



PEACE & SOCIAL JUSTICE
Brother Jerry's Letters from the Congo

In late 2005 Brother Jerry's mother passed away, but he continued to write faithfully to family, friends and benefactors of the Pendjua mission.

Brother Jerry's faithful dedication to a life of social justice in the Congo was never more apparent than in this heartfelt letter, his last of many:

Dear Family & Friends,

May 14, 2006

I'm sorry I did not write earlier. I was awaiting my final diagnosis and treatment prognosis. ...The tumor in the lining of my stomach is malignant.

...On May 2, I saw an oncologist who trained at Georgetown. He is young, very nice and forthright. ...I told him I needed two years as I had to go back to Pendjua. I have to hire a doctor to replace me and also prepare the [hospital staff, to continue the work when I am no longer there. I also want to prepare one of the diocesan priests to supervise the Batoa education program, the Internats and the high school. I am optimistic that all will go well and that I will get at least a two year remission if not a cure. ...Please continue to pray for this intention.

I am very worried about my children at the Internats. I know Jesus has great compassion for the poor and He will not abandon my children. I know that they are having much anxiety and wondering what will happen to the Internats. I think about them and pray for them every day. I pray that I can be with them for a few years and prepare them for the day that I will not be with them. All of the Batoa want me to stay in Pendjua until the Lord comes for me. My pygmy friends and students always say that my bones belong to them, and I will be buried in the ground of their ancestors so [future generations] can visit me. My supervisors may have other ideas.

I try to make sense, not out of this cancer but out of all the time that I have to spend here [in Virginia] when there is so much work to do in Pendjua. I feel bad that Fr. Yves has to do all the work by himself. The only sense that I can make out of this long stay in the U.S. is that Jesus wants me to have a mini sabbatical, to take me aside in a quiet place where I can rest, pray meditate on the Word and contemplate my Beloved One. Missionhurst is truly a beautiful and tranquil place to contemplate God.

I do not know if you read the daily Gospel readings, but if you do, you know that the Gospel of John has been read every day since Easter. I find the reading for May 21 very comforting: "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in Me." (John 14, 1)

...Do not be discouraged by my cancer. Have faith in Jesus. He knows that I have promises to keep and miles to walk before I sleep. Thank you for all your prayers.

Love and prayers, Jerry

Saints Peter & Paul sponsors the Pendjua Catholic Mission located in the rain forest of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. There are 40,000 inhabitants divided into two races, the Bantu and the pygmies called Batoa. The Batoa are the majority, yet live in servitude to the Bantu as victims of discrimination and oppression. The Pendjua Catholic Mission is aimed at liberating the Batoa and is staffed by two priests and Brother Jerry Galloway, a medical doctor.

Next Social Justice Mtg.: Thurs.8/24/06; 7:30-9:30, Rm. 227
www.sspeterandpaul.net (Ministries / Christian Service / Peace)