

A day the life of an Augustinian Recollect Novice



The Novices

Since August 2009 I have been living in Monteagudo, the Novitiate House, in Northern Spain. The Novitiate is an intense year with particular focus on the spiritual and community aspects of the Augustinian Recollects. There are 12 students. We get up at 7.00a.m for morning prayers at 7.15am followed by half an hour of mental prayer, then Mass. (except on Tuesdays and Thursdays when we have Mass in the evening). After Mass we go down to breakfast. We do our chores, and our classes begin at 10.30am. We have various responsibilities; this year I am the "Weather man" and the Librarian. Our classes are on Spirituality, History of the Order, the Bible, etc. followed by prayers and lunch. We are organised into groups for serving meals, washing up and collecting the plates. The community is made up of an additional 12 friars, some of whom are elderly or infirm.

After lunch we have time together as a community, a rest or a siesta. We play football on Monday, Wednesday and Friday and have workshops on Tuesday and Thursday. These include learning to play the guitar, singing, learning French and English. There is free time until evening prayers at 8.00pm followed by our evening meal and time together as a community.

We have excursions once a month, to various cultural and religious sites. The habit is worn frequently, including at meals, as an outward sign of our commitment to the Religious Life, we are encouraged to make good use of our free time by reading or meditating. There is no internet, email or television, but we watch films on a Saturday and can phone home once a month. In August, if all goes well, we will make our simple (or temporary) Profession of the vows of poverty, obedience and chastity. It has been an enjoyable year, but by no means easy. I have realised my faults, my weaknesses and my need for growth. I have had to learn to forgive and to be forgiven. I have become strengthened in my commitment, but realise too that there is much still to be done.

I ask for your prayers, so that I might be faithful to the commitment I will make. It is a commitment to serve, to imitate Christ and to love with an open and willing heart.

Douglas Beard

A Letter To Our Friends 22nd May 2010

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THE AUGUSTINIAN RECOLLECTS

St Rita's Centre, Ottery Moor Lane, Honiton Devon EX14 1AP
Fax/Tel: Office: 01404 42635 REGISTERED CHARITY

Dear Friends,

Miracles do happen. The problem is that we just don't see them - the birth of a baby, a sunrise or sunset. Yes, I hear you say, but what about a real miracle? I have to tell you, they happen as well.

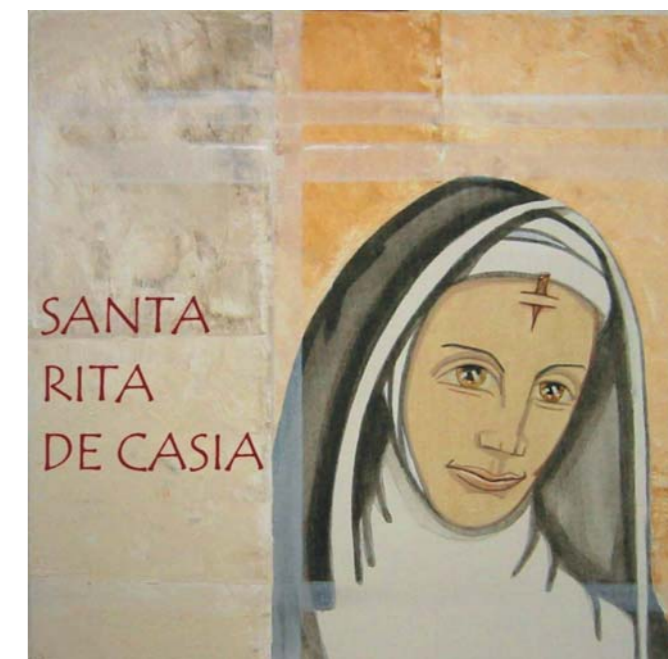
Just the other day a devotee of St Rita wrote and told us of a predicament her son had got into. His case was impossible (without going into details) yet his mother and his family set about bombarding heaven with prayers especially to St Rita, the Patron of impossible cases and a miracle did happen. This lady wrote with her grateful thanks to Rita for her intercession.

St Rita lived 500 years ago, but she remains a Saint for today. She was a married woman with two young teenage boys. Her husband was murdered and her two young boys died shortly afterwards. Today her story would be covered by the tabloid press for a day, appear on the TV news and then she would be soon forgotten.

But St Rita is not forgotten; she picked up her life from such deep despair and went on to become probably the most revered saint in Christendom. Her life is a miracle in itself. As Christians we are marked with faith, hope and charity. St Rita stands out as a beacon of hope and gives succour to those in need.

A prayer of intercession that you might like to say: Dear St Rita, you were granted a share in the Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Strengthen me and give me courage to deal with trials of life. Intercede for me so that my requests, though seemingly impossible, may be granted, and help me to live a life such as yours, full of charity, forgiveness and prayer.

On behalf of all the Recollect Brothers here and throughout the world, I would like to thank you for all your continued support, you and your families will be remembered in this year's novena and especially in our St Rita's Day Mass.

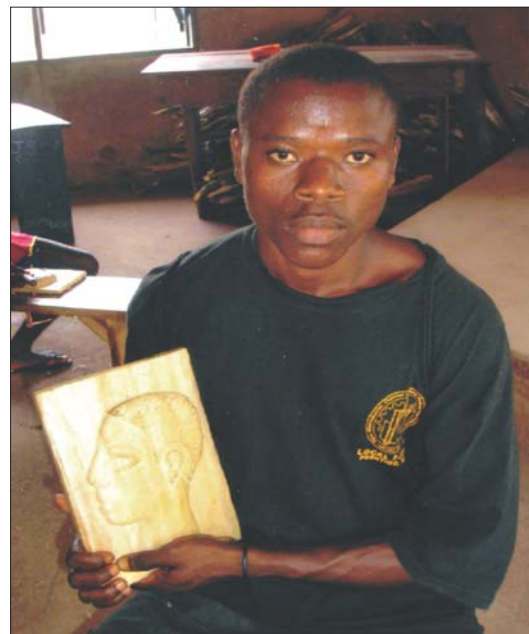


Fr. Gerald Wilson. O.A.R.

Parishioners Visit Sierra Leone Mission



With Bishop George



John -
to be an
apprentice



Stephanie and Kate

Before Father Joseph went to Sierra Leone nearly three years ago, he asked Ray and Pauline Mulligan from St Anthony's Church, Ottery St Mary to go there for one month to teach finance and woodcarving. On 6th January 2010, with the accommodation ready, they were on their way!

Ray was tasked with trying to improve the accounting systems at the 42 schools which are managed by Father Joseph, and also at the various churches. The existing accounts varied from being non-existent, to somewhat inadequate. None of the schools or churches actually balanced their figures, or produced any annual figures.

In the final week, Ray organised two workshops at which representatives from all the schools were able to start the preparation of their accounts for the current year. Any future queries can now be easily emailed to, and from, Ray and Father Joseph.

On his visits to four of the schools, Ray transported bags of cement, to be used in the building of new classrooms, and in his spare time, was kept busy as a children's entertainer!

Pauline's job was to find as many people as possible who showed a talent for carving, and who could be sent for further training to a woodcarver willing to take apprentices. Out of 33 people who came and completed a carving, 7 unemployed young men showed such enthusiasm and talent that they have been earmarked for further training.

Everyone's pride and joy at their finished carvings was wonderful to behold - 'it was well worth going all that way just to see the smiles on their faces!'

Bishop George at Makeni told Pauline about the carver who had created the carvings in his chapel and who takes young men as apprentices.

Father Joseph will be getting in touch with this carver to finalise details for sponsorship.

Ray and Pauline were joined on their trip by Stephanie Hodgetts from Holy Family Church, Honiton and her friend Kate Muller from London. They experienced teaching in various local schools and made learning and discovery a lot of fun for the children. Most of the children, for instance, had never seen a map before, and were mystified at the relationship between a globe and a flat map.

Kate and Stephanie also successfully ran an after-school club at the mission house in Kamalo for older teenage girls, including the teaching of computer skills (which Father Joseph will continue, along with secondary school teachers and older boys).

The girls' four week experience ended with a reward for their hard work - an overnight stay at River 2! They thought they had gone to Paradise - with white sand, warm Atlantic Ocean, palm trees, stunning scenery and fabulous food, including lobster, crab and barracuda! They summed up their trip as, 'such a wonderfully amazing and rewarding experience!'



Fr Joseph



The new school



In outfits given by St Peter's Church, Kamakwie