

Dear Brother and Sisters,

Our community is pleased to share with the Order about the time we have spent in the confinement imposed by the Covid-19 Pandemic.

It is a story that will remain engraved in our memories. We ask ourselves: “How long is the pandemic going to guide us?” But we have kept the Faith, Trust, and Hope in God.

Our country, the Democratic Republic of the Congo [DRC], has experienced the pandemic of Covid-19 during a time when the government is still not seeking economic stability nor that of multiple other political situations — in brief, at a time of crisis.

The pandemic has attacked more the capital (Kinshasa) and other towns. Thank God that in the region where our monastery is, we have not experienced any cases. We are located 120 km [75 mi.] from the town of Kikwit, the head of our diocese, and 620 km [385 mi.] from the capital (Kinshasa).

As for everyone else, the situation was not easy for us with the confinement decreed by the Head of State since last March 19th. That forced us into a terrible economic crisis, despite our already having one. We could not go into town to do the community’s shopping.

In view of the distance from town, we do the shopping for the community in town twice a month, which was currently not easy. Each time we were obliged to sell our animals and to find an intermediate solution on the spot. We all fear going into town to do the shopping.

We have four brothers studying in Kinshasa; one had quickly returned to the community before the confinement, with our Father Prior who was at Kinshasa to accompany two sick brothers. These two latter brothers did not suffer from Covid-19. One remained at Kinshasa in the community of the Jesuit Fathers to pursue their care. It was not easy for him, living for 3 months outside of the community. Another returned to the community. Thank God we have survived by His grace.

Our liturgical life has not changed. During the time of confinement, we have had a grace: five brother novices made their first monastic profession (May 14th).

We asked our workers at the beginning of the confinement not to come to work with us, but to go rather to work in our farms, but that was not easy. After three weeks we asked them to come back to work with us, while still respecting the barrier-measures the government had set up. We closed our guesthouse. And we have kept up a good contact with the local church. We followed all the instructions given by our bishop.

Our economy has declined still more, but by the grace of God we are struggling to keep a balance.

We continue to pray for those countries struck most by the Covid-19 pandemic and we pray for our brothers and sisters of the Order. Let us support each other spiritually. The mercy of the Lord fills the universe. “Bless the Lord, O my soul, bless His most holy Name; do not forget any of His benefits.” [Ps 102]

Monastery of O. L. of Emmanuel Kasanza at Kasanza/RDC
Your brothers of Emmanuel Kasanza/RDC