

A Mustard Seed story with many roots and branches out

In 2003 Cy Speltz and Carol Dittberner of St Paul, MN went to Fort Portal, Uganda (western) to present a Level I course to the Banyatereza Sisters, a native order. The Order had trained 9 of their sisters in the Montessori Method and there were two schools in Fort Portal; this was the impetus for adding Catechesis of the Good Shepherd to their Catholic Montessori Schools.

In 2006, Carol Dittberner and Catherine Maresca went to present Level II to the same group. Carol had been to Australia the summer of 2006 and had dinner with Carol Roth, Anne Delasorte and other catechists and talked about the upcoming course. It turned out that the community in Brisbane, Australia, had a sister group in the Emmaus Community in Masaka, Uganda – which is in the eastern part of Africa. They asked if they could sponsor some of their people from that community to attend the course in Fort Portal. So in the course in 2006, three community members came for the Level II course.

During that course, while revisiting the Mustard Seed Parable, one of the sisters exclaimed, “We have a mustard tree – it’s in the priest’s back yard – not far at all,” and so a spontaneous field trip was made to the tree. It was huge, very tall and was filled with yellow flowers. We saw clearly how the pods were in the flower and when opened contained many, many seeds. We took pictures with the sisters, including wild seeds which were sprouting in the sidewalk cracks!

The three people from Masaka returned to their community and invited Mary Hare and Linda Kiel to give a Level I course there. One of the people who attended that course was Frederick Makkenu, and evangelical pastor from a city in Kenya. He loved CGS and invited the Australians to come to Bungoma, Kenya. This led to Rev. John and Kaye Corner beginning their work in Kenya among the Anglican and Evangelical Communities. John and Kaye have gone back very often and began a CGS Kenyan Assoc.

In 2009, Cy and Carol and the sisters in Fort Portal began an Assoc. in Uganda. In 2009, Carol was also asked to present Level I introductory courses in Nairobi, Kenya – with Dr. Deb Zeni from Toronto. We presented a one week course to students and seminarians, religious at Tangaza University. The second week we presented to the Missionaries of Charity in Huruma, one of the poorest of the poor slums in Nairobi.

And so it grows . . .

The Missionaries of Charity have sponsored many courses all over the world, including



Uzbekistan and Trinidad. We are currently, 2017 presenting Level II in Kigali, Rwanda; the sisters have had two Level I courses after which they started 10 atria in three countries – Rwanda, Burundi and Uganda.

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