

Emmanuel d'Alzon community in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo had the joy of welcoming 12 new members, brothers who are joining the community in order to pursue their formation in Theology. Their number reminds us of the 12 apostles, chosen by Jesus Christ as his closest collaborators in announcing the Gospel.

Like the apostles of old, these young Assumptionist religious are determined to face the challenge of coming to know Scriptures because, as St Jerome (347-420) puts it, "ignorance of Scripture is ignorance of Christ". To fight this ignorance, we need to study, and in this case, we need to study theology. Armed with this conviction and determination, some of the brothers have enrolled at Saint Augustine University of Kinshasa, known best by its French acronym USAKIN, an institution run by the consortium of Major Superiors (Association des Supérieurs Majeurs – ASUMA). Others are enrolled at Saint Eugene Mazenod Institute run by the Oblates of Mary Immaculate.

Before becoming too busy at these institutions, the 12 "apostles" had the pleasure to participle, with other religious as well as lay people, in the "d'Alzon workshop" (journée alzonienne) under the heading "The Ideal of Assumption in a Changing World". The different topics of the day examined the different methods to be used in the new evangelization. This was done with forthrightness, taking into account the challenges and the crises of the present world where, as Assumptionists, we are called to play an active role: to enlighten the world with the gospel values that constitute, more than ever, the answer to the crises of our times. The workshop was well attended by the religious of the large Assumption Family, who are well established in Kinshasa.

We want to reiterate here our sincere thanks to our benefactors: all those who help us to make our dream come true as Assumptionist religious in the Province of Africa as we go on with our studies, our workshops, our colloquia, and our days of reflection as means to fulfill the vocation we have received from the Lord. These workshops foster a culture of ongoing formation in order to appropriate these words of our Founder, Fr Emmanuel d'Alzon: « Although study is not our

only means of salvation, let it be understood that if ever the religious stop studying, it will be the sign that the congregation has outlived its usefulness and has been cursed by God» (E.S. p. 208). We are all grateful and we carry on with that responsibility.

Translated from French by Fr Salvator Musande, A.A.

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