

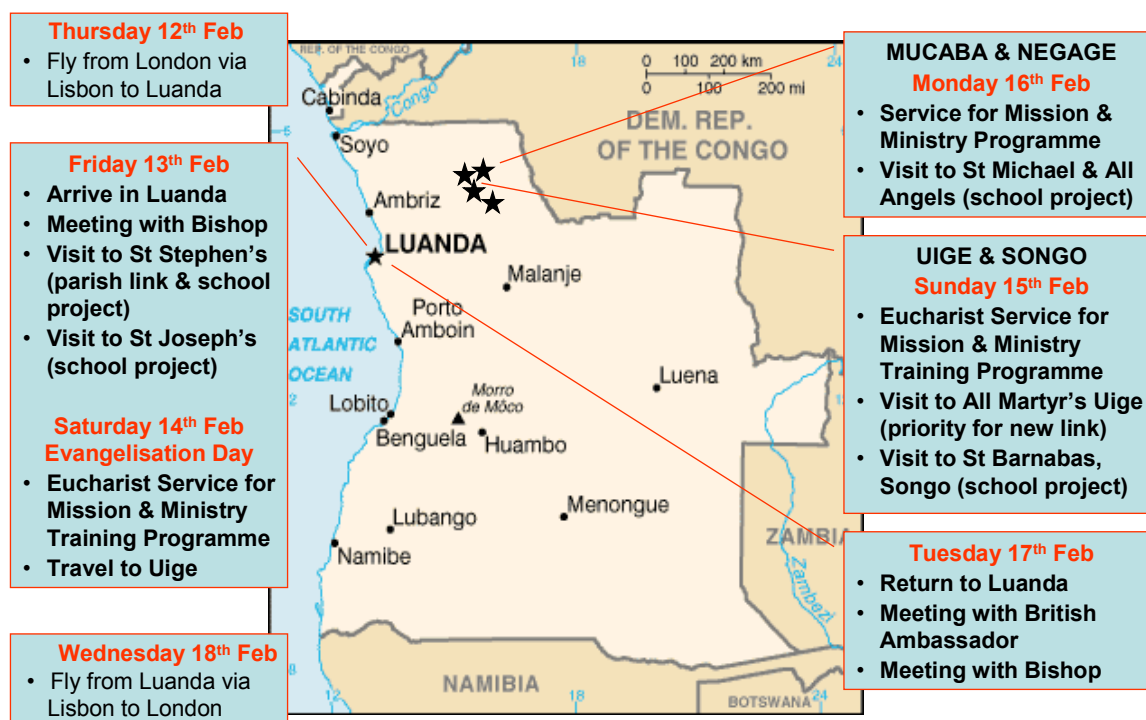
Mission & Ministry Programme Visit - February 2009

Introduction

ALMA was asked by the Diocese of Angola to send a representative to visit the Mission & Ministry Training Programme in February 2009 in order to participate in celebrations for the closing of the first three year's courses, and the opening of the next courses. This report contains my notes and reflections on the visit, together with messages from the course students and tutors.

Programme

The main focus of the visit was to three of the Mission & Ministry Programme training centres in Luanda, Uíge and Mucaba. My hope was for the visit to be an encouragement for the catechists as well as affirming the programme, thus helping to strengthen the Diocese of Angola, and also to develop relationships with Bishop André & his clergy.



Summary

- ❑ Bishop André sends his greetings to ALMA, and considered the visit had been important to motivate local churches. In each celebration, congregations were excited to have a visitor.
- ❑ 57 students have successfully completed 3 years of theological training through the Mission & Ministry Training Programme and been awarded diplomas.
- ❑ Of these 57 students, 54 are men and 3 are women (who trained in Luanda). In each of the three centres, 50% of the students who started the course were not able to complete it.
- ❑ The three SEAN courses were supplemented by other material during the three years. A plan is needed for how the remaining SEAN courses are to be used.
- ❑ A new 3 year plan has been submitted for the Mission & Ministry Training Programme. The priorities are salaries for tutors, a vehicle for growing the church, and developing the farm.
- ❑ Angola is being changed on the outside by investment in infrastructure, but the lives of the poor people are untouched. What is transformational for them is education and water.
- ❑ Pat Phillips has agreed to give an Ambassador's View to ALMA Parishes on Fri 27th March.

Luanda, Friday 13th February

I was met at Luanda airport by Revd Nunes Pedro (Diocesan Secretary & ALMA Link Officer), Pedro Almeida (Catechist, St Paul's Sapu, Luanda) and Manuel Muanga. After I'd delivered gifts for Manuel's family, Fr Nunes explained I would be staying at the Roman Catholic guest house rather than at the Bishop's House and that I would see why later.

We drove there, and over breakfast I talked with a Catholic priest who was on a parish placement in Luanda before continuing with a doctorate. He spoke passionately about poor people not seeing any improvement in their conditions, and the need for the Church to speak and act prophetically, particularly in respect of the governance of the country. I observed that was a message we'd heard in London from Revd Luis Samacumbi of the Angolan Congregational Church. My priest companion beamed and said Luis was a good friend of his!

Then on to the Bishop's House in Benfica for a meeting with Bishop André, Revd Nunes Pedro & Revd Simão Adolfo (Mission & Ministry Programme Co-ordinator).

Mission & Ministry Programme Management

The 2007 accounts had been audited and were signed & sealed. I was given a copy, and Fr Nunes undertook to get a translation sent to Peter Southwood via e-mail.

A three year budget has been prepared for the period 2009 - 2011, and revised following feedback from Peter Southwood. Fr Nunes explained that the balance left over from the first three years was \$112,941, and that this would cover 2009, most of 2010, but not 2011. He asked whether there is any interest to add to the fund.

Bishop André summarised that at present there is a \$30,000 gap in the next three year plan, and advised that \$10,000 would come from the Dutch Old Catholic Church via MANNA. He identified three priorities in the budget:

1. Salaries of those doing the training, as without them the course could not happen.
2. A vehicle to take the church to other provinces. Fr Nunes explained that the only available vehicle is the Bishop's, so when he is away, the diocese has no vehicle.
3. Developing the diocesan farm to generate income to fund training in future years. The Government will take the land back if it is not used. The President has called the country to diversify from oil and diamonds to other industry, starting with agriculture.

The Diocese has an initial 5 year lease; this could be renewed for another 5 years, then 25, then 50. The lease expires in 2011, so the farm must be in working order by then for the Diocese to be confident of retaining it.

Bishop André believes the Diocese can manage the project directly, under his supervision.

I promised to take these messages back to London, and the revised budget was signed & sealed.

Mission & Ministry Course Students

Fr Simão reported on numbers of students who had completed 3 years training. After which the diplomas for those who successfully completed the course were signed and sealed:

- 23 in Luanda, of whom 18 passed
- 18 in Mucaba and all passed
- 13 in Uíge and all passed
- 8 in Songo (run as a sub-centre of Uíge) and all passed



Thus, 57 students had all successfully passed the course and were to be awarded diplomas. All of the students are catechists, and some of them are leading congregations. Some have degrees. Bishop André added that over time some will be selected for ordination as deacon. He believes the programme will give good results for the diocese, which needs more ministers.

I asked about the continuation of the course. Fr Simão reported that 30 students were currently registered across the diocese, including those who are retaking some modules. Of these, 7 are in Uíge, 8 in Luanda, 7 in Mucaba, and 8 in Benguela (sub-centre of Luanda). 10 have already completed 1 or 2 years, and 20 are new students. (Post visit note: 50 students now registered).

Mission & Ministry Course Material

Mike Clark had briefed me on progress with the translation of course material, and I reported that Vol. 4 would be available shortly, and then Vol. 5 later this year. Fr Simão said that over the three years, the subjects covered had been: Old Testament, New Testament, Prophets, Gospels, Homiletics, Hermeneutics, Leadership, Ethics, Family Life, Liturgy & Stewardship. Other material (beyond Vols.1-3) had been used to fill in the gaps. He confirmed that two more volumes were expected, but advised there was no plan at present as to how they would be used - due to delivery timescales being unknown. I have put Mike in contact with Simão & Revd Augusto Domingos (Uíge Course Co-ordinator) to discuss the future material, and how it could be best used.

Peter Southwood had briefed me on the recruitment of a replacement course supervisor for Adrian Chatfield. Bishop André was pleased to hear that a possible candidate had been identified.

School Projects

Fr Nunes identified that the Diocese of Angola believes that all school project budgets need to include an allowance for a project co-ordinator's salary. One of their learnings from school projects so far is that the amount of project management required should not be attempted on a voluntary basis as quality suffers. Bishop André added that Revd Pedro Nzuzi will co-ordinate the Nsosso School Project. Most Angolan Clergy are unpaid and it is often not reasonable to ask them to give the Church further unpaid time. This feedback needs to be considered.

Plans now exist for each of the school projects underway with the exception of St Matthew's Kimvuenga, and it was agreed Fr Nunes will produce a proposal for this school.

Water Projects

I circulated the 2009 Lent Appeal card and said how much Bishop André's photos of water supply issues had been appreciated. He was very pleased to see the photos being used, and advised that the situation with water in Luanda is getting worse as more housing is being built. The city was built for 0.5 million people but now has a population of 6 million.

Improving the quality of water is a high priority for the Diocese of Angola. Bishop André was meeting Living Water International the following weekend to initiate their partnership, and plans to also ask the Government and businesses to support the Church's water projects:

1. Building water tanks and arranging for a truck to fill them in Luanda
2. Running workshops to teach people about good sanitation
3. Laying a 12 km water pipe from Uíge Mountain to Songo, and diverting a mountain water supply to run through the pipe by gravity. This has been authorised by local government.

In summary, Bishop André sees these as three feasible projects which could benefit the people.

Parish Links

Cristo Redentor had provided pictures for their linked parish of St Lawrence, Eastcote. Rachel Phillips had asked me to raise the church's need for a roof. Bishop André confirmed that this project has the support of the Diocese, and Fr Nunes agreed to prepare a plan with the parish.

Communication between St Joseph, Rocha Pinto and Jesus Church, Enfield had previously not been happening. I was able to report that the two parishes established e-mail contact at the New Year, with assistance from me and Revd Muanga.

Bishop André confirmed that the three top priorities for new parish links are St Mary, Kikolo in Luanda, Martyr's in Uíge, and St Joseph in Huambo.

Role of Commissary

Bishop André identified that in my new role as Commissary to the UK, he would like me to:

- Represent the Diocese of Angola in ALMA and with the Diocese of London;
- Find other organisations in the UK to fund projects; and
- Continue what I'm already doing regarding twinning.

He is very grateful to Mike Clark for his 10 years of support to the Diocese of Angola, and will be writing to express his thanks to Mike.

Bishop André flagged up that the Diocese needs help in planting new congregations - catechists need bicycles in order to travel, and this is a priority for funding.

He noted that Tear Fund will be supporting the diocesan HIV/AIDS project this year.



The Bishop had been travelling in this vehicle when the major accident occurred in 2007. As you see, the vehicle has been healed too!

Luanda was very humid. Bishop André showed me the annex to the Bishop's House which has accommodation for visitors and explained that as there was no air conditioning, they thought I would be more comfortable in the Roman Catholic guesthouse. I was very happy with that!

I was surprised to see so many signs in Chinese all over Luanda. It gradually became clear quite how much of the infrastructure investment in the city is resourced by the Chinese. A main road improvement programme is underway, which unfortunately is making road congestion in Luanda worse in the short term. New house building in the south of Luanda by Chinese owned companies employing Chinese workers. Who can afford these houses? Only the rich.

St Stephen's, Golfe, Luanda



Visit to see my own parish link and discuss progress with the school. Ven Dacosta Emmanuel said that the school will start in March. Registration is in progress (60 students at date of visit) and staff recruitment underway. Staff will be paid by the government and pupils will pay a very small sum (tbd) to the church.

The school director will be a church member and report to both the government and the church. Candidates have been short listed; the next step is to review with the government.

Unfortunately after the construction had started, the provincial government put a pylon in the church grounds for overhead power cables. These run immediately over the school, which stopped the first floor from being finished. There is now a new provincial governor, and Pastor Emmanuel says she is committed to seeing the school finished. Negotiations are in progress and he is hopeful of a good result.

Luanda was much cleaner in the city centre than on my first visit in 2005 as an army of cleaners was deployed on the streets, but not in Golfe where St Stephen's is; and not in Cazenga either added Fr Nunes. When I saw Cazenga on Tuesday, he was quite right!

St Joseph's, Rocha Pinto, Luanda



**Colégio São José Anglicana
with Manuel António Pingano
(School Director) & Fr Nunes**

Visit to school funded by ALMA. 250 students attend over two periods. The office is used as a classroom so that the school has 4 classrooms and can be recognised by the government.

The project stopped when funds were put into these desks. Other items have been funded through contributions made by students.

Fr Nunes assured me the flooring will be finished using student contributions, so can remaining funds be released for computers?



One of the four classrooms

Fr Nunes said there had been no rain in Luanda this rainy season, but there were several areas where the roads were flooded even without any rain.

Luanda, Saturday 14th February

Woken up at 2am – by the rainy season arriving in Luanda! It poured for 5 hours.

Fr Nunes was due to arrive at 8:30 am to take me to St Stephen's for the first service at 10am. By 9am I was rather concerned and was very pleasantly surprised to find the Vodaphone network connected my mobile immediately.

Nunes explained he was delayed because the roads were affected by the heavy rain. I soon found out that most of the roads were rivers. Luanda is built on sand, which had been turned into deep mud by the heavy rain. After we'd navigated the roads and mud, the service started. It finished about five hours later!



Today was Evangelisation Day, the anniversary of the registration of the Anglican Church in Angola and the death of the first Archdeacon, Ven Alexandre Domingos. So, in the context of Eucharist, the challenging order of service included:

- Evangelisation Day Message to the Church and presentation of gifts to Beatriz Alexandre
- Confirmation of 22 members from several parishes in Luanda
- Introduction & Commissioning of the new Commissary for the Diocese of Angola!
- Talk on ALMA & Catechist Training by me, translated into Portuguese by Fr Nunes
- Awarding diplomas to 18 catechists, and messages from the students and tutor
- Commissioning 80 members of a prayer team for the Archdeaconry of Luanda



Choir of Students, Luanda Theological Training Centre

Message of Greetings from the Students

To: The Rt Revd Bishop André Soares, Missionary Bishop of the Diocese of Angola
Revd Kiaku Eduardo Avelino, Dean of the Diocese of Angola
Ven Dacosta Emmanuel, Archdeacon of Luanda
Revd Nunes Pedro, Diocesan Secretary
Pastors of the Archdeaconry of Luanda
Revd Simão Adolfo, Tutor of the Luanda Theological Training Centre
Brother John Tasker, Representative of Revd Adrian¹, the couple who are the course donors, and the Anglican Communion
Officers of the Archdeaconry of Luanda
Brothers and Sisters of the People of God

¹ Revd Adrian Chatfield was previously the Course Supervisor and would have been known to the students.

We the students of the theological training course from 2006 to 2008, want to express our thanks to God for all He did for us both before and after this course.

God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea. (Ps 46:1-2)

When we started the course we knew it would not be easy because Satan fights against those who search for God. We finished because God's hand was with us. When we started we were many students, but half of the students stopped through various difficulties. Thank you to our teachers and pastors who encouraged us to finish the course.

Thank you to the Lord, who said, "But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well." (Matt 6:33).

Thank you to our tutor Revd Simão Adolfo who, with the bad weather we had, came through the city many times with half-wet clothes and shoes full of marshy water and mud, but plastic bags minimised the damage, and he kept coming to avoid discouraging us and always stayed strong.

And also thank you for the divine inspiration of our pastors and the other people who chose us to be students of this centre. May God bless you mightily for your love and the confidence that you put in us.

Thank you to all the sponsors of this course, the ones who created this programme for us to study in Angola, which was what we needed. This kept the costs of training and accommodation low. Dear brothers and sisters we will never forget all that you did for us, your affection, your commitment, your love and dedication, your confidence and the determination you had for us to have everything we needed as students and now as (serving catechists) that we go out to be.

Promise:

We, the students who finished the theological training course, in the presence of God and of His Church, accept that today marks the start of a new responsibility that we have in this great Body of Christ (His Church); in obedience to the command of the Lord Jesus Christ for the spiritual and numerical growth of His Church.

Also, we promise to be faithful, honest and fair in the work of our God.

It is with great honour and joy that we give these promises to the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Great is the one who called us in the way of the cross, the God of Israel who did not stop until everything was achieved in the right time. In exactly the right time.

In times of joy we worship God
In times of difficulty we look to God
In times of silence we adore God
In times of pain we trust God

For every time in life, we thank God. Thanks be to God.

Luanda, 14th February 2009

Uíge, Sunday 15th February

Staying in the guest house, Estrela do Norte, I found the electricity supply had been made more reliable through having two complete circuits. So when one generator fails and the backup is used, one just has to use a different set of switches in the bedrooms. Which was easy once I'd realised!

My companions at breakfast were all Angolan construction workers. Uíge no longer looks as though a war has hit it, which is quite some achievement! New public buildings, schools, banks, flats, and a garage have been built. There are still some shell shocked buildings to resolve, and what was the main street is full of closed shops. But I even saw three cash dispensers in Uíge!

The service was held in the open next to St John the Baptist, Bembanganga as there wasn't a church building big enough to hold the expected congregation.

Fr Nunes was concerned that whilst we would be ok under a canopy the rest of the congregation would be out in the sun for several hours. But large umbrellas rapidly appeared, and I remembered from my first visit to Uíge in 2005 that large umbrellas were useful for protection from either rain or sun, and sometimes from both in the same service!



One of the choirs in the service at Uíge

I had been asked in advance to preach. After asking me, Fr Nunes had enquired whether that was good news or bad news? He seemed happy with the response that it was always good news to preach the Word of God! I'm not sure if he had realised at the time that my preaching in Uíge would mean he would need to translate from English into Kikongo!

Kiambote Kieno is guaranteed to produce applause from a congregation. The opening prayer in Portuguese also created quite a stir. Knowing even a little language is very much appreciated.

My ecclesiastical status needed some explaining. Revd Simão Adolfo settled on "ministerio não pastor". I hope my presence as a lay minister has encouraged the catechists, present and future! Afterwards, it occurred to me it may have helped to recall that Archibald Patterson was a Reader.



Students, Uíge Theological Training Centre

Message of Gratefulness

The Sovereign God loved us and sent His Son to be the Saviour of the World. We need his eternal mercy to equip humanity with all the good things which happen in the World.

The Diocesan programme of basic formation in theological training is bearing fruit for all who want to be helped: Priests, Deacons, Churchwardens, Catechists, Secretaries of Parishes, Congregation Leaders, Youth, and Mothers Union members who are the majority of church members.

The course was opened by the Archdeacon of Uíge, Ven Eduardo Da Silva Clemente, on 5th February 2006. On the 8th we started learning. During the three years of course we faced the

challenge with dedication and zeal. Though we had bad and good times, illness, calamity, weather and family problems. At the end of the year, in December 2008, we finished the training course.

32 students started the course. Along the way some dropped out and we 16 students, Catechists, Churchwardens and Evangelists, finished the course through the grace of God.

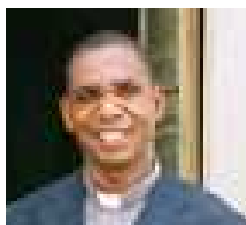
We have worked to proclaim the Gospel, the Good News of Salvation, which is basic theological formation, fruit of the knowledge of our teacher, Revd Augusto Domingos. He didn't withhold any of his time, commitment, harmony, vocation or any of his teaching talents from us.

We want to state our satisfaction and gratefulness for this formation which will never be forgotten. May the blessing of God be with you all in Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Class of Students

Uíge, 15th February 2009

One of the catechists who trained at the Uíge Theological Training Centre travelled 36 km on foot for every class over the three years!



Revd. Augusto Domingos

Message of Greetings

To: John Tasker, Commissary of the Diocese of Angola in the UK
Revd Nunes Pedro, Diocesan Secretary
Ven Eduardo da Silva Clemente, Archdeacon of Uíge
Esteemed brothers and sisters in Christ

We are very grateful you have come to this great event to participate in the closing of the first training course, "To be an approved worker", and greetings to our visitor John Tasker, representative of ALMA. He is the servant of God we were waiting for in order to proceed with the closing of the course, and we pray God will be with him during his mission in Angola.

We enjoyed this first theological training course, and we are praying that God will see all the difficulties we had during these times of training. Thank you for your prayers for us, because they really made the success of the course a reality.

Many righteous people and pastors had longed to see this training seminary for the workers of God's harvest. But the implementation of this plan wasn't in human hands, it belonged to the Supreme Creator and giver of all, the Lord God Almighty.

God answered their prayers and dreams when on 8th February 2006 we started the theological training course with 32 students in Uíge. The period has been long, with difficulties and storms. Half the students left the training centre, and we enjoyed completing the course with only 16 workers finishing the three years.

The sub-centre of the Archdeaconry of Lucunga-Loge in Songo started with 14 students and they finished brilliantly with 8 students. That really shows that many are called but few are chosen. The teachers were priests, brothers formed for this church.

In the community the church needs practical faith to confront how people are doing in the different stories of their own faith. Globalisation wants to see everything relative to all other things in a similar way; to be the same is normal. The Apostle Paul says, "Everything is permissible for me - but not everything is beneficial. Everything is permissible for me - but I will not be mastered by

anything" (1 Cor 6:12). For this reason we are called into responsibility for the Gospel and to be witnesses of Christ.

The course "To be an approved worker" continues to prepare you to lead with an integrated vision of life, "so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work" (2 Tim 3:17).

To finish, I would like to leave a challenge to the newly formed workers, "And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others" (2 Tim 2:2).

Thank you to the Diocese of London and all church members who directly or indirectly helped us with their gifts, from which we have formed the workers for the harvest of God. We really needed your help, and may the God of silver and gold reward you with multiple blessings.

Thank you very much!

Revd. Augusto Domingos

Priest & Programme Co-ordinator
Uíge, 15th February 2009

I met Revd José Congo, Priest of St Felipe, Uíge who told me he had walked 15km to attend the service, as he has no transport, and would have to walk back. After I mentioned this to Fr Nunes, he observed that Revd Afonso Lopez, Priest of St Matthew, Kimvuenga is 35km from Mucaba, and would have to walk to attend the service tomorrow. There is a clear need for bicycles for pastors and catechists in the Uíge Archdeaconry who need to travel these long distances.

Martyr's Parish, Candombe Velho, Uíge

Martyr's in Uíge is one of Bishop André's priorities for a new parish link, so the purpose of this visit was to understand something of the life of the parish. I was welcomed by photos of Archbishop Rowan's visit to Martyr's!

Revd Augusto Domingos presented me with photos and a history of the parish, including Alexandre Domingos' Certificate of Ordination signed by Archibald Patterson.

He spoke of the two disciples together on the road to Emmaus, who had encountered Jesus. He saw that as the story the Church is telling, and said we need another too so we can walk together.

Revd Augusto Domingos presented me with a bag of coffee, pointing out that it was red coffee. Fr Nunes added that meant it was the best coffee produced in Uíge – see reference to red seed later.

Martyr's Church is being extended as it is too small. Church members are making bricks.



Eduardo Tomas (Catechist), Revd Jacinto Henriques, Revd Augusto Domingos, Vicente Manuel (Guardian)

Just out of Uíge, Fr Nunes pointed to a hill beside the road and said that was where Archbishop Rowan had laid the stone for the secondary school.

Songo, Sunday 15th February

Visit to St Barnabas, Songo for a meeting on the school project and twinning with St Botolph's Without Bishopsgate. We were expecting to meet Ven. Pedro António Sacala, who is Archdeacon of Lukunga Loge and Priest of St Barnabas. Rather than a small meeting, we were greeted by the whole church which had gathered to welcome their visitors. This was completely unexpected, and was both very moving and rather disconcerting! I introduced the purpose of our visit, and having just announced that St Botolph's wanted to twin with St Barnabas, there was an enormous thunderclap as though God in heaven was showing his approval! By the time I'd finished speaking, the sky opened with a tremendous rainstorm, so we turned to worship as the noise of the rain on the corrugated iron roof inhibited conversation.

The worship was mainly in Kikongo because some members don't know Portuguese very well. Not all the Mothers Union choir sang in Portuguese, so I thought language may be gender related.

Four choirs led the worship, during which the local radio turned up wanting an interview!

Fr Sacala and Fr Nunes Pedro went to be interviewed. They asked what the purpose of the visit was, and what the Church can do for the Government. That was an opportunity for Fr Nunes to talk about the Mission & Ministry training programme for catechists and the Church's plan to build a school in Songo. The Government representative confirmed that if the church builds a school, then the Government will pay the teachers.

A letter from Revd Dr Alan McCormack and card from members of St Botolph's were very well received. They were very pleased to hear the offer to fund the building of the school and if the funds are available, they would hope to start building in June for the school to open next February.



Children in one of the current classrooms

The nearby government school looked in a very poor condition, probably due to war damage. It has 3 classrooms. There are also 5 trees with piles of red bricks for the children to sit on.

A large open space next to the church building is for a larger church, and then there is a piece of land 110m x 150m for the school to be built.

Pastor Sacala said that ideally the school would have 6 classrooms, but the number depends on the available finance.

St Barnabas is the mother church of Songo, and has two satellite congregations. St Monica and St Tiago (James in English). Like most Anglican Churches in Angola, St Barnabas is situated in the part of town where the poorest people live. There are many goats, some chickens and ducks, and a few pigs wandering around.

We had refreshments in Pastor Sacala's house; plantain, pine nuts and safu fruit. Fr Nunes translated the letter from Alan McCormack and Pastor Sacala wanted to write a letter in response. On Tuesday I received the letter which his son Tony wrote in English. Tony is fluent in English as he has studied at Windhoek in Namibia. He has one semester left to complete, but is currently having a break before resuming his course. I think this may be useful for arranging a joint parish visit from St Botolph's and St Barnabas, Connecticut later this year.

When I told Pastor Sacala that St Botolph's wanted to visit and help with building the school, the room immediately burst into song. It was very moving.

Songo has been a sub-centre for the Mission & Ministry training programme, with 8 catechists being awarded diplomas for successful completion of the course. They want to have a training centre of their own rather than being a sub-centre of Uíge, but were told that there needed to be more students to justify that. Simão Adolfo encouraged the MU and Youth to consider training.

Lots of children are wearing T-shirts with slogans in English that they don't understand. One boy at St John the Baptist, Uíge thought it was very funny that his shirt had Happy Birthday on it, once he had learnt it meant Feliz Anniversario! Another at St Barnabas, Songo had a T-shirt saying Homework & Weekends don't mix! I found that very funny as the purpose of the visit was to discuss the school!!

That evening I had a conversation with Mendes and Estêvão Domingos, the two oldest sons of Fr Augustos who were keen to practice their English. They asked about jobs in London compared to Angola. No comparison really, despite the financial crisis.

Mucaba, Monday 16th February

6:30am start for journey to Mucaba, which had been negotiated back from 6am as quite why a 90 minute journey for a service at 10am necessitated such an early start was a mystery! The road to Mucaba is now passable thanks to the Chinese who are reconstructing it. Huge embankments have been built to bridge valleys, the road widened and resurfacing is in progress. Beautiful green mountain scenery, bit like the North Pennines. We bounced into Mucaba at 8am, and it was cold!

Breakfast of plantain, pine nuts and coffee was followed by a meeting with the Local Government Administrator at 9am (clue to early arrival) who wanted to know what we were up to in his area. Fr Nunes and myself explained. He wished us well and said he was sending a representative to the service who would report back.

Just after breakfast, I had asked the most important question of the day, "Who is preaching this morning?" and Fr Nunes answer was "You are!" then he, Simão Adolfo and Augusto Domingos burst into laughter. "And the readings are the same as yesterday?" I said hopefully. "We're following the lectionary". So a sermon was prepared on the way to and from seeing the Administrator. My few words of Kikongo and Portuguese were appreciated. I guess the sermon in between was ok since I was mobbed afterwards by a church full of adults & children wanting to shake my hand.

Revd Pedro Nzuzi had travelled 35km from Nsosso to Mucaba at some personal sacrifice to be present for the service. This enabled us to discuss the school project being funded from the 2008 Diocese of London Lent Appeal. Nsosso has many children, and could really do with a larger school than we can afford from the Lent Appeal, but Pastor Nzuzi said it is best to start with the funds available and then build on. There are two government primary schools in Nsosso so being linked to one of them initially should be ok. He is the adult literacy co-ordinator for Nsosso. I was

interested to observe that his personal sacrifice in travelling led to Fr Nzuzi presiding over the Eucharist as the senior priest present at the service from the Archdeaconry of Nzadi-a-Lukisi.

The service was held in the church of St Paul, Mucaba. This is the mother church of Mucaba, planted by Archibald Patterson, and was chosen because it is where the students trained.

This time the diplomas were awarded by myself, Nunes Pedro, Simão Adolfo, Pedro Nzuzi, Augusto Domingos, Police Chief and Local Government Representative! The catechists were accompanied by their wives who took charge of the diplomas, showed them proudly to the congregation, and then kissed their husbands. Some catechists were then given their diplomas by their wives, but not all of them! Well, I had preached on love in families!

Message from the Students at Mucaba Theological Training Centre

To: John Tasker, Commissary of the Diocese of Angola in the UK and all accompanying him
Revd Pedro Nzuzi, Nzadi-a-Lukizi Archdeaconry Management Commission
Brothers and Sisters

Today we receive the delegation to help us enjoy and celebrate the end of the basic theology course. Greetings from the students. Thank you in Jesus' name.

We enjoyed the formation which we've had, because only learning can overcome a lack of knowledge and has the power to change what's bad to the best work in the practical service of evangelism.

We believe all we learnt during these three years could change something in the Church in Angola, especially in the local church.

We started the course on 10th February 2006 with 32 students. The celebration on the day of the course opening was led by João Lopes Panda.

Half the number of students left the course due to difficulties and problems.

Thank you to The Rt Revd Bishop André Soares, who decided to implement the basic theology course in Angola. Thank you to our teachers, Revd Augusto Domingos, who opened the way, and Revd Manuel Finda, who continued and was the centre co-ordinator.

Thank you to Almighty God for giving us the intelligence and courage to come to the end of the course with the family responsibilities we have.

We appeal to everyone who God calls to this course to come as we did, in courage, faith and dedication. May God bless you.

God bless the Diocese of Angola
God bless the Worldwide Anglican Church
God bless the Nzadi-a-Lukizi Archdeaconry

The Students
Mucaba, 16th February 2009



Revd. Manuel Finda
Tutor, Mucaba Theological
Training Centre

Message of Greetings

To: Commissary of the Diocese of Angola in the UK
Revd Nunes Pedro, Diocesan Secretary
Beloved Archdeacon
All guests present
My brothers and sisters

The Archdeaconry of Nzadi-a-Lukisi and the Theological Training Centre are filled with enthusiasm that you have all come here. Greetings from us in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

All visitors coming into this area called the red seed of Uíge are welcome, and we would like them to feel they are at home.

Turning to this event, we would like to speak about the start of this course. On 10th February 2006, we started studying the first year with 33 students, women and men. We have had many difficulties since then, some students left the course for different reasons, and then we finished with only 17 students. Thank you to God and all the people who, directly or indirectly helped us, for this project of local ambassadors for the Kingdom of God became real.

We hope the next group will do better than we did. They will think about the big area they have which needs many Evangelists. They will not forget what the Lord Jesus said to the 72: "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few". (Luke 10:2a)

Congratulations to all students who supported the centre during these three difficult years, and not forgetting Revd Augusto Domingos, who is the John the Baptist of this centre. I hope they will continue to be faithful to Jesus Christ until he comes again.

At his licensing in Lubango, The Revd Manuel Finda said, "It is necessary to understand what the Bible said about growing the Local Church, we need to have faith and want to serve God with the good things we received from God. This helps both the growth of the Church and the edification of the Body of Christ. The bad win if the good do not do something."

Teaching is transforming lives.
Thank you for our first course.

Fr. Manuel Finda

Theological Training Centre, Nsadi-a-Lukizi, 16th February 2009

After delivering his message, Manuel Finda presented it to me to bring back to London, and also gave me a gift of an Angolan Pastors Bag to hold my alb, scarf, bible and prayer book.

Negage, Monday 16th February

Visit to St Michael's & All Angels, Negage to see the school project whilst we were in Uíge. We visited Negage on Monday afternoon, one day earlier than planned, as we needed to get back to Luanda earlier than planned the next day. This meant that we just met with Ven Eduardo da Silva Clemente, Archdeacon of Uíge & Parish Priest, rather than with the whole congregation who might well have appeared if our visit had been the next day as originally planned!

Pastor Clemente showed us the school, and explained it was the first school that the Government had built for the Anglican Church. It had been built with three classrooms, and now that the Church has built a fourth classroom, the school can be independent (and have its own director). The building work for the new classroom has been completed. We were visiting in the afternoon so it was pouring with rain at the time! Once the downpour stopped we had a guided tour, and interrupted a goat who had been sheltering in the new classroom, which just needs the door and windows to be fitted. This will happen as soon as the builder recovers from an illness, and the walls will then be painted. The roof had a small leak which also needs fixing before the painting.

We talked about the plan to install a water tank. Observing the amount of rain coming off the school roof, I enquired whether it was planned to collect the rainwater. This led to a discussion between Fr Nunes & Fr Clemente on the location of the tank. They concluded that the top of the village next to the school would be a better location than the original plan of closer to the houses, so that rainwater could be collected and fed into the tank, and then piped to the toilets.

I visited many Anglican Churches during the visit, and was particularly struck that all of them were situated in the middle of where the poorest people were living. Other churches may be in splendid isolation, but the Anglican churches are living out the life of Jesus as incarnate amongst the poor. May God bless them and us as we seek to be Church alongside them.

Return to Luanda, Tuesday 17th February

Left Uíge 05:15 am and arrived in Kikoyo at the end of the new road 5 hours later. The Rua Ngola through Kikoyo was solid with traffic and liquid with mud. It took the next 3½ hours to get through Kikoyo. Imagine every size of vehicle between a container truck and a little boy pushing a wheelbarrow. In each direction. Plus thousands of pedestrians. Young mothers carrying babies on their backs and shopping on the head, school children, market shoppers. All trying to get through a quagmire at the same time.

A further ½ hour to Revd Simão Adolfo's house in Cazenga, where the road turned into a swamp and Fr Nunes had to resort to four-wheel drive. If we had not been in a vehicle with a high wheelbase and 4WD we would not have got through. Fortunately, the Bishop had lent us his personal official vehicle, the diocese hasn't got one but needs one so that both Bishop and Diocesan Staff can travel on different journeys at the same time.

Fortunately we had been invited to meet Pat Phillips, British Ambassador to Angola, so Fr Nunes had changed the plan. If we'd visited Negage in the morning then we may not have got through Luanda until midnight, and navigating quagmire and swamp in the dark would not have been safe.

The British Embassy is in the same security zone as the Presidential Palace. The entrance is therefore protected by the Presidential Guard, which had been changed since the Ambassador had issued the instruction to admit us. Fortunately, Fr Nunes had got the vehicle cleaned of swamp so our presence looked credible, and armed with Pat's mobile phone number we gained entrance.

Having discussed the visit, we moved on to the infrastructure investment being made, and concurred it was essential although recognised that road works are making life in Luanda much more difficult in the medium term. I observed that whilst this investment is essential, with the one exception of schools, I had not seen any improvement to the lives of the poor people of Angola. It seemed this insight balanced the completely positive view of government ministers!

The Foreign Secretary has called an Ambassadors Conference in London in March. This will be a 3 day conference followed by 2 days engaging with stakeholders. There will be a FCO Conference on Churches in Africa on 26th March to which ALMA will be invited. Sensing an opportunity, I

wondered whether an Ambassadors View of Angola event for ALMA Parishes would be possible. Pat immediately agreed and suggested Fri 27th March.

The Luanda Urban Poverty Programme (LUPP) had initial funding from the British Government, although this has now finished since Angola is not poor! Allan Cain of the NGO Development Workshop is the contact. We concurred that Angola is not poor, but most of her people are.

The Church can have a role in encouraging the Government to act on behalf of poor people by speaking together through the Council of Christian Churches in Angola (CICA). Fr Nunes told us that Revd Kiaku Avelino, Parish Priest of St Augustine's Viana is now the CICA Administrator. Pope Benedict is visiting Luanda in March.

Pat showed us the Embassy Garden and Fr Nunes decided it was a great venue for a retreat!

When we arrived at the Bishop's house, Bishop André, his wife and children were all gathered round a log fire in the compound on which dinner had been cooked. The gas had run out.

We reviewed the visit, and felt that it had gone very well. Bishop André considered the visit had been important to motivate local churches

Wednesday 18th February

Fr Nunes arrived at 06:40 to take me to the airport. 10 minutes later we were there! Pedro Almeida (Catechist, St Paul, Sapu) was there waiting for us with gifts for Revd & Luisa Muanga. After Fr Nunes had left for the office, Osvaldo Ferreira (President, St Stephen's Youth Group) appeared and ensured I got through all the airport formalities quickly which was very helpful.

Pedro and I had a conversation in Portuguese and English about his congregation of Patterson the Missionary which had become an independent parish led by Revd Simão Adolfo. Pedro said that Revd Simão was a good teacher and the parish is growing. This good news and their love was a good way to leave Angola. I knew that the journey would not be complete until all the experiences and messages had been passed on, starting with Revd Muanga who was to meet me at Heathrow.

Thanks

I would like to express my thanks to:

- Bishop André for his invitation and welcome
- Revd Nunes Pedro for his excellent organisation of the programme
- All who encouraged, supported and prayed before and during the visit
- The Angolan Embassy in the UK for the speed with which they issued a visa
- Fr Nunes and Revd Simão Adolfo for their friendship during my visit
- Revd Augusto Domingos and his family for their hospitality
- Pat Phillips for her invitation to reflect together on the visit
- Revd Domingos Ramos Muanga for translating all the messages from students & tutors
- My friends Pedro Almeida, Osvaldo Ferreira and Rosita Moraes for their welcome

John Tasker

ALMA Twinning Officer and
Commissary for the Diocese of Angola in the UK
16th March 2009