**Piarist Fathers, Province of Central Africa**

***“There is no need for them to go away; give them some food yourselves.”***

Dear brothers and sisters,

What do you think about this popular cartoon in which someone is completely drowned and only one hand has remained outside calling for help? No one comes forth to help yet there are five people on that spot taking pictures/videos of this person drowning. The cartoon is titled “People Nowadays”. This cartoon depicts a culture of indifference according to which, no one cares about the situation of the other person. Against this background, the gospel of this Sunday has a lot to teach us. Jesus is not indifferent to the hunger and the sickness of the people. On the contrary, in a compassionate spirit, he reaches out to these people to cure them and to feed them. Reaching out to the needy therefore is part and parcel of the church’s mission. The poor and the needy are the treasures of the church and in no circumstance should the church be indifferent to their plight.

In this connection, the Piarist Fathers of the Province of Central Africa are living out this mission of charity and compassion in this underdeveloped part of the world. We are involved in humanitarian, pastoral and educational activities in four countries in the central African region namely: Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon and Democratic Republic of Congo. In these countries we run schools, parishes and socio-educative centers. We believe that with the present situation of poverty and underdevelopment, education and humanitarian attention is the best approach to transform the situation.

However, for the past four years, the English-Speaking region of Cameroon where we have been present for over thirty years has been plagued in a disastrous socio-political crisis. As a result of this crisis, many families have been displaced, a lot of property has been destroyed and many lives lost. The whole situation has brought untold effects on the families and the children in particular notably, hunger, joblessness and worse of all, a disruption in the education of the children.

Faced with this situation, the Piarist Fathers have been at the frontline to come to the aid of these people in any way we can. We have organized home classes in Kumbo in order to teach the children who for four years have not gone to school. In Bamenda, we would like to start an agricultural training program for women so that they can later on feed their families. In Bandjoun, we have opened an English section in a French speaking school so as to welcome displaced children running away from the war zone. The situation is quite pathetic and has created numerous needs. That is why we are reaching out to you to ask for your prayers and financial assistance. Your kind donation will feed the hungry and bring back life to desperate families.

We are grateful to the Archdiocesan Mission Office for giving us the chance to share our story. Whatever you can do for these children and their families, we will be grateful and we assure you of our prayers for God’s abundant blessings upon you. Find below some pictures of our needs.