



Well, the global COVID-19 pandemic has reached East Africa, with several confirmed cases in Tanzania. All the schools have been closed. We had an emergency meeting for formation leaders at Jordan University College on Saturday where we decided to apply strict measures that include not allowing seminarians to leave the premises unless there is an emergency, restricting visitors to our houses, making sure that handwashing and social distancing are practiced, etc. As I am sure you understand from your own experiences, the meeting was held in a somber mood as we contemplated how the virus could impact countries that have smaller and poorer housing, inadequate infrastructures, and insufficient supplies of clean water and soap. The haunting image for me came as I drove home and saw a mini-bus that was built for about 15 passengers crammed with about 40 people! Nothing good will come of this, I thought! At this point, as we approach Holy Week and Easter, church services have not been cancelled by the diocese of Morogoro. At the meeting, we thought that eventually they will be cancelled; whether they are cancelled or not, we will celebrate on our own here at the formation house.

One of our men told me today that he needed to go to the hospital because he was not feeling well. At first, my heart jumped into my throat! But, he did not have any respiratory symptoms and the symptoms he did have were consistent with malaria or a urinary tract infection. It turns out that he “only” has malaria! It is amazing how things have changed when you find out that you have malaria and are happy! He has medication now and, with rest, should be fine. By the way, in the time that I have been here, I think four of the six men have had malaria at least once. I take malaria medication each day, so I have not had to deal with this fact of life in the warmer locations in southern Tanzania like Morogoro. It is just a part of life here and many people have had malaria many, many times over their life span.

On a happier note, the Ontario-Kentucky Province purchased a new pick-up truck for the parish and school in Buhemba, so Fr. Andrzej drove the old pick-up from Buhemba to Morogoro for our use. It is old but it has 4-wheel drive and has



already come in handy as we negotiate the muddy roads in the rainy season. Phillip and I were able to get the air conditioner fixed and repair the rear axle, so it seems to be working very well right now.



Speaking of rain, we are in the rainy season right now. There are some times when it rains so hard that you cannot imagine that more water could fall from the sky at one time than at that moment!



The other thing to get used to is the **NOISE** of the rain as it falls on the tin roofs that cover most of the buildings. One night at supper, we were **YELLING** at each other because the noise of the falling rain on the roof was so loud!



Of course much rain gives rise to much mud, which makes walking and driving a challenge!



It is amazing how quickly the newly planted corn grows under the conditions of heat and rain. I took this first photo of a newly cultivated field about 2 weeks ago. I took the second photo yesterday. So, the corn is growing quickly!



Here in our formation house, following the custom of other places in the world, each person celebrates his birthday, but also his name's day. I think that this is a great deal: you get an extra "birthday" but you don't have to add another year to your age! Joseph celebrated his name's day on March 19th, the Feast of St. Joseph. We had cake and ice cream, presents, singing, and speeches! The celebration came in the midst of exam week, so it was a welcome relief for everyone.



Mosses presents the name's day cake to Joseph.



From left to right: Yohana, Mosses, Vitalis, Peter, Joseph, and Phillip.





Yohana gives a speech before giving Joseph one of his presents. What could it be?





It looks like a new shirt that fits perfectly!!!! Of course, any birthday celebration needs some ice cream to go with the cake!



The direct link for the blogs is: <https://resurrectionists.ca/members-in-action>