

Fr. Edmond Bamtupe Kisughu



Fr. Anselme Kakule Wasukundi



Fr. Jean-Pierre Mumbere Ndulani

Letter from the Superior general to Assumptionist religious, to the Sisters of the Assumption Family, and to lay members of the Assumptionist Lay-Religious Alliance.

Dear brothers, sisters, and friends,

It has already been five years since our brothers, Jean-Pierre, Edmond and Anselme, were kidnapped by armed soldiers. Since then, we have been waiting in hope and prayer. Unfortunately we remain without the slightest bit of reliable news and our waiting goes on in absolute uncertainty. I am writing this letter with the sole purpose of keeping our hope alive. Christians cannot resign themselves to a state where they allow silence and death to prevail. Our God is a God of life.

As their brother in faith I once again turn my attention to members of their grieving families. For them this disappearance is a tragedy that never ends. The absence of any information and the ongoing incompetence of civil authorities cause further bitterness and sadness. I reiterate my friendship with the religious of the Province of Africa and more particularly with the Assumptionists, the Oblates and Orants of the Assumption, and all those in the consecrated life in the diocese of Butembo-Beni. Still today you remain subject to violence and abuse. Our brother, Fr. Vincent Machozi, comes immediately to mind; he was shot in cold blood with his

mother looking on. Nor do I wish to forget the two diocesan priests who were kidnapped a little more than 100 days ago. I pray as well for the people of North Kivu who regularly endure acts of violence and abuse at the hands of armed factions who criss-cross the region. We Assumptionists stand side by side with this population on whom such evil is exacting a tremendous toll.

I encourage all of you to redouble your efforts for peace and reconciliation. Of course, prayer must be of the highest priority. But it is also necessary to work for unity as our recent 33rd general chapter called for. We are « men of communion in a divided world ». It is my wish that justice and peace committees and commissions of parishes, provinces, and Catholic Action movements with whom we collaborate embrace this theme of unity. We can contribute to the coming about of a new world founded on the dignity and respect of the human person. Our small family, present in more than thirty countries, must inform public opinion of this cause of peace in the Congo and get the word out to the media of the enduring hardships of the people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) who have suffered for too long.

I pray that Our Lady of the Assumption make of us all artisans of peace and unity.

Fraternally,

Rev. Benoît GRIÈRE, A.A.
Superior general

Rome, October 19, 2017