

The Church of Saint Monica, Nairobi, rocked to typical African liturgical music with songs sung by a choir of over 70 people wearing red anniversary shirts, dancing as they sang. This was but one sign of the abundant joy that marked the celebration of the Assumptionists' 25 year presence in East Africa. The archbishop of Nairobi, Cardinal John Njue, accompanied by some 20 priests led the overflowing congre-gation of over 800 worshippers to mark this anniversary but also to witness the diaconal ordination of two young brothers: Jacob Barasa of Kenya and Jean-Marie Mutulirano of DR Congo. The A.A.'s were joined by many sisters of the A.A. family: Oblates, Orantes, Religious and several lay assumptionists were also on hand.

Cardinal Njue, "a man of few words" – so he asserts, kept us in stitches and elicited vivid responses from the assembly for a good hour or so! "Are we together?", one of his favorite expressions, drew enthusiastic responses. Like most African feasts the Eucharist concluded with several "speeches". The letter from Fr. Benoit Grière, Superior General, to the religious of Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda was read by Fr. Luc Martel. Then the East Africa Regional Superior, Fr. Simon Njuguna, with a word of appreciation, acknowledged the presence of Fr. Miguel Diaz, the Superior of the Province of North America and Philippines, one of the three provinces that sent personnel to begin the East Africa mission in 1988. Next it was Fr.Protais Kabila, Provincial of Africa, who greeted the assembly expressing the pride of the Africa Province with developments in East Africa.



Shorter words of congratulations and appreciation were given by Fr. Miguel Diaz and Fr. Luc Martel, former superior of the East Africa mission before it became a Region of the Africa province. Fr. Njuguna then read comments expressing thanks to those who helped develop our presence in East Africa, and he remembered in particular all that the late Fr. Richard Brunelle had contributed and the regular presence of Fr. Oliver Blanchette and Fr. Alex Babineau. He then turned to the promising future of the region with the presence of several young brothers in formation and the apostolic orientations recently taken to open 2 new parishes in Tanzania and the high school at Katua in the Njiru parish. The new parish in Kyavakadde, Uganda, of course, is sign of our very promising growing presence there. Our houses of formation, parishes, and schools, are all indications of the full development now in progress in our East Africa Region.

At the conclusion of the Eucharist (4.5 hrs.), the various parish committees then set things in

motion to organize four feeding stations where everyone in attendance ate while being entertained by various groups. Later that evening, the family members (brothers, sisters & lay a.a.'s) gathered in the yard of the parish rectory for fraternal sharing until quite late. Once again, the Assumption family has shown how important such moments of fraternal sharing are and that being one family and one church is central to living our charism.