

## Despite harsh poverty, Zambians' desire for education moves people forward

By M.J. Kelly SJ

One of the main characteristics of people in Zambia is their faith in and desire for education. They want to go to school and they want to continue their education for as many years as possible. Once they complete primary and secondary schooling, they are eager to pursue further training and education.

Despite the poverty that affects most, even the poorest will find a way to further their children's or relative's educational prospects. One happy outcome is that young people are easy to teach because they are so eager to learn.

The primary problem is that quality education remains elusive; books and learning materials are scarce. In many schools, the teaching day is shortened to accommodate the large numbers of young people, clamouring for admission. Since teachers' salaries are low, some are less committed than one would wish.

Despite constraints to education when it was a colony, Zambia since independence in 1964 has made enormous strides. Today there is a place in school for most Zambian children. It should certainly reach the Millennium Development Goal of universal primary education by 2015. In the run up to 2015, Zambia's priority is to ensure that school children incorporate useful knowledge, reasoning ability, skills and values – that is, ensure that they actually learn.

Jesuits are playing their part, involved in several universities, running a major teacher education college, managing secondary schools, promoting primary education, working especially for the education of girls, and supporting non-formal education through interactive radio programmes. The work of Canadian Jesuit, Brother Paul Desmarais, in the Kasisi Agricultural Training Centre, is of critical importance to the improvement of family farming methods. With two Zambian Jesuits now studying for their Master's in Guelph, Ontario, the future of this work is assured.

The guiding principles for Jesuit educational work in Zambia are those that inspire every Jesuit: a restless desire

to do ever more for the Lord and his people, availability for the tasks created by new challenges, while working in partnership with others and in solidarity with those in need.

Based on a deep personal love for Jesus Christ, Jesuit educators in Zambia seek to be one with the poor, the marginalized and the voiceless, promoting participation in the processes that shape the society. They know their work will move forward thanks to the continued prayers and concern of CJI supporters.

Sharing the joys and hopes, the grief and anxieties of the people of Zambia, they seek to accompany them along the road to authentic human development toward what Pope Paul VI called "the transition from less human conditions to those which are more human".

*Fr. M. J. Kelly SJ has written extensively about Education Policies and the changing social and economic environment as a member of the School of Education, University of Zambia. He is based at Luwisha House in Lusaka, Zambia.*



Father M.J. Kelly SJ is surrounded by a group of school-age kids in Lusaka, Zambia. With him is Nadine France of Health and Development Networks, an organization helping improve the quality of education on AIDS education and other health-related and development issues.

MJ Kelly

## Colonialism vs. Education

Educational opportunities in Zambia suffered as a result of colonialism in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, with most of the effort being made by the churches, which tried to pressure a reluctant colonial administration to extend opportunities for education.

The sad outcome of this colonial shortsightedness was that when Zambia became independent in 1964 less than 1,000 of its citizens had completed 12 years of education and the country could boast fewer than 110 university graduates.

In the late 1940s, Fr. Max Prokoph, a renowned early Jesuit educator in Zambia, proposed the establishment of a Catholic boys' secondary school. Colonial authorities turned down his request, however, noting in a terse response to his request that "we already have a secondary school for boys. Why do we need a second one?"

Despite this resistance, Fr. Prokoph established the school. Today, Canadian Jesuit, Brother Al McAndrew, teaches in the very school that Father Prokoph eventually established.



Fr. Patrick Ravichandran SJ, a teacher at Canisius High School in Chikuni, Zambia, pauses outside with two of the high school's students who are either overcome by the intensity of the sun shining down on such a beautiful Zambian day...or they can't bear the thought of all the potential homework they hold in their hands!

CJI Photo

## After 36 years, working with Zambia's farmers still inspires Br. Paul

By Georgine Willemsma

The idea that if you give someone a fish and they will eat for a day, teach them to fish and they will eat for a lifetime, was what came to mind listening to Brother Paul Desmarais SJ, speak at Holy Rosary Church in Guelph, Ontario on September 22 and 23, 2007. Replace fishing with farming and we could easily be talking about the Kasisi Agricultural Training Centre (KATC) in Zambia where Br. Paul is Director.

Brother Paul came to meet the people of Holy Rosary Church who have been supporting his work for many years with a range of education and fundraising activities (*see, Mission Possible*). There is a lot of interest in the parish in international development and justice and they express it. The parish has, for instance, a monthly collection and fundraising events so that the important work done at Kasisi and other Jesuit programs in developing countries is able to continue.



Brother Paul Desmarais SJ is joined (from left) by Roger Manning, Fr. Len Fischer and Lorraine Manning of Holy Rosary Parish in Guelph, Ontario where he gave a presentation on Kasisi Agricultural Training Centre in Zambia. Fr. Fischer, who is at Holy Rosary, was Br. Paul's Novice Master at Ignatius College in Guelph in 1963.

G Willemsma

### ACROSS CANADA

Br. Paul is no stranger to farming. Born and raised on a farm in Pointe-aux-Roches, also known as Stoney Point, Ontario, he is rooted in farming. He talked about the many Kasisi programs that are available to the small-scale farmers in Zambia – they have attracted farmers from nearby Zimbabwe – who also want to improve farming conditions in their own land.

Kasisi's courses range from sustainable agriculture, organic vegetable production and organic cotton production to biological pest management and beekeeping. Most are week-long courses, from Sunday through Friday, but there are lengthier courses in such areas as blacksmithing or animal draft power.

Drawing on his depth of agricultural knowledge and Zambia, Brother Paul spoke about which crops have the best success rate in the area, and environmentally responsible techniques farmers learn to prevent crop destruction. One is planting maize or dill between rows of cotton to attract and eliminate insects that could decimate a cotton crop.

Kasisi also trains farmers to be trainers of other farmers; it's to reach those who cannot go to the Centre itself. Farmers who have been trained at Kasisi return to their regions, teaching other farmers in small groups of about 15 that meet about twice a month. There are also periodic "field days" that allow between 100 and 200 farmers to visit and see what their neighbours are doing. The Centre also has a weekly radio program of potentially 20,000 others. Over the



Holy Rosary parishioner Therese Wright with Brother Paul Desmarais, SJ

G Willemsma

past four years, Kasisi has trained some 1200 farmers annually.

Br. Paul said Kasisi hopes to begin marketing the produce of these hard-working farmers such as lint from the organic cotton crops. The goal is to help farmers have more disposable income to support their families and improve living conditions. He noted the devastating effects, for example, that HIV/AIDS continues to have on families and how many grandparents must now raise large families when parents succumb to the disease.

After more than 36 years in Zambia, Br. Paul Desmarais speaks passionately about the people of Zambia and his love for them. It's why everyone at Holy Rosary who heard him that weekend said they felt very privileged to learn first-hand about the extraordinary work being done at Kasisi. We pray that his dreams for his brothers and sisters in his second home come true.

*Georgine Willemsma is a member of Holy Rosary parish in Guelph, Ontario.*

## It's pies for projects in Guelph

By Anne Bachusky

It's called **Mission Possible**, and it certainly has been for parishioners at Holy Rosary parish in Guelph, Ontario, where we raise badly needed funds for Canadian Jesuits International projects in Jamaica, Nepal and Zambia. What do we do? We **bake** 160 to 220 of the most scrumptious apple pies you've ever tasted. The parish has been doing it for the past 10 years... and plans to do it another ten!

In order to reach the lofty goal of over 200 apple pies, a group at Holy Rosary plus extra volunteers bakes 80 pies each during two or three sessions from mid-October

to mid-November. Last year it was October 20th and November 24th. All the pies are baked with loving care in the Church Hall kitchen. Parishioners, who pre-order pies, pick them up, some still warm from the oven, in the parish kitchen in November.

The group has raised over \$2,000 every year through this activity! The pies have been so successful that the parish group is already now making its own homemade chocolate fudge. It's a really "sweet" way to support the great work of Jesuits overseas!

*Anne Bachusky is a member of Holy Rosary parish in Guelph, Ontario.*

## We need your support

Canadian Jesuits International (CJI) supports poor and marginalized people in developing countries worldwide. We need your support to continue that commitment.

Make a one-time or regular monthly donation. You can even dedicate a donation in memory of or in honour of someone.

Send your cheque to:

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(SEE DETAILS ON COVER PAGE)

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### The Vision and Mission of CJI

The vision of Canadian Jesuits International is of a world of justice, peace and integrity of creation transformed through our commitment to the poor and our faith in a living God in our midst.

As a response to God's love in the world, the mission of Canadian Jesuits International is to support poor and marginalized people in developing countries through the work of Jesuit and other partners and to carry out educational advocacy.

To learn more about Canadian Jesuits International or, to make a donation, please contact:

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Jenny Cafiso  
Director

## EDUCATION

In Jamaica, they're transforming society one bright student at a time



Jim Webb SJ

Students along with their principal, Estelle Forrester, are all smiles at St. Anne's School in Jamaica. St. Anne's has started the hard climb to academic excellence. It is a "work in progress" and moving forward with students, staff, Principal and Board all playing key roles. Canadian Jesuits are involved there and at all levels of education in the country.

by Jim Webb SJ

Compared to many other countries, Jamaica's literacy rate of 79 percent is one of the highest in the world. So why does the country's education system continue to fail the majority of its students?

The cause of the problem will not be found in the high schools, but rather in the primary school system that is supposed to prepare students for high school. In Jamaica, children go either to a primary or preparatory (prep) school for GRADES 1 to 6. Prep schools are expensive by Jamaican standards, costing on average \$2,000 CAD a year, but they have smaller classes and quality teaching resources. Primary schools have no fees, but they have fewer resources and crowded classrooms with as many as fifty students or more.

At the end of GRADE 6, every child takes an exam which measures their level of achievement. A student with high marks is able to get into a quality high school, while one with poor marks is usually destined for an "upgraded" [a

general] high school where most need remedial teaching, but where few remedial resources are provided.

Canadian Jesuits in Jamaica are involved at all levels of education. Fr. Peter McIsaac is the chair of St. Anne's Infant and Primary Schools and St. Anne's High School. Situated in the poorest and most violent area of Kingston – it had the world's highest murder rate in 2005 – St. Anne's is in the process of improving the quality of primary education usually unavailable to students there.

This process of transformation began two years ago with the arrival of the current principal of St. Anne's, Mrs. Estelle Forrester under whose leadership much progress has been made. Since it takes more than two years to effect that kind of change at a school, the extent of the progress will only be fully realized by GRADE 6.

For the past year, Fr. McIsaac has also been the chair of St. George's College, a high school with 1,450 students, located near downtown Kingston. "George's" was started in 1850 by Jesuits forced into exile from Colombia. Once considered one of the elite schools in Jamaica, and

*See, Academic excellence and justice, page 3*



A word from  
*Jenny Cafiso*, Director CJI

Anyone who has traveled to a developing country, especially in rural areas, has surely been struck by the sight of hundreds of children walking along the roadside on their way to school. Often they will flag down your vehicle, hoping to hitch a ride. Within seconds, children seem to appear from nowhere and before you know it, you are carrying a precious, overflowing cargo of laughing children.

It is not surprising that they want a ride. Most will walk up to three hours each way to get to school. It's one of the signs of the importance people in developing countries place on education. Among the first requests of recent refugees is always for a school to begin.

Education is recognized as a key requirement to meet the needs of the world's poorest. Providing universal primary education is second on the list of the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDG) – the blueprint agreed to by all the world's countries and leading development institutions to meet the needs of the world's poorest by 2015.

Yet education remains an elusive goal for most. War, conflict, and natural disasters usually put a halt to a child's education. More than 100 million children, mostly girls, will never go to school. A third will never even complete the first five years of elementary education.

In addition to being a universal human right, quality education should give everyone the opportunity to live fully; affirm the dignity of each human being; allow personal growth in every aspect – physical, emotional and spiritual; be firmly rooted in the community; foster solidarity and work toward social justice.

The Jesuits play their part to ensure that people are able to claim their right to quality education. The Jesuit Refugee Service provides education to over 170,000 refugees and other forcibly displaced children in primary and secondary schools in over 50 countries. Another example is *Fe y Alegria*. Begun in 1955 in Venezuela to bring education to poor neighborhoods, today it reaches over 1.2 million students in 2,000 centres in 16 countries. Then there are the thousands of Jesuit schools, universities, colleges, and other educational institutions all over the world.

In Mission News, we see how Canadian Jesuits International is contributing to education. Canadian Jesuits' work overseas, much of it begun over 50 years ago, still impacts communities today. Recently, Fr. William Mackey's role in education in Bhutan was featured on the CBC Radio's The Current. In Nepal, India, Zambia and Jamaica, Jesuit educational initiatives play important roles in the social transformation of individuals and communities. They strive to give a Jesuit education, that is, one that emphasizes academic excellence as well as a commitment to creating a world of justice and peace for all.

## Darjeeling's tea workers' rights remain threatened

Globalization and the rights of Darjeeling's tea estate workers was the subject of a June 2007 **Mission News** story by Fr. Cherian Padiyara SJ, Director, Loyola Vocational Training Centre. It exposed the deplorable conditions of tea workers and how Jesuits in Darjeeling are responding to them. **Our Readers Write:**

### > Fair Trade Tea

*Thanks for the interesting article. One possible way to improve the plight of tea workers could be for Canadian consumers to purchase "fair trade" certified tea. There was no mention of "fair trade" tea in the article...any idea why? Maybe "fair trade" hasn't been applied in Darjeeling? Fair trade is now fairly common with coffee, but less so with tea, though it does exist.*

**Blaise Salmon**  
Victoria, British Columbia

### > India's Tea Profits

*If tea demand keeps rising, and India's profits were \$500 million, why are tea gardens closing down? Where is the money going? If not to the pickers. . . then, where? (I understand that) tea is grown in billy country and depends on fresh water. Does climate change and the ensuing decrease in fresh water globally have anything to do with some of the closures?*

**Faith Milton**  
Whitecourt, Alberta

### > Fr. Padiyara Responds

Let me respond first to the question about "fair trade" tea from **Blaise Salmon** in Victoria. To the best of my knowledge fair trade, understood as consumers purchasing products produced by workers who have been paid justly, etc., has not been applied to Indian tea. But I would be very keen to know about where we can find out more details about the practical aspects of fair trade: who to contact, the procedures and organizations involved, and the role of the various stake-holders in this. Maybe Blaise Salmon could help us in this regard.

Now to **Faith Milton's** question, asking why tea gardens (estates or plantations) continue to be closed down, if the demand and profits for Indian tea continue to rise. Tea is an extremely labour-intensive industry. Labourers contribute maximum effort in the production of tea. The tea thus produced by the labourers is taken in bulk by the garden owners to the auction centers in Guwahati (Assam), Silguri and Kolkata (Bengal). The auction prices are manipulated by big tea merchants and multinational companies. They are the ones who make money out of tea trade and marketing.

The tea gardens that are owned by companies like the Tatas are not closing down. That's because they control their own tea gardens, as well as the entire chain of production and marketing of their tea brand. So the profit goes to the tea merchants and the brand owners. Smaller owners whose income depends on the auction prices, that are manipulated, (are more vulnerable) and stand to lose. As we pointed out in the article, the labourers are the ones who suffer the worst.

Cherian Padiyara SJ  
Director, Loyola Vocational Training Centre  
Darjeeling, India



Jim Webb SJ

In a break during classes, students at St. George's College clown around for the camera, capturing their liveliness and enthusiasm. Tapping into that energy has enabled the college, now led by Canadian Jesuits, to motivate students to do their best for themselves and their communities.

## Schools stress academic excellence and justice

*Continued from page 1*

still seen as one of the "traditional" high schools, about half of George's students come from primary schools (*read*, lower socio-economic status) and half from prep schools. Now in a process of renewal, St. George's is on a path of academic recovery, with significant help from its alumni, the most active and dedicated of whom are in Toronto.

Over the past 25 years, Campion has honed its academic performance to become the top academic high school in Jamaica. The last five Rhodes Scholars from Jamaica have been Campion graduates. Its graduates often qualify for Harvard, Princeton and Yale.

What's changed is that prior to 2000, 95% of its students came from prep schools. By 2006 and 2007, at least 30% of Campion's students came from primary schools.

With this new influx of students from lower socio-economic backgrounds, Campion offers supervised homework programs for its own students and Campion's senior students now tutor students from Chamber's Lane, a ghetto community just across the road from the school.

In all these schools, the emphasis on academic excellence, while important, would not satisfy their being "Jesuit" schools, without also inculcating in their students a sense of justice: a commitment to make Jamaica a place where every person has equal opportunity, dignity and respect. St. George's and Campion have active chaplaincy and ministry programs, retreats and days of recollection, where

students encounter God in their neighbour, the poor and themselves.

*Since 1998, Jim Webb SJ has been the chair of the Board of Campion College, a Jesuit high school started in 1960. He was the Regional Superior of the Jesuits in Jamaica from 1997-2006. In addition, he chairs the Justice Commission of the Archdiocese of Kingston (Jamaica) and is involved with a rural development project that works along with a farmers' marketing cooperative in Annotto Bay.*



Jim Webb SJ

Students at Campion College in Jamaica give a very Caribbean touch to a traditional carol during their Christmas Concert. A high school started in 1960 by Canadian Jesuits, Campion has already earned a reputation for academic excellence. The last five Rhodes Scholars from Jamaica have been Campion graduates.

## Webb: Education challenges

### *What is the impact of education on development in Jamaica?*

In Jamaica, the bed you are born in largely determines your educational opportunity. If your parents can pay for Preparatory or "Prep" school, that is, a private primary school, you have five times the chance to get into a "traditional" high school, one in which you have a decent chance to pass grade 11.

### *Does education lead to better levels of employment, and if so, what opportunities are there for employment?*

One of the critical factors in Jamaica's challenge to develop is brain drain. Over 80% of Jamaicans with tertiary education have emigrated. Jamaicans develop North America!

### *How would you describe the work Jesuits in Jamaica do in Annotto Bay with local farmers?*

I guess you could say that our contribution to education in Jamaica has not been limited to the formal classroom. Since 1990, the St. Mary Rural Development Project has provided agronomists to train local farmers in St. Mary.

### *Is there a difference in access to education between boys and girls?*

Generally speaking, boys do less well in the educational system in Jamaica. This year, 82% of the new students at the University of the West Indies in Kingston were women. What is sometimes referred to as "the marginalization of the black Jamaican male" is a complex question, and certainly not one that is being successfully addressed by the current educational system.

## Education breaks cycle of dependence in Nepal

By Bill Robins SJ

Moran Memorial School (Maheshpur) in Nepal serves tribal people, many of whom are Catholics, and who have farms or who work on tea estates. Life is very hard for them. Although tea estates provide shelters for these working families, they have no running water or electricity. It means total dependence by these families on the tea estates.

It comes as no surprise that education has such a high priority among these families, since education is the best way to break this cycle of dependence. Most adults have little, if any, education. Their hope lies in their children and their education that will hopefully mean enriched and better lives.

Despite their best efforts, their meager weekly wages just barely cover basic family needs and so little money can be saved. Yet parents find a way to pay about a dollar a month toward covering tuition fees. It's up to the Nepal Jesuits to make up the rest: about seven dollars a month per child. With a school of four hundred students, the bill is large!

This year's senior class at Moran Memorial will be the first to sit for the national high school examinations in March. Even though

most students lack a proper diet or warm winter clothing, we know that they are all working all day and well into the night, studying by lamp light, to pass these exams. You can be sure they will.

In Nepal, Jesuits began their educational efforts in 1951 when in July of that year Father Marshall D. Moran SJ began St. Xavier's Godavari School at the south-east edge of the Kathmandu Valley. The school quickly expanded to a second location.

St. Xavier's (Deonia) serves local business people and farmers, mostly grandchildren of those who moved south from the hills a half century ago. Most parents can pay for their children's education, but many must still turn to the school for financial help.

Jesuits in Nepal look forward to many more years helping youngsters grow into adults of conscience, competence, and with a compassionate commitment to one another.

*Fr. Bill Robins SJ taught in Nepal for over thirty years. After ordination, he moved to Darjeeling, and taught in Bhutan for five years. In Nepal he taught science for over two decades at St. Xavier's Godavari School. He is now in two Jesuit schools in Nepal's southeast.*

## Centre Espérance in Togo empowers communities to stamp out HIV and AIDS

By Gilles Mongeau SJ

The building was not yet completed, but already the **Centre Espérance Loyola** (Loyola Hope Centre) was contributing to the life of its neighbourhood when I arrived last January 2007 in Lomé, the French-speaking capital of Togo, a country in West Africa.

Five teams of young adult volunteers were conducting a massive survey of local high schools and apprentice shops to determine the level of awareness and knowledge of HIV and AIDS among teenagers. The results would be fed into the planning process of the Centre's youth consciousness-raising activities.

The ten young adults were most impressive, meeting every morning with another Jesuit and myself to report on the previous day's activities and plan for the day ahead, as well as to reflect on the meaning of their experience in the field.

The whole survey, over 1200 questionnaires with follow-up interviews, was completed in a few weeks. I remember noting in my journal how



Delali Kpelevi

**At Loyola Hope Centre (CEL), Jesuits work with young people to develop new ways to educate and make young people and families in Togo more aware of HIV and AIDS. Their goal is to make families and youth AIDS-free over the next ten years.**

impressed I was with the serious engagement these young people had made, and with their capacity for reflection.

Over the course of three months in 2007, I would have many occasions to be impressed with the team. Among them were the secretaries,

## Canadian Jesuits International Statement of Operations August 1, 2006 – July 31, 2007

<b>Receipts:</b>	
Canadian Contributions	\$ 1,537,659
Interest Income	50,549
Investment Income	433,657
Pension Income	78,000
Sundry	2,1996
	<b>\$ 2,121,861</b>

<b>Expenditures:</b>	
Programs	\$ 859,843
Administrative	110,224
	<b>\$ 970,067</b>

**NOTE ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT:**  
The excess of revenues over expenses shown in the financial statement is due in large part to the fact that the Darjeeling Jesuit Province has not been able to receive foreign funds due to a restriction imposed by the Indian Government while they conduct a review. CJI is holding funds for them until the situation is cleared. If you would like more information, please call or write to CJI.

facilitators and labourers that helped pull the Centre's physical and administrative fabric together in time for our March 2007 opening. We bought furniture, computers, planned workshops, sought funding. We planned a chapel, counseling rooms, classroom spaces. Their commitment never wavered.

This is in many ways the most significant spiritual truth of the Loyola Hope Centre. The Jesuits have found a willing and generous group of supporters who seek only the tools to help make Togo's families and young people AIDS-free in the next decade.

The people of Lomé and of Africa in general, are far from powerless. The Loyola Hope Centre makes its own contribution by offering some of the spiritual, psychological, political and nutritional tools they need to win the battle against the scourge of AIDS.

*Fr. Gilles M. Mongeau SJ is Assistant Professor of Systematic Theology and Director in Lonergan Studies at Regis College in Toronto.*