA priest told him during his studies: **'wherever you are sent, don't be worried, because God is already there and has prepared the ground for you.'**

Madina parish is on the edge of Accra, capital of Ghana. There were three priests caring for seven churches. More than 3,000

people attended the two Masses in Queen of Peace. "I was responsible for St Monica's outstation Church and my usual Sunday congregation was about 500 people at one Mass. I saw my role as one of trying to give the people hope through the sacraments and in practical ways [visiting the sick, the elderly and house visitation]. But sometimes, in really difficult situations, all I could do was just be present with them." Each week there were visits to our three schools as well as State schools in the area. At any one time we had 250 or so youths and adults preparing for sacraments, not counting infant baptisms. Marriage preparation was essential for all couples seeking to marry in the Church.

On the SMA side I was asked to lead the 'Friends of SMA' group in Ghana. This group brings together people of all ages and backgrounds, who are interested in the mission of the SMA and want to support it in different ways. Such groups are being established in all 16 countries where SMAs work.

In Africa everything is done within the context of the family. I would love to help bring that African warmth and sense of togetherness to the Irish Church. At the same time I'm also grateful to Ireland and its missionaries. My presence, and the faith I received, is really the fruit of their work. The Irish brought the word of God to many parts of Africa, the seed was sown, it grew, and now the fruit is coming back to its source. And I am part of that fruit, a product of the African Church coming back to Ireland and the Irish Church, offering our talents and gifts, as Christ taught us.

My limited experience in Ireland is of a very different church. The first difference is the age profile. In Africa we have all ages attending Church, but in Ireland I don't see many young people. I see only the older generation. In Ghana, and elsewhere in Africa, the Mass could go on for two-hours plus. Here it is 45 minutes on Sunday and at most 30 minutes during the week! Also, in Africa, Masses are lively events, with everyone singing and dancing at certain times. "Here it is cool, there's no noise, no dancing and little singing. Here you have nice infrastructures, in Africa we have mostly temporary structures and the people are happy to come and hear the Word of God. So for the past few weeks this is my impression of the Irish Church and the difference with Africa. Maybe with time I will see more than today."

"I have found the Irish people to be very welcoming, accommodating and I like their sense of humour. It helps me to relax.

"I was also so happy to see the SMA retirees in Cork. They worked for God and for us in Africa, and now God has given them time to come home to rest. In the early years many of them died, some as young as 25 years of age. But as medical care has improved most now live on into old age and are able to rest from their labours. As a young missionary I see them as a great sign. We need to work hard and when we are old we can look back and say, 'Thank you God for what we were able to achieve, like these men'.

"Daily I ask God to give me more wisdom and time to appreciate things, to be gentle in all that I do, to take my time before judging people and for the strength to carry out my daily activities successfully while I am here. I am open to good advice from anyone and I want to love as much as possible and to smile as much as possible."

### What was your happiest memory?

"My happiest memory was my ordination. I thanked God for allowing me to become his messenger; for choosing me, not because I am the best, or perfect, but for giving me the chance to work in his vineyard and minister to the people of Ghana and now Ireland. When I see that, through me, some people find happiness, it gives me joy. So, that is my happiest moment, my ordination to the priesthood.

### What was one of your best learning moments?

"One of the great moments of learning was when I joined the minor seminary, just prior to joining the SMA. It was a moment that helped shape my life today. It was the first time I left my family and had to take responsibility for myself including managing my time and resources. I remember my mum gave me some money, saying to me, **'This is for you and you have to manage it well. If it is not enough, don't ask others, you must be yourself. Just be content with what you have and you will find it is enough.'** This was a good moment.

"I learned also how to be accommodating, accept others who are different from me. If the person is in a good mood and I'm not, I have to accept. I learned how to take care of myself, how to manage my time, to talk to people and to forgive. I learned the importance of playfulness, how to joke with people and how to be myself, not someone else. I learned the importance of 'Be Yourself'. These are very strong memories within me."



Fr Alphonse preaching in Our Lady of Apostles Church, Madina parish, Ghana

# AFRICA - Impact of Climate Change - LAKE TURKANA



Lake Turkana touches both Kenya and Ethiopia. It is also known as the Jade Sea, because of its greenish-blue or turquoise colours, which come from algae that rise to the surface in calm weather.

290 kilometres long and 40 kilometres at its widest, Lake Turkana is the world's largest permanent desert lake, fed by water from the Omo River, which flows from Ethiopia and supplies 90% of its fresh water. Lake Turkana also lacks outflow - its only water loss being through evaporation. With an altitude of 300 metres above sea-level, it is a hot place - with temperatures often well above 40 degrees Celsius.

Many regard the Lake Turkana area as the cradle of humanity due to discoveries of human remains, some dating back at least 3 million years.

Lake Turkana is home to about fifty species of fish and hundreds of different birds, including the colourful flamingo. The Lake is also an important flyway passage and stop-over for migratory birds. Plankton in the Lake feeds the fish and the birds. Crocodiles are there in abundance and it is also a breeding ground for many types of snakes. In a word, Lake Turkana is an outstanding laboratory for the study of plant, fish, bird, animal and many other forms of life.



About 300,000 people live along the shores of Lake Turkana, forming part of an intricate ecosystem. They interact and gain their livelihood from it. Most are from the Turkana ethnic group who eke out a living - either as pastoralists (herding goats, cows, camels and donkeys) or as fishermen (relying on the Lake). An important element, however, is the fact that the waters of the Lake are alkaline (high concentration of carbonate salts) and thus not fit for drinking.

In Ethiopia, 200,000 Merille people farm the Omo River Delta area. Covering 1,300 sq kilometres, where the river empties into Lake Turkana, they plant in the floodplain areas after the waters recede, as well as providing pasture for their animals. The international border is far from precise and has long been a matter of violent dispute.

## The Problem

Turkana has a long history of recurring famines, drought and competition with neighbouring tribes for grazing, land and water. It has also a history of neglect by colonial and subsequent national governments. However, two recent events have exacerbated an already difficult situation: increasing temperatures and River Omo dams.

**Increasing temperatures:** maximum and minimum average temperatures in the area rose between 2 and 3 degrees Celsius between 1967 and 2012. Various explanations are put forward and debated. However, one thing is clear: the Turkana people cannot be held responsible! But they are impacted by the results. A Human Rights Watch Report (October 2015) concludes: **"...climate change, in combination with existing political, environmental and economic development challenges in Turkana, has had an impact on the Turkana people's ability to access food, water, health and security"**.

- the rainy season is much shorter, resulting in less grazing land.
- there are more frequent droughts and diminishing herds.



A Turkana Christian

- Migration patterns are changing.
- increased competition for grazing lands and for water, heightening the likelihood of conflict and insecurity.
- Women and children walk long distances for water - with subsequent negative health effects.
- the proliferation of illegal arms is a cause of great concern.

**River Omo dams:** The Ethiopian government has built three dams along the Omo river. Situated some 600 kilometres from Lake Turkana they are having a devastating effect on the Lake and its people. The dams are reducing the fresh water flowing into Lake Turkana by between 50% and 70%. The results are already evident:

- A big drop in the Lake water levels. The average depth of the Lake used be about 30 metres. Some estimates now indicate a drop of at least 13 metres.
- A marked decrease in the Lake's nutrients.
- Disruption of fish spawning cues and in the productive fish habitat.
- a consequent decrease in fish catches.
- Declining wild-life and an unstable ecological system.

With the higher air temperatures, there are also increasing rates of evaporation.

The Dams are having a profound impact on the river basin itself. Built to support vast commercial plantations, hundreds of kilometres of irrigation canals are diverting the waters to these plantations. The effects on the delicate ecosystems of the region are clear: the drying out of the riverine zone, the disappearance of silt deposits and the elimination of pasture and trees.

In the midst of all the environmental changes – on both sides of the porous international border between Ethiopia

and Kenya – are human beings. Their precarious livelihoods are now in disarray. Due to the decline of land and water resources, life-style alterations are demanded of the people. They are 'forced' to migrate. There is no doubt but that the lack of land, and its degradation due to over-use, as well as the scarcity of water, are the main factors at play in the conflict between the Merille and the Turkana people. These conflicts have resulted in killings. Worshippers at a Church Service in Todonyang were murdered in August 2016 and retaliatory attacks took place just before Christmas. The few educational and health services in the area have broken down. Increasing numbers of people are being displaced. There is hunger... anger... uncertainty... death....

## Towards a Solution

The Kenyan and Ethiopian governments need to respect the human rights of their peoples. For over 500,000 people climate change is not an abstract concept. It is impacting their everyday lives.

The international community also has a responsibility. Prominent nations and banks are providing substantial funding for the Omo Basin project. They are in a position to, at least, insist on mitigation steps to offset the hardship of the people. Commercial projects cannot be allowed to ride roughshod over the rights of peoples who have lived in this area for millennia.

Finally, in the interests of humanity, the United Nations needs to safeguard the Lower Omo basin and Lake Turkana, as "they comprise a series of World Heritage sites, known for their exceptionally important biodiversity and for their central role in the human evolutionary story". (cf. "The Downstream Impacts of Ethiopia's Gibe 111 Dam" published by International Rivers: January 2013).

The SMA has been involved in the Turkana area for many years. Read the article on page 7 about the SHALOM group who are trying to build peace and lessen inter-ethnic conflict there.



*"Active non-violence is a way of showing that unity is truly more powerful and more fruitful than conflict. Everything in the world is inter-connected."*



**Pope Francis: message for World Day of Peace 2017.**  
(of also Laudato Si'16. 117 & 138.)

## From Mission in Africa to Mission in London (part 2)

In the last issue of our Magazine [Autumn / Winter 2016] we read of the mission experience of Monika Manser in Nigeria. She now recounts her missionary life post-Nigeria. Working in the Hospital for Tropical Diseases in London, Monika was in need of clinical specimens for her work. Monika turned to Sr Dolores Kearney OLA with whom she had worked in Nigeria. Monika writes:

By now Sr Dolores had transferred to St Joseph's Clinic, Nkwanta in Ghana. From 1992 – 1999, I went to Nkwanta six times with my colleague Hilary to collect specimens from patients with parasitic diseases. Whilst Hilary was working in the clinic's laboratory, I would accompany Sr Anne Harding [now sadly deceased] to outstations with a microscope and attach it to the ambulance battery to enable me to make a diagnosis. I was happy setting up my mobile laboratory under a mango tree, examining clinical specimens for the parasites causing malaria, intestinal problems and bilharzia. Nkwanta was a beautiful place and although I was kept busy, I always came back to London feeling spiritually refreshed as I loved the company of the small community of OLAs there.



Sr Dolores and Monika

In 2002 Sr Dolores was appointed to Bugisi, Tanzania and so Bugisi became my next source of specimens. I was delighted not only to see Sr Dolores again but to meet Sr Anne McCormack OLA, whom I had met in Bacita, Nigeria, twenty years previously. Again I always enjoyed my visits to Bugisi, and, like Nkwanta, we also tended to run training courses for the laboratory staff and any interested hospital staff as well as giving some healthcare talks to the school children who had parasitic infections. As with Nkwanta, I always felt I was going on retreat and came back to London feeling spiritually refreshed.

In London, not only was my career progressing in the expertise gained through my experiences in Ghana and Tanzania but my spiritual life was maturing by being part of the vibrant parish of the Holy Apostles, Pimlico where the Parish priest instilled a sense of community. Also the seeds of mission and ministry which had been planted by the OLAs, firstly in Nigeria and then later in Ghana and Tanzania, were slowly taking hold.

The seeds of ministry were nurtured in me by the invitation of Canon Pat Browne, PP, to be an Extraordinary Minister of the Eucharist and then heading the Catechist team for the First Communion Programme. For this I undertook the Catholic Certificate of Religious Studies, a two-year course organised by the Diocese of Westminster. Being a cradle Catholic, I took my religion for granted and it was only through study of the Bible, the Church, Catechesis and the Sacraments that I recognised the richness of my faith. Then, a few years ago when I was invited to bring the Body of Christ to the sick and housebound, I experienced a calling and realised there was more to life than tropical diseases.

In 2013 with encouragement from Canon Pat, I undertook further study in theology. This part-time two-year course took me to the age of 60 when I retired from my Tropical Diseases profession and embarked on mission and ministry in the parish. In December 2015 I graduated with an MA in Pastoral Theology. The topic of my MA dissertation was "Ite, Missa Est – The Role of the Laity in the Catholic Church", a topic close to my heart since my initial exposure to the role of the laity in the Diocese of Ilorin, Nigeria.

Since 2015 I have become more involved in taking the Body of Christ to the sick and housebound. I am also involved in **Proclaim 15**, a new initiative which was

# Reconciliation and Peace-building in East Africa

launched in 2015 by the Catholic Bishops of England and Wales to support, motivate and equip parish evangelisation. At present, along with Maria, a friend and fellow parishioner, we are initiating prayer in family life and a youth group for the 14-18 year olds in the parish. We believe that the Prayer in Family Life initiative is especially important since due to busy life styles, praying as a family can be difficult and we want to encourage families to pray in different ways. We will eventually initiate a programme of encouraging non-churchgoing Catholics back to the fold.

I cannot end without mentioning the influence my husband David has had on both my career and spiritual life. Although he is not a Catholic, he has always fully supported me in my Parish ministry and Pastoral studies. It is through our love for each other that I have been able to truly experience God's love and appreciate the graces we obtain through the sacraments, the people we meet and the Church, the Body of Christ. I definitely feel blessed in that my career in Tropical Diseases, which I loved, was a gift from God and that through my first meeting with the OLAs in Bacita in 1981, my road in life took the Tropical Diseases route. My sense of mission and ministry was also influenced by the OLAs and SMAs in that my career which involved working in the foreign missions has now evolved to mission in the parish.



Monika and David on their wedding day

The Shalom Center for Conflict Resolution and Reconciliation was founded in Kenya by Fr Patrick Devine SMA in 2009. Along with Fr Oliver Noonan SMA and dedicated local staff in Nairobi they focus on the root cause of violence in the tribal lands of eastern Africa. Turkana is one such area where they conduct many workshops and other events to promote skills and techniques in peacebuilding and alternative dispute settlement mechanisms leading to sustainable peace.

Inter-ethnic conflict is mainly between the majority Samburu and Turkana ethnic groups and stems from a variety of factors relating to the scarcity and management of resources - water and pasture - that sustain their pastoralist way of life. The nomadic nature of these communities forces them to move around in search of these resources and in the process cross paths often with detrimental outcomes; there is theft of livestock and most of the time violence as they compete to feed and water their animals. Recent theft of livestock from the Turkana by the Samburu and the consequent return of the animals through peaceful means can be attributed to SCCRR's intervention in bringing the communities together.

In May 2017, four ethnic groups intend to hold another inter-ethnic meeting, marking the beginning of a series of inter-ethnic meetings geared towards relationship building, and transformation at the personal, relational, structural and cultural levels. They will seek to find a way forward in the pursuit of peaceful coexistence between the four ethnic communities. SCCRR is committed to continue working tirelessly with communities in the search for the ever elusive positive peace that plagues these areas. For more information go to [www.shalomconflictcenter.org/](http://www.shalomconflictcenter.org/)



A Shalom workshop with Muslims and Christians in the Tana River area with Pokomo, Wardei and Abdullah communities.

# Live Simply so that others may simply live



The Faith In Action group with their Award.

The Parish of Our Lady of the Rosary and St Patrick, Walthamstow, London recently became the first SMA parish to earn the CAFOD LiveSimply Award. The Award is presented to parishes who demonstrate that they are living simply, sustainably and in solidarity with the poor.

In March 2016 the parish set up a Faith in Action group. Twelve months later this group had energized the parish so much that, on 12 March this year, the parish was presented with the LiveSimply Award. The journey really began however with the presentation of the SMA Thumbprint Campaign for Climate Justice at all Masses in the parish on 15 November 2015. SMA Fathers John Brown and Kevin Conway, together with the SMA Laity Coordinator, Dympna Mallon, had identified Climate

Justice as an issue for engaging the parishioners more in the Mission of SMA.

Walthamstow parish was already active in social justice, providing food and shelter for homeless people over the winter months. It is a culturally diverse parish, with many parishioners knowing, directly or indirectly, the impact of climate change on their countries of origin. Against this background,

the Thumbprint Campaign represented a positive vehicle by which to promote the vision of the SMA to engage in a new and more meaningful way with lay people.

The material was delivered using the SMA Thumbprint film clip and narrative at all Masses. A translation was prepared for the Polish Mass attendance. Most people attending the five Masses over the weekend left their thumbprints on the Campaign posters. For many it was a very meaningful way of engaging with the climate justice issue. When they were invited to build on that response, in March 2016, 14 people attended a meeting from which the Faith in Action group was born. Since then, the group has encouraged fellow parishioners to monitor how they travel to Mass

including a parish initiative to "Walk to Mass"; installed bicycle racks outside the Church; developed a vegetable patch in the church grounds. At parish events disposable cups, plates and cutlery are no longer used and Fairtrade tea, coffee and sugar are 'on the menu'. Other initiatives included holding a soup lunch after Mass on the first Sunday of Advent. These things have now become an accepted aspect of parish life; the parish is now linked with projects in Bethlehem and China, and soon hopes to be named as a "Fair Trade" parish.

The winning of this award is down to the vision, energy and commitment of the parishioners. Their priests supported and facilitated the completion of the various aspects of the award. This parish shows what can be achieved when people are encouraged to embrace and explore their own baptismal call to be missionary, to respond to the challenge of the SMA Founder to reach out to the most abandoned and to answer Pope Francis' call to care for creation and the poor of the earth.

For information about the SMA Thumbprint Campaign for Climate Justice please contact Gerry Forde at [justice@sma.ie](mailto:justice@sma.ie)

## The souls of the virtuous are in the hands of God...

We commend the following SMA and OLA missionaries and our deceased supporters to your prayers.

**Sr. Liguori Smiddy** (Garryoughtra, Co. Cork), served in Nigeria, England and Ireland, aged 91 years, on 27 October 2016.

**Sr. Marciana O'Keeffe** (Midleton, Cork), served in Nigeria, France, Italy and Ireland, aged 90 years, on 14 November 2016.

**Fr Joseph Maguire** (Dublin), served in Nigeria and Ireland, aged 94 years, on 21 November 2016.

**Sr. Fidelma Caffrey** (Ballina, Co. Mayo), served in Nigeria, England and Ireland, aged 88 years, on 21 December 2016.

**Fr James Kirstein** (Cork City), served in Nigeria, Benin, Philippines and Ireland, aged 81 years, on 23 January 2017.

**Fr Edward [Ned] Casey** (Gort, Co Galway), served in Nigeria and Ireland, aged 88 years, on 15 February 2017.

**Sr. Catherine Buckley** (Evangelist) (Derrynagasha, Kinsale, Co. Cork), served in Ghana, England and Ireland, aged 91 years, on 2 March 2017.

**Sr. Catherine Farrell** (John Baptist) (Donaskeigh, Tipperary), served in Nigeria and Ireland, aged 85 years, on 6 March 2017.

**Lord God, welcome our deceased SMA supporters, benefactors and missionaries, into the peace of your Kingdom. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

## Remember the Missions in your Will

By remembering the SMA and OLA in your Will you can help the work of mission to continue after you.

I leave the sum of € [ ] to the Provincial Superior for the time being of the Society of African Missions, Blackrock Road, Cork, for the purpose of the African Missions.

or

I leave the sum of € [ ] to the Provincial Superior for the time being of the Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of Apostles, Ardfoyle Convent, Ballintemple, Cork, for the purpose of the OLA Sisters.

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