



## CONGREGATION OF THE MISSION WESTERN PROVINCE

*To the Confreres in the Kenya Region*

28 October 2020

Dear Confreres,

May the grace to follow Christ evangelizing the poor be with us always!

I received the results of the election of the new Regional Superior from the Electoral Commission. I want to thank the Electoral Commission (Fr. Musolo, Fr. Mwaura, and Fr. Nyanjom) for their service and work on behalf of the Region and Province.

The results of the election was inconclusive in nominating a new Regional Superior on the second ballot: *Fred Wandera with 17 votes and Edwin Mugwe with 17 votes*. The *Regional Norms 1.6.4* state, "if no one is nominated on the second ballot with an absolute majority of those present, the names of the two receiving the most votes on the second ballot shall be published, with the number of votes received. Only these members shall have passive voice on the third ballot, in which a simple majority of votes shall be required for nomination." After consultation with the Provincial Council, I am suspending the Regional Norms for having a third ballot and opting for a different discernment strategy to nominate the new Regional Superior.

I am making this decision because the appointment of the next Regional Superior is consequential for Kenya's future for a number of reasons. The next Regional Superior will be the first native Kenyan in this major superior role. There are plenty of examples in the Congregation and in other religious communities where the first native sons and daughters in these positions failed due to the lack of pay-in and support from the local membership. We want to learn from history and not repeat the failures of the past. The leadership of the next Regional Superior will be essential in helping the Region and the Province properly establish Kenya as a Vice Province. Given the importance of this leadership role, and what is at stake here, it is vital that we do this discernment process right.

I have asked Fr. Tom Esselman, Special Assistant to the Provincial, to design a discernment process to include prayer, dialogue, readings, presentations, and possibly other communication forums during the months of November, December, and January. I foresee the nomination process culminating in January 2021 with the appointment and installation of the new Regional Superior. Fr. Tom will be in communication with you next week for further details about the process and plans.

The extension of the nomination process warrants us to reschedule the November Plenary Meeting until January 2021. Fr. Gary will work with the confreres of the Region in identifying appropriate dates for us to gather. As you may recall, it was my intention to travel to Kenya in November. I have rescheduled my trip to be with you in January.

My apologies for any inconveniences these changes may cause you and your local community. However, I cannot stress enough the importance of properly selecting the new Regional Superior and the planning for the Vice Province. I am aware these are difficult and challenging times for us. Please know my care and appreciation for all of you and our beloved mission in Kenya. You are in my prayers daily. Please pray for me.

Sincerely in St. Vincent DePaul,

Patrick J. McDevitt, C.M.  
Visitor