

BAMBOO STORY

NARRATOR: Once upon a time in the heart of the Western Kingdom lay a beautiful garden. And there in the cool of the day was the Master of the dwellers of the garden, the most beautiful and most beloved of which was the noble and gracious Bamboo. Year after year Bamboo grew yet more noble and gracious. He was conscious of his Master's love and delight. Yet, he was modest and in all things gentle. Often when wind came to revel in the garden, Bamboo would throw aside his dignity. He would dance and sway merrily, tossing and swaying and leaping and bowing in joyous abandon. He would lead the Great Dance of the Garden which most delighted the Master's heart. One day the Master himself drew near to contemplate his Bamboo with eyes of curious expectancy. And Bamboo in a passion of adoration, bowed his great head to the ground in loving greeting. The Master spoke:

MASTER: "Bamboo, Bamboo, I need to use you."

NARRATOR: Bamboo flung his head to the sky in utter delight. The day of days had come! This was the day for which he had been made.....the day in which he would find his completion and his destiny! His voice came low:

BAMBOO: "Master, I am ready, use me as you will." "Bamboo".....the Master's voice was grave....." I need to take You and cut You down.' A trembling of great horror shook Bamboo. "Cut ...me down? Me whom You, Master, had made the most beautiful in all your garden? To cut me down –ah, not that,.....not that. Use me for your joy, O Master, but cut me not down."

MASTER: "Beloved Bamboo" the Master's voice was graver still "If I cut You not down, I cannot use You."

NARRATOR: The garden grew still. Wind held his breath. Bamboo slow bent his proud and glorious head. There came a whisper.....

BAMBOO: "Master if you can't use me except You cut me down; then do thy will and cut, but do not cut my branches..."

MASTER: Bamboo, alas! If I cut them not away I cannot use you."

NARRATOR: "Bamboo hid his face. A listening butterfly glided fearfully away." Bamboo shivered in terrible expectancy, whispering low,

BAMBOO: "Master, cut away."

MASTER: "Bamboo, Bamboo, I would divide You yet in two and cut out Your heart, for if I cut not so I cannot use You."

NARRATOR: Then was Bamboo bowed to the ground....

BAMBOO: "Master, Master, then cut and divide."

NARRATOR: So did the Master of the Garden take Bamboo and cut him and hack off his branches and strip off his leaves and divide him in two and cut his heart, and lifting him gently, carried him to where there was a spring of fresh sparkling water in the midst of the Master's dry fields. Then putting one of broken Bamboo in the spring and the other end into the water canal in his field, the Master laid down gently his beloved Bamboo. The spring sang welcome. The clear sparkling water raced joyously down, the shoots grew. The harvest came. In that day was Bamboo, so glorious in his stately beauty, yet more glorious in his brokenness and humility. For in his beauty, he had been life abundant. But in his brokenness he became a channel of abundant life to his Master's world.

My dear brothers and sisters in St. Monica's Parish, it is with humility that I share with you the "Bamboo Story" since you are really a Bamboo to our brothers and sisters in Dandora.

It is not that we are capable of being a blessing to others on our own. There are so many times we change lives and affection to others. This is because the hand of the Lord is with us. No one can give the description of this wonderful relationship without the power of the Holy Spirit.

Now that you've become a Bamboo (St. Monica) for your brothers and sisters in Dandora Holy Cross (Kenya), continue allowing the flow of this life giving and life changing experience. In the beginning of this relationship you must have groaned like the Bamboo asking:

- Oh, what can we do?
- Is it necessary?
- Can we afford?
- Anyway, why don't we leave them? etc

Today five years down the line, you've changed/touched so many lives both spiritually and materially. Who knew today we would be sitting somewhere identifying the needs of our brothers and sisters as our own: Schools, Dispensary, Boma Rescue, VCT, faith sharing, breaking the Bread and drinking the Cup, etc.

Thank you for your humility, for accepting just as the Bamboo did to make so many happy, joyful and hopeful. One statesman said: "A powerful leader is a prayerful one".

I would say that a powerful Community is a prayerful one. You are a powerful Parish because you allow Christ to lead the way and you follow.

I was reading USCCB (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops) magazine on 06/13/07, page 1 said "Pray regularly for our brothers and sisters in Africa. Prayers must be the starting point and foundation of our solidarity". My dear brothers and sisters in St. Monica Parish, this is what we are all looking forward to as the magazine said.

Page 2 read "a Parish reaching beyond its own members and beyond national boundaries is a truly Catholic Parish". Oh my brothers and sisters I am proud to say that you are indeed a Catholic Parish.

Bravo St. Monica Parish Community!

Continue being a blessing to many.

Yours in the Lord's service,

Fr. Andrew Massawe, CSC
PASTOR