

## **Provincial Desk January 2025** **Provincial Desk**

### **MISSION ENGAGEMENT AND EXPERIENCES IN GERMANY**



I am Mathew Assenga, CSSp., ordained on May 27, 2021, in the Archdiocese of Arusha, Tanzania. My journey as a newly ordained priest has been marked by urgency, profound learning, and moments of joy. I wish to offer a thoughtful reflection on my experiences during my first missionary engagement in the Church in Germany—a foreign and unfamiliar land with a distinct culture, environment, and people.

The mission in Germany presents a unique sense of urgency and fragility, particularly in addressing the spiritual needs of the community, especially the youth. These needs require careful preparation, including an intensive language course, training in safeguarding children and youth, and a deep understanding of cultural dynamics. These essential tools enable meaningful pastoral engagement and contribute significantly to fostering faith among the people I serve.

My pastoral responsibilities encompass a broad spectrum of activities, including serving as a school chaplain, teaching religion, celebrating Holy Mass, catechizing, visiting families, organizing youth programs, and offering pastoral care to the sick and dying. Caring for children and youth poses challenges, as many lack a firm religious foundation within their families. This demographic group, considered the treasure of the future, demands attentive and informed engagement. To ensure effectiveness, the diocese provides regular courses designed to equip priests and Church ministers with the skills necessary to address the evolving pastoral demands of our time.

To extend my pastoral care effectively and address the spiritual needs of the school and parish communities, I dedicated myself to a one-year intensive language course. Mastering the language is a fundamental tool for engaging authentically with the people and participating fully in the pastoral activities of the diocese. Alongside this linguistic preparation, immersing myself in the cultural fabric of this new environment has been an essential component of my mission.

As a newly ordained priest, embarking on my first foreign mission, I have been entrusted with the role of secondary school chaplain, while also assisting with parish activities on weekends. This dual responsibility has deepened my understanding of the unique dynamics and challenges of pastoral work in a cross-cultural context.

My experiences so far have revealed that mission work in Germany holds both profound relevance and delicate complexities. It calls for a careful balance between respecting boundaries, refraining from judgment, and addressing the diverse spiritual and personal needs of the people. Many seek solace, meaning, and connection amid the struggles of life, including issues of injustice, family challenges, health concerns, and environmental crises.



As a religious missionary, I have come to understand that my vocation extends far beyond the pulpit. It involves being present, listening with humility, understanding people's struggles, and offering them hope and encouragement. This mission has taught me the profound value of empathy, patience, and authentic engagement in creating meaningful connections with those I serve.

Despite the challenges of adapting to a new culture and environment, I find immense fulfillment in my work. The relationships I have formed with the people, their warm hospitality, and their appreciation of my efforts to embrace their language and culture have been deeply rewarding. Their smiles, shared traditions, and kindness have enriched my missionary experience and brought me profound joy.

The people of Germany are welcoming and generous, especially when approached with openness and a heart

free from biases or prejudices. Their hospitality and support have made my transition smoother and strengthened my resolve to serve with dedication and humility.

Missionary work is a vocation that demands adaptability, courage, and an unwavering commitment to the call of service. It requires a willingness to step beyond the comforts of one's native culture and embrace the realities of a new, often secularized environment. Engaging fully in this mission involves not only proclaiming the Word of God but also walking alongside the people, allowing their culture and experiences to shape the journey of faith.

As I continue this journey, I am reminded that the essence of missionary work lies in embodying hope, fostering understanding, and building bridges of faith and connection. My mission in Germany is not merely a task—it is a profound opportunity to grow, learn, and serve in the spirit of humility and love.

Fr Mathew Assenga, CSSp.



## PILGRIMS OF HOPE



The local Jubilee Year has been opened and welcomed with enthusiasm and fervour at the diocesan and parish level here in Arusha. The theme of the Jubilee is relevant to us in many ways: we are invited to be pilgrims of hope in our imperfect world, despite the challenges we face.

In East Africa, our leaders have chosen to talk at each other instead of talking to each other to resolve the escalating political, military and humanitarian crisis in the mineral-rich eastern province of the Democratic Republic of Congo. The impotence of African Union and quasi-indifference of the “International Community” is wanting.

Meanwhile, elsewhere, there are concerns about the impact of xenophobic inclinations on migration policies, leading to large-scale expulsions and detentions of undocumented foreigners. In such challenging times, it is important to remember that we are all part of one global family. The Christian hope that inspires us should be part of our daily lives as we journey together with others in our families, communities, parishes, workplaces and public spaces.

The Church offers guidance on how to sustain hope: “The temptation can be to resolve conflicts by force rather than by dialogue. Authentic practices of synodality enable Christians to be a critical and prophetic voice over against the prevailing culture. In this way, we can offer a distinctive contribution to the search for answers to many challenges faced by our contemporary societies in building the common good (*For a Synodal Church*, 47).

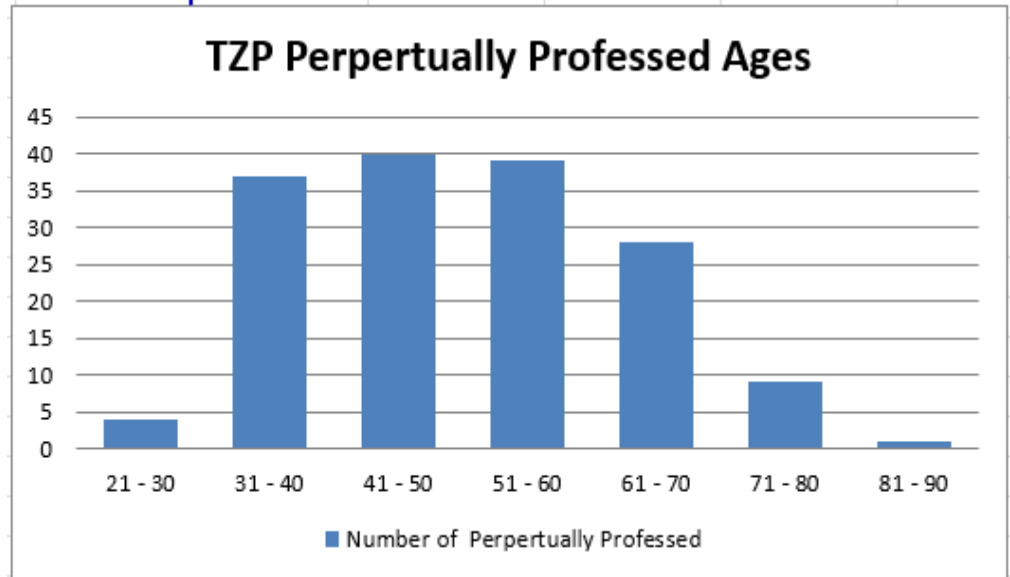
## WORK IN PROGRESS



*Progressive transfer of Usa Seminary to the new site: offices, classrooms and examination hall on the second floor*

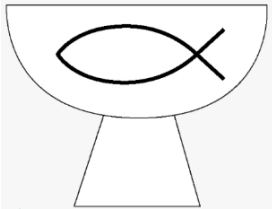
**STATSTICAL DATA OF THE PERPETUALLY PROFESSED MEMBERS OF THE PROVINCE  
(JANUARY 2025)**

Ages	Number of Perpetually Professed
21 - 30	4
31 - 40	37
41 - 50	40
51 - 60	39
61 - 70	28
71 - 80	9
81 - 90	1
	<b>158</b>



 **SAVE THE DATES**

**Priestly ordination**



May 15, 2025: St Joseph Spouse of Mary Parish, Patandi, Arusha

July 10, 2025: Epiphany Parish, Burka, Arusha

**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

✎ **KARIBU**



We are happy to welcome a new confrere, Fr Anselmo Okabekwe, CSSp. from Nigeria South East. He is currently taking a Kiswahili language course in Mang'ola. We wish him a fruitful missionary experience in Tanzania.



Our sincere congratulations to all confreres in the Ministry of Secondary school Education for the impressive Form Four national examination results. We recognize and appreciate your work in collaboration with your school teams. Bravo!

✎ **VACATION**

✚ January Mkude

*Welcome back home and enjoy your stay with family and friends.*

✎ **NECROLOGY**

Leonce	RAMBAU	12 February 2022
John	KWAY	14 February 2013
Aurelian	MASSAWE	19 February 2021

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

**BIRTHDAYS**

FEBRUARY		
01	George	MAYEMBA
02	Patience	MUGISHA
07	Joseph P.	SHAYO
07	Colman F.	KIMARYO
08	Patrick	NJAU KAGUA
12	Justi	TARIMO
14	Valentine	BAYO
22	Priva	TEMU
23	Komba	FLAVIAN
25	Firmin	LASWAI

Fraternally,



Florentine Mallya, CSSp.  
Provincial Superior

