Handling the Word of Truth
Supporting Theological Education in Togo and West Africa
Missionary Rev. Jacob W. Gaugert

The Republic of the Congo

Capital city = Brazzaville
Population = 5.1 million
More than 85% of the population claims to be Christian
4 official languages = French, Lingala, Kituba, Kikongo

Current baptized membership of the EELC = 3,700

Entrusting the Teaching: the Establishment of another Seminary in Francophone Africa

You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. - 2 Timothy 2:1

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

By God’s grace, for almost two decades, our CLET seminary in Dapaong, Togo has been training men for the ordained Ministry to serve Jesus' flock with Word and Sacrament. In that time the institution has gone from serving the Lutheran Church of Togo and the Lutheran Church of the Ivory Coast, to training men for eleven different Lutheran church bodies in eight francophone African countries. The CLET in its rural setting has been protected from political upheaval and pillaging – while neighboring countries went through troubled times. Our seminary has been able to serve as the main axis of our work in francophone Africa for these past years. We certainly pray that in the coming years she can continue to serve as the first step of residential theological training for burgeoning Lutheran church bodies on the continent. However, the cost of bringing men and their families to Togo from all over Africa is costly. We know that it would be more cost-efficient to train men closer to home. Keeping them closer to their region of origin reduces the
Pray:
Thanksgiving for the safe return of Rev. Albert KOUTIA and his family to Congo-Brazzaville.

Thanksgiving for the financial commitment of the members of EELC congregations to begin the CLETCO seminary.

That the parishes of the EELC would send capable students to prepare for the Ministry at CLETCO.

That more francophone churches in Africa would soon be able to also establish their own institutes for local theological training.

That the students and families in the CLET and CLETCO communities would celebrate our Lord’s birth this Christmas holiday with sincere piety and hope in the Lord’s gifts.

complexity of tribal makeup and cultural background of the student body – thus reducing the frequency of misunderstandings, rivalries and cultural conflict. We give thanks to God that now, after some of our francophone Lutheran church bodies have several CLET graduates serving in their ministeriums, we can encourage the planting of sister institutions of the CLET in the various countries.

We are pleased to share that the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Congo-Brazzaville (EELC) is one of the church bodies that has recently made the step to begin training men for the ministry in their own country. The EELC is led by Rev. President Joseph MAVOUNGOU, who from the beginning of his presidency over a decade ago made the conscious decision to quickly increase the number of pastors from three ordained Ministers to over twelve. This church body is also blessed by a good pool of educated and dedicated lay men and women who are contributing their talents and financial gifts to the support of their pastors and their national church body.

One of the fruits of this healthy base of leadership and collaboration is CLETCO students attend classes in the provisional facilities in Pointe Noire.
Oct.-Dec. 2018

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Or

CLET
B.P. 53
Dapaong
TOGO

Please consider a special 2018 year-end gift or a pledge for 2019 with the enclosed Adoption Agreement Form and envelope

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the founding of the CLETCO (CLET -Congo) seminary in Pointe Noire in the fall of 2017. The fall of 2018 marks the second year of operation. The institute plans on graduating its first class in the summer of 2020. Three full-time teachers serve during the entirety of the academic year and other ordained pastors of the EELC come in periodically to offer intensive classes. The three full-time professors are: Rev. President MAVOUNGOU, Rev. Albert KOUTIA, who just returned from serving at the CLET in Dapaong for the last 6 years, and Rev. Armel OUADIKA, a very bright young man who serves as the executive secretary of the EELC and as the chief administrator of the institute. The LCMS-OIM will be sending missionaries periodically to CLETCO to offer intensive courses. Additionally, consideration is being given to calling missionaries to move to Brazzaville to serve full-time alongside the current faculty members.

The LCMS-OIM along with the EELC and her members and leaders have taken this step to establish the CLETCO institute, knowing that this is - and will continue to be - the institute/seminary of the EELC. This means that from the foundation of this seminary into the future, the EELC will take increasing financial responsibility of the operations and budget of the institute. For the year 2018, the EELC is covering 20% of the operating budget. This covers everything from salaries, utilities, supplies, to student scholarships. This percentage of local support is to increase by 5% each year so that ten years into the future the EELC will be covering at least 70% of the CLETCO operating budget. As a gesture of goodwill in response to this local support of the institute, the LCMS-OIM is also contributing toward the building of the institute’s facilities each year and there is openness toward considering subsidizing the pursuit of accredited, higher education degrees of the faculty in the coming years.

We pray that the establishment of the CLETCO will serve as a model for the expansion of theological education francophone Africa that will train faithful leaders and undershepherds of our Lord Jesus for the future.

In Christ,

God of the prophets, bless the prophets’ sons; Elijah’s mantle o’er Elisha cast, each age is solemn task may claim but once; make each one nobler, stronger, than the last. - LSB 682:1