

## **Provincial Desk May 2025** **Provincial Desk**

### **CREATION OF THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF BAGAMOYO AND INSTALLATION OF ITS FIRST BISHOP**

On March 7, 2025, the late Pope Francis joyfully announced the establishment of the new Catholic Diocese of Bagamoyo, appointing Bishop Stephano Musomba, OSA, who previously served as the auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of Dar es Salaam, as its first bishop. This significant event marked Bagamoyo as the 36<sup>th</sup> Catholic Diocese in Tanzania, generating immense excitement as it fulfilled a long-held dream for the vibrant resurgence of the Catholic faith in the place.

Historically recognized as the largest slave market in the region, Bagamoyo was once a place of despair. However, it evolved into a community of liberated slaves and became cherished as a Mother Mission. Today, Bagamoyo has transformed into a beacon of hope and faith. This occasion heralded a historic moment, bringing to fruition the vision planted by early missionaries and those who continue their vital work in the area. It is affectionately seen as the gateway to the Catholic faith for mainland Tanzania and East Africa.



*Bishop Musomba seated after his installation*

The momentous inauguration of the new diocese of Bagamoyo and installation of the first bishop lasted for two days. The first day was Saturday, 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2025, which commenced with the arrival of Bishop Musomba, who was greeted with enthusiastic cheers and warm embraces from the crowds of faithful and residents of Bagamoyo. This was followed by sacred rituals marking the inauguration of the new diocese and introducing the appointed bishop. The apostolic constitution *Fidelium Vitae* (appointment letter from the Holy See) was read in the presence of Archbishop Yuda Thadei Ruwa'ichi of the Archdiocese of Dar es Salaam and Bishop Lazarus Vitalis Msimbe, SDS, of the Catholic Diocese of Morogoro, and those present.

After the reading, the formal act of creating the new diocese was performed with due solemnity, resonating deeply with everyone present. The newly appointed bishop was then introduced to the assembly, greeted with an outpouring of support and hope from the community. In a symbolic gesture of trust and responsibility, the Canon of the Cathedral, Fr. Thaddeus Siya, CSSp, ceremonially handed over the keys to the Cathedral Church of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. The sight of the bishop joyfully opening and entering the cathedral filled the hearts of all present with excitement and reverence. The day concluded with vespers led by Bishop Augustine Shao, CSSp, of the Catholic Diocese of Zanzibar. The echoes of prayers and hymns resonated through the air, marking the beginning of a new chapter in the spiritual history of Bagamoyo.

The Holy Mass for the Episcopal installation took place on Sunday, 4<sup>th</sup> May 2025, on the grounds of the Marian Schools in Bongololo. This location had previously hosted the grand celebration marking 150 years of Catholic faith in Tanzania in 2018. The ceremony was graced by the presence of nearly all the bishops and abbots from across Tanzania, the Apostolic Nuncio to Tanzania, Angelo Accattino, Superiors of religious congregations, the Vice-President of the United Republic of Tanzania, Dr. Philip Mpango, local government officials, leaders of various political parties, hundreds of priests, religious men and women, and thousands of lay faithful.

During his homily at the installation ceremony, Bishop Lazarus Vitalis Msimbe, SDS, drawing inspiration from the bishop's surname (Musomba), which means "to carry" in Kiswahili, urged him to carry the people of Bagamoyo to God. He encouraged him to feed the hungry, assist the poor and homeless, and serve the sick and elderly with compassion and dignity. The homily served as a heartfelt reminder of the bishop's sacred vocation to bear witness to the Risen Christ, while also praying for him to be courageous in denouncing evil and upholding the unity of the Church, all of which align with the bishop's motto, "That they may be one" (John 17:11).

In his address during the episcopal installation ceremony, Bishop Eusebius Nzigilwa, the Vice President of the Tanzania Episcopal Conference and Bishop of Mpanda Catholic Diocese, reminded Bishop Musomba of the spiritual richness that Bagamoyo holds, from which he could draw strength for his pastoral responsibilities. He emphasized that Bagamoyo is still celebrated as a gateway of the Catholic faith for the mainland. It is also a national pilgrimage center and a place where the graves of the first Spiritan missionaries, otherwise known as Holy Ghost Fathers, who brought the Gospel to Tanzania lie. Thus, the spiritual richness of Bagamoyo is an assurance that the bishop is surrounded by intercessors in both heaven and on earth to support him in his episcopal apostolate.

The Vice President of the United Republic of Tanzania also addressed the gathering, congratulating the priests, the religious, and the lay faithful members of the new diocese, as well as the bishop on his installation as the first bishop of the newly established Catholic diocese of Bagamoyo. Moreover, he announced that the government strongly condemned the recent attacks on the Secretary General of the Tanzanian Episcopal Conference, Rev Dr Charles Kitima. He assured all peace-loving citizens that the Ministry of Home Affairs has been directed to ensure that all those apprehended face legal consequences.



*The Vice President of Tanzania, Dr. Mpango, congratulating the new Bishop at the end of Mass*

In response to a special request from Bishop Msimbe regarding the restitution of land belonging to the Registered Trustees of the Catholic Diocese of Morogoro, now part of the Diocese of Bagamoyo, which has been occupied by the government institution of ADEM since, the Vice President directed the Minister of Education, Science and Technology to convene a team of experts from three key ministries: the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Human Settlements, and the President's Office for Regional Administration and Local Governments. Together, they will engage in constructive discussions with Catholic Church leaders to explore viable solutions to this matter.

The Diocese of Bagamoyo was established from two existing deaneries: the Deanery of St. Gaspar, which is part of the Archdiocese of Dar es Salaam and consists of 17 parishes, and the Deanery of Bagamoyo from the Diocese of Morogoro, which comprises 13 parishes.

In a significant announcement made before the conclusion of the celebration, Bishop Musomba revealed that the Diocese of Bagamoyo will be organized into five deaneries: Chalinze, Bagamoyo, Bunju, Tegeta, and Mivumoni. He appointed the deans for each of these deaneries. Fr. Elias Ruvahofi, CSSp, has been appointed as the Dean of the Bagamoyo Deanery.

The Spiritan presence within this new ecclesiastical circumscription is profoundly palpable, as they oversee six parishes, own and manage various educational institutions, including the Marian University College (MARUCo), two esteemed Girls' High Schools (Marian Girls High School and Marian Mater Dei Girls High School), and one technical college (Saint Joseph Technical College). They also run two Boys' High Schools (Marian Boys High School - Kerege and Marian Boys High School – Mlingotini), as well as a pre- and Primary school (Marian Pre and Primary School at Epiphany Parish) and a pre-school (Marian Suwema Memorial Preschool - Makurunge). Furthermore, they own and manage the Stella Maris Hotel, which played a vital role during the event, providing accommodation for bishops and religious superiors and offering catering services for most of the guests who attended this historic occasion.

The vibrant celebrations in Bagamoyo during the inauguration of the new diocese were truly memorable. The installation of the pioneer bishop was truly a significant moment and a memorable occasion for all who gathered. As we embrace this new chapter, we extend our warmest wishes of *Bon Vent* to the Diocese and its esteemed bishop and all Spiritans working in Bagamoyo, hoping for a future filled with blessings and growth.

**Fr Elias Ruvahofi, CSSp.**

### **‘A PRIEST IS NOT HIS OWN’: MAY 15, 2025 PRIESTLY ORDINATION**



*Newly ordained priests*

#### *Introduction*

Thursday, 15<sup>th</sup> May 2025 was an eventful day in the Province of Tanzania following the celebrations of the priestly ordination of her four confreres: Fr Desdery Mfoi, CSSp. Fr Evagre Silayo, CSSp., Fr Oden Siwale, CSSp., and Fr Francis Massawe, CSSp. Alongside the four Spiritan Deacons, Bro. Ladislaus Munishi, of the Order of Friars Minor Capuchins (OFM Cap) also received his priestly ordination. Celebrating the priestly ordination of our confreres in the context of the Jubilee Year of hope 2025 in which we are called to journey as pilgrims of hope calls us to an even deeper reflection. As a glimmer of hope, these events attest to the growth of the Church and the Congregation, in both numbers and grace, despite the respective humble beginnings.

The celebrations kicked off at 10:30 am at St Joseph the Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish Church, just a few meters from the Spiritan Provincialate. In attendance were the newly ordained families and friends, Confreres and Diocesan Clergy, parishioners, people of goodwill, religious men and women, and others from within and outside the country. Also in attendance was Fr Jude Ortese, CSSp., Superior of the Province of Nigeria North-East (NNE), who was visiting the country. The Holy Mass was presided over by the Rt. Rev. Anthony Lagwen, Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Mbulu, where the Spiritans are engaged in missionary work among indigenous peoples: The Datooga, Maasai and Hadzabe. The Iraqw, a Cushitic ethnic group, is the largest group in the area.

#### *Bishop's homily*

In his homily, the bishop admonished the newly ordained to live up to the dignity of their office in their attitude towards the ministry, setting a good example. He praised their courage in embracing the religious and priestly life with the Spiritans, who have always distinguished themselves as the voice of the voiceless and as missionaries and friends to the poor and marginalized. More than anything, they are missionaries to the toughest and most challenging areas where the Church struggles to find workers. He encouraged them to be true witnesses of Christ, to be a light to the flock entrusted to their care and to distinguish their priestly ministry through sacrifice, service and humility, following the example of Christ, who, out of love, came not to be served but to serve, giving his life as a ransom for many (cf. Mk 10:45). In his concluding remarks, the bishop praised the Spiritans' enduring dedication and missionary commitment in his diocese, especially their work with indigenous communities and their efforts to foster holistic transformation, particularly in the areas of Christian and spiritual life, social engagement, education and health.

#### *A Word from the Provincial Superior*

Fr Florentine Mallya, CSSp., the Provincial Superior of Tanzania, thanked parents, friends, formators and benefactors for their invaluable support and guidance of the newly ordained during their training. He urged the newly ordained priests to cultivate the missionary spirit envisaged by our founders: This approach is deeply rooted in love and respect, and is committed to the holistic development of the people they serve. It emphasizes 'becoming one with the people' in order to understand their traditions and integrate the Gospel into their cultural contexts.

#### *Mission Appointments*

On behalf of Fr Alain Mayama, CSSp., the Superior General of our Congregation, the Provincial Superior, Fr Mallya, announced the missionary appointments of the newly ordained confreres as follows. Fr Evagre Silayo has been appointed to the Province of Spain, where he completed a two-year Period of Missionary Experience (PME). Father Oden Siwale, CSSp., has been appointed to the Group of Italy, where he also completed a two-year PME. Frs Francis Massawe and Desdery Mfoi have been appointed to the Spiritan International Group of Malawi and the Province of Tanzania respectively. We wish our confreres God's blessings as they embark on their missions.

#### *Conclusion*

After the liturgical celebrations, a brief reception was held at St Carolus hall, which is located next door to the parish. This provided an opportunity for families, friends and confreres to congratulate the newly ordained priests and wish them well in their new roles. It was also an opportunity for confreres working in diverse missions within and outside the province to share bonds of solidarity and

brotherhood, exchange their enriching experiences, and encourage each other to persevere in their missionary endeavors. May the Holy Spirit inspire many young men and women to follow Christ's path of sacrifice and service as missionaries. Amen.

**Br Boniphace James, CSSp.**

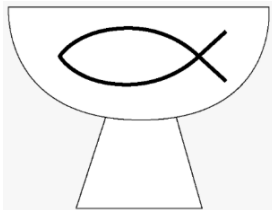
### SAVE THE DATES

#### First religious profession:



June 21, 2025: Magamba, Lushoto

#### Priestly ordination:



July 10, 2025: Epiphany Parish, Burka, Arusha

## Jubilee Celebration

**Jubilee celebration:** on August 14, 2025 at the Provincialate, Tengeru



#### **Silver Jubilee-Religious life:**

1. Francis Lasway
2. Patience Mushi
3. Ricklan Mallya
4. Daniel Waweru



#### **Silver Jubilee-Priestly Ordination:**

1. Honest Munishi
2. Nicodemus Massong
3. John Laizer

**Annual Retreat**



**Venue:** St Carolus, Tengeru  
**1<sup>st</sup> group:** June 22-28, 2025  
**2<sup>nd</sup> group:** June 29 - July 5, 2025  
**3<sup>rd</sup> group:** August 3-9, 2025

**APPOINTMENT**

The Provincial Superior, with the consent of his Council transfers:

- Fr Anselm Okabekwa to St Jude Thaddeus Parish, Mangola with effect from May, 2025.
- Fr Gabriel Abah to Our Lady of Mercy Parish, Monduli Chini, with effect from September, 2025.
- Fr Martin Okoye (temporary assignment) to Christ the King Parish, Kerege, with effect from May, 2025.

*We wish them all the best in their new ministry.*

**BIRTHDAYS**

Gasto	Lyimo	06
Deockary	Massawe	07
Honest	Lyimo	15
Joseph	Kiwango	20
Erasmus	Manwa	22
John	Maendeleo	24
Dennis	Leiya	28

*We wish you all a very happy birthday!*

**BEREAVEMENT**

**We extend our prayerful sympathies to:**

- Fr. Amandus Kapele-(sister) Mrs. Prisca Kapufi, May 15, 2025.  
 Fr Octovian Massong–(brother) Mr. Novat Faustin Massao, May 19, 2025.  
 Fr Gaspar Mushi-(brother) Mr. Martin Stambuli, May 27, 2025.

*Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace. Amen.*

### NECROLOGY

+ Bernard	Ngaviliau	26/06/2005
Clemence	Mushi	20/06/2021

### PROVINCE OF TANZANIA-PROFILE



on this link: <https://heyzine.com/flip-book/acecb327dd.html>

### ENLARGED GENERAL COUNCIL(EGC)

On March 15, 2024, our Superior General, Alain Mayama, on behalf of the General Council wrote a letter to all Superiors of circumscription stating:

“In accordance with SRL 205.1 and 205.2, the next Enlarged General Council (EGC) has been convoked by the General Council from **Sunday (evening), 22 June to Saturday (midday), 5 July, 2025**. It will be held **at the Spiritan Centre in Chevilly-Larue**, a house belonging to the Congregation, by the city of Paris.

The choice of the Province of France is consistent with the second Phase of the Animation Plan on Spiritan spirituality for Mission which will begin in October 2024 and end in October 2026.” ....

The purpose of EGC is:

#### **SRL 205.3**

- to check on the implementation of the decisions of the General Chapter;
- to study new means of strengthening and bringing about the Congregation’s objectives;
- to reinforce collaboration between different circumscriptions both among them and between themselves and the Superior General and his Council.

The Union of the Circumscription of Eastern Africa (UCEAF) will be represented at the EGC by Fathers Garbicha Wako Kilimpe (Ethiopia) and Florentine Mallya.

### SICK CONFRES

Let us continue to pray for our sick confreres. At this time, we especially remember **Fr. Nolasco Mushi**, who is experiencing severe pain. We are profoundly grateful for the presence and care of our confreres, the house staff, the palliative care team, and the doctors who are walking closely with him through this journey.

Let us remain steadfast in prayer, asking the Lord to grant all our ailing brothers peace, strength, and consolation.

Fraternally,



Florentine Mallya, CSSp.  
Provincial Superior



**PRAYER  
FOR THE 4th PROVINCIAL CHAPTER  
2026**

**O God, our loving and caring Father, with the life-giving Spirit you sent into the world your only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, our Saviour. In word and deed he has shown us how to always do your will.**

**We thank you for the gift of our Founders: Claude-Francis Poullart des Places, for his love for you, the most needy students of his time, and for his emphasis on the necessity of community life; and Venerable Francis Libermann, for his missionary action in favour of the most rejected and despised of society.**

**We Spiritans of the Province of Tanzania are grateful for the many blessings we have received in our Province and in the Congregation as we prepare for the 4th Provincial Chapter.**

**Fill our hearts and minds with faith, hope and love. Give us the courage to respond to your call to "cross to the other side of the lake" (Lk 8:22) and to experience something new (cf. Is 43:19). May your Holy Spirit guide us and give us courage to take up new challenges where the need is greatest, in the spirit of synodality and in this Jubilee Year, as pilgrims of hope in your Church.**

**As we cross to the other side of the lake, let us be open, flexible and available to the Holy Spirit in interpreting the signs of the times, in the words of the Venerable Libermann: "be like a feather in the wind".**

**May the Blessed Virgin Mary, companion of missionaries, intercede for us and help us to open our hearts to the Holy Spirit, so that he may fill them, possess them and act in them as sovereign Master and Lord - Amen.**



**One heart  
One soul**

