

**Chipembedzo cha Kubadwa kwa Yesu
Liturgy of Christmas Day**



Mua Parish, Dedza Diocese, Malawi

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PHOTOGRAPHS

The photographs that follow were taken at Mua Parish Church by Samson Phiri on the morning of Christmas Day 2013.



Mdipiti (Procession)





The dancers, who are photographed against the Mission House, hold zisekese (shakers formed from the pods of the flamboyant tree) and sprays of leaves.

They are followed by Br. Volker Schwill and Fr. Claude Boucher, who will officiate.

Mwambo wo pepesa (Penitential rite)



*Pepa pepa pepa – Sesani umu!
Images of sweeping and burning are employed to symbolize the putting aside of sin.*



Mau oyamba (First reading)
Isaias 43: 18 - 19

Mau achiwiri (Second reading)
Isaias 65: 9, 17 - 18



Koma musakumbukire zakale...

The prophet Isaias proclaims the New Covenant.



Onani tsopano ndikuchita zatsopano...



Uthenga Wabwino (Gospel)
St. Luke 2: 1 - 14



Duwa lopambana maluwa ena onse, ndiwo Amai Maria... Ulemu.

Tiyeni titsakane ndi Bambo Yosefe ndi Amai Maria pa ulendo wawo...

Let us follow Father Joseph and Mother Mary on their journey...



- Masikuwo, malamulo adafumira kwa Augusto / Sizare
- Kuti awerenge / anthu onse / a pansi pano, a pansi pano.

*Odi! Odi! Odi kuno...
Odi! Odi! Odi kuno...*

Ndiwe yani?

Ndine Yosefe...

Ukufunanji?

Ndifuna malo...



*Ayi kulibe malo...
Kulibe malo...
Pitani kwina...
Muyese kwina...
Mukapeza malo kwina...*

Mukapeza malo mu khola!



Kubadwa kwa Yesu (The Birth of Jesus)



Kuonetsa Mwana (The Shewing of the Child)



The Machembere (those who have undergone the experience of birth) present the Child Jesus to the community in the kazukuta song, so that He becomes a human being.



Waberekanji Maria? Wabereka Yesu Woyera mbee! Taleka n'taona – eee wabereka Yesu!



Banja loyera (The Holy Family) 1



Mary leaves the khola with the Child Jesus.



Ulendo wa Abusa (Visit of the Shepherds)



*Musaope, musaope chifukwa ndadzakuuzani
Uthenga Wabwino –
Umene udzakondwetsa anthu onse / anthu onse.
O / lero, / lero Mpulumutsi amene
Ali / Khristu Ambuye / waku, / wakubadwirani
Mu mzinda, / mu mzinda wa Davide.*



Banja loyera (The Holy Family) 2



The shepherds ask permission of Joseph to dance. Joseph shews respect for his wife by bidding them ask permission of Mary instead. Mary is pleased to grant her permission.



Kuvinira mwana Yesu (Dance in honour of the Child Jesus)





Kupereka mphatso (Offertory)

The offertory, in money and in kind, is made before the Holy Family sitting in the khola.

Mr. Joseph Kadzombe Gama

Mr. Davie Maleka Chaone and Blessings

Mr. Florensio Nowah





Miss Mary Gama





Kupatsa mafuno abwino a mtendere
Pax vobiscum

Kusandulitsa
Consecration



Mulungu ali nafe: Emmanuel!



God is with us: Emmanuel!

TEXT

The text that follows respects the ipsissima verba and rubrics of the original Chichewa text (which has also a little explanation in English) as closely as possible. The English translation is coloured by the expression of the Douai Rheims edition of the Bible, as revised by Dr. Challoner. Although further removed from the language of the present day than the Chichewa, it serves better to suggest the liturgical echo and effect of the original than a merely colloquial translation would allow. The response of Mua Parish to the text is creative: no actor would feel bound to observe its every letter.

CHIPEMBEDZO CHA KUBADWA KWA YESU LITURGY OF CHRISTMAS DAY

Mdipiti: Wansembe pamodzi ndi Gulu la Chipembezoz
- Procession: *The officiants together with the liturgical group*

Nyimbo Yolowera: Mwana watibadwira (Buku la Nyimbo no. 8)
- Processional Song: *A Son is born (Hymnbook no. 8)*

M'dzina la Atate...
- In the name of the Father...

Nyimbo:

Chaulere cha Ambuye / athu Yesu Khristu, ndi chifundo cha Mulungu / ndinso mphatso wa Mzimu Woyera / ea / ea / zikhale nanu.

- Song:

- The grace of our Lord / Jesus Christ, and the mercy of God, / and the gift of the Holy Spirit / ea / ea / be with you.

Kudandaula kwa ana a Israele. Kuyembekeza Mpulumutsi
- The Penance of the Children of Israel. The Hope of the Saviour

[This is the preparation for the Penitential Rite.]

Salimo 79: 3 – 4

Utsani, utsani mphamvu yanu ndipo, /
Ndipo idzani, o idzani kudzatipulumutsa.
Mulungu, / mutibweze mom'muja, (2 x)
Ndipo / onetsani nkhope yanu yofatsa kuti tipulumuke. (2 x)

- Psalm 79: 3 – 4

*- Stir up, stir up your might and, /
And come, o come to save us.
O God, / convert us, just as we are, (2 x)
And / shew us thy gentle face and we shall be saved. (2 x)*

MWAMBO WOPEPESA
- PENITENTIAL RITE

Kudandaula kwa ife, masiku ano:
- What we regret, in the present day:

Pemphero:

Achauta Tate wathu, ife mbumba yanu, tafika pa maso pano, monga mmene tilili. Taonani zonse zomwe zikutipanikiza ndi kutilimetsa. Tingakubisireni chiyani. [Chete.] Ndi zimenezitu:

Nsanje, udani, kusamvana, kupasuka kwa mabanja ndi midzi yomwe... Pepa pepa pepa – Sesani umu!

Kuononga nkhalango, kusakambirana koma kuthamangira ku kotho... Pepa pepa pepa – Ndiponso zina zambiri. Inu Chauta, Tate wathu, si ife ana anufe... tikutentha zonse. Tikusilira chipulumutso. Pepa pepa pepa – Sesani umu!

- Prayer:

- God our Father, we your family, we have come before your face, just as we are. Look upon all that troubles and distresses us. We can conceal nothing from you. [Silence.] Such as:

... Jealousy, enmity, disagreement, divorce in families and in villages also... Sorry, sorry, sorry – Sweep here!

... Destruction of the forest, Deafness to negotiation but hurry to court... Sorry, sorry, sorry – and for much else too. O God, our Father, are we not your children? We are burning everything. We desire your salvation. Sorry, sorry, sorry – Sweep here!

[Burning of rubbish.]
[Everyone remains silent.]

[Wansembe apereka chikhululukiro.]
- [The officiants give absolution.]

Pemphero loyambirira
- **First Prayer**

MAU OYAMBA A M'MALEMBO OYERA
Yesaya 43: 18 – 19

Chauta akhazika pansu mitima ya mbumba yake.

Koma musakumbukire zakale, / musakumbukire, (2 x)
Musakumbukirensa e (2 x) nthawi inapitayo, inapita, / inapitayo. (2 x)
[Kuoneka odabwa.]
Onani tsopano ndikuchita / zatsopano. (2 x)
[Kupenyapenya.]
Zayamba kumera e (2 x) kodi simuziona? Kodi / simuziona? (2 x)
Ine ndidzalambula e (2 x) msewu m'chipululu, msewu / m'chipululu,
Ndipo ndidzayika mitsinje m'dziko louma, ndidzayika / mitsinje.
[Kudabwa poona kukoma mtima kwa Chauta.]

Nyimbo Yotsikira
Yesaya 43: 20 – 21

Ziweto zidzanditamanda... / eee
Ndi nthiwatiwa ndi mimbulu... / zidzanditamanda... (2 x)
Chifukwa ndidzaika... / eee
madzi m'chipululu... / ndi mitsinje m'dziko louma... (2 x)
Kuti ndimwetse... / eee
khamu, khamu langa... / wosankhidwa wanga... (2 x)
Khamuli limene... / eee
Ndidzadzipangira ine... / Lidzalalika...
Lidzalalika ulemu wanga... / lidzalalika... (2 x)

- FIRST READING FROM THE HOLY SCRIPTURES
Isaiah 43: 18 – 19

- God comforts the hearts of His family.

- But remember not former things, / remember not, (2 x)
Remember not also e (2 x) time that has passed, that has passed, / that has passed. (2 x)
[The reaction is of surprise.]
Behold I do new things, / new things. (2 x)
[The reaction is to look from side to side.]
And now they shall spring forth e, (2 x) verily you shall know them. Verily / you shall know. (2 x)
I will make e (2 x) a way in the wilderness, a way / in the wilderness,
And I will give rivers in the desert, I will give / rivers.
[The reaction is one of surprise at the goodness of God.]

- Song as the Reader steps down into the Nave
Isaiah 43: 20 – 21

- The beasts of the field shall glorify me... / eee
The ostriches and the dragons... / shall glorify me... (2 x)
Because I will give... / eee
Waters in the wilderness... / and rivers in the desert... (2 x)
To give drink... / eee
To my people, to my people... / to my chosen... (2 x)
This people... / eee
I will form for myself... / They shall shew forth...
They shall shew forth my praise... / they shall shew forth... (2 x)

[For this nyimbo the people sit and kuomba m'manja (clap their hands).]

Chauta apitiriza malonjezo ake kwa anthu ake:
- God is steadfast in his promises to his people:

MAU ACHIWIRI A M'MALEMBO OYERA
Yesaya 65: 9, 17 - 18

[Kuvuma:]

- Eee [Chauta akuitana.] (2 x)
- Eee [Anthu ake avomera.] (2 x)

- Ndidzatulutsa mwa Yakobe mtundu wina
- Ndi mwa Yuda, umwini wa mapiri anga...

- Osankhidwa anga adzakhala nawo
- Ndipo akapolo anga adzakhhalako.

- Onani ndikulenga thambo latsopano,
- Sadzakumbukira zakale, zakale
- Sizidzabwerera mu mtima, mu mtima...

Koma makamaka mukhale ndi chimwemwe
Ndi chikondwerero chosatha, chosatha...

Pakuti ine ndidzalenganso,
Onani ndilenga Yerusalema wodala
Ndi khamu langa kuti lione chimwemwe...

Nyimbo Yoyamikira Malonjezo a Chauta
Yesaya 35: 1 - 2

[Anthu aimilira, navina ndi maluwa ndi masamba.]

Chipululu / ndi nthaka youma
Zidzakondwa / tchire lidzasangalala
Ndi kuphukitsa duwa lokoma.
Lidzakhala ndi maluwa odzaza, odzaza,
Lidzakhala (2 x) nilidangalala.

- SECOND READING FROM THE HOLY SCRIPTURES
Isaiah 65: 9, 17 - 18

- [At the East end:]

- Eee [God is calling.] (2 x)
- Eee [His people answer.] (2 x)

- And I shall bring forth a seed out of Jacob
- And out of Juda a possessor of my mountains...

- And my elect shall inherit it
- And my servants shall dwell there.

- For behold I create new heavens,
- And the former things shall not be in remembrance, the former things
- And they shall not come upon the heart...

- But you shall be glad
And rejoice for ever in these things, for ever...

- For I will create,
Behold I create Jerusalem a rejoicing
And the people thereof joy...

- A Song in Praise of the Promises of God
Isaiah 35: 1 - 2

- [The people stand, and dance with flowers and leaves.]

- The land that was desolate / and impassable
Shall be glad / and the wilderness shall rejoice
And will flourish like the lily.

*It shall bud forth and blossom, and blossom,
It shall blossom and it shall be glad.*

Duwa lopambana maluwa ena onse, ndiwo Amai Maria.

Kumene kwa iye kudzachokera Mpulumutsi ndi chipulumutso chimene mwatilonjeza mwa Maria.

Ife fuko lanufe tikuyimbira pamodzi nawo kuti:

Ulemu.

- The fairest lily of all lilies is Mother Mary.

- From her come the Saviour and the salvation that you have promised in Mary.

- We your people, we sing together now:

- Your Praise.

UTHENGA WABWINO

Luka 2: 1 - 18

Nkhani ya chipulumutso chathu yafika pa chimake.

Tiyeni titsakane ndi Bambo Yosefe ndi Amai Maria pa ulendo wawo.

[Pano pakhale nthawi ya chete pang'ono.]

-- Masikuwo, malamulo adafumira kwa Augusto / Sizare
-- Kuti awerenge / anthu onse / a pansi pano, a pansi pano.

[Yosefe ndi Maria aoneka. Ali pa ulendo.]

Ndi Yosefe yemwe adachoka / kwawo e,
Ku mudzi wa ku Galileya, / kwawo e,
Ku mudzi wa ku Nazarete. (2 x)

Ndipo adakwera ku Yudeya, / Yudeya e,
Dzina lake mzinda wa / Davide e,
Betelehemu dzina lake. (2 x)

Yosefe adafika komweko, / komweko e
Chifukwa adali wa fuko / la Davide e,
Ndi mkazi wake Amai Maria, / amene adali ndi pakati, /
Ndi mkazi wake Amai Maria...

[Pano ayimbe ndi maganizo ozama ndi mokhumata.]

Yosefe Woyera adafika, (2 x) / Yosefe Woyera adafika... e, (2 x)
Adafika ku Betelehemu, ku Betelehemu... e,
Nagogodagogoda pa zitseko za anthu kumeneke ooo...

Yosefe yekha:

Odi! Odi! Odi kuno ooo...
Odi! Odi! Odi kuno ooo...

1

[Mwini malo:]	Ndiwe yani?
[Yosefe yekha:]	Ndine Yosefe
[Mwini malo:]	Ukufunanji?
[Yosefe yekha:]	Ndifuna malo. (2 x)
[Mwini malo:]	Ayi kulibe malo [Kuvuma:] malo kulibe...
[Mwini malo:]	Kulibe malo [Kuvuma:] malo kulibe... malo kulibe...
[Mwini malo:]	Pitani kwina [Kuvuma:] malo kulibe...
[Mwini malo:]	Muyese kwina [Kuvuma:] malo kulibe... malo kulibe... (2 x)
[Mwini malo:]	Mukapeza [Kuvuma:] malo kwina...

[Zonse monga versi loyamba kupatula nzere wotsiliza.]

[Mwini malo:] Mukapeza [Kuvuma:] malo mu khola!

[Ponena choncho, apatsa Yosefe kanyale. Yosefe ndi Maria, alowa mdima, kulowera ku njira ya ku khola.]

Anthu a kwawo sadamulandire, sadamuzindikire.

Kuwalako kudawalira mu mdima
Koma anthu a mu mdima anakukanadi kuyera, kuyera... (2 x)
Adadza kwawo, mwini kuyera... (2 x)
Adamukana anthu a kwawo... ooo... (2 x)
Koma nyama zidamulandira (2 x)
M'khola mwawotu! (2 x)

Kukhale bata kuyembekeza chinthu chachikulu chomwe chili pafupi kuchitika

[The officiants animate the congregation.]
[Joseph leaves the khola.]

Kubadwa kwa Yesu

[This verse is sung twice. The first time the khola is closed with an nsalu, but the second time we can see that the child has been born.]

Koma, koma / pamene anali, /
Kumene uko, / nthawi idafika / yakubala... a /
Nthawi yake ija idafika / ya kubala... /
Mwana wake... e / ya kubala Mwana, /
Idafika, / idafika / ya kubala... a / ya kubala Mwana.

Nabala Mwana wake, / Mwana wake woyamba, / (2 x)
Mwana wake woyamba, / woyamba.
Nabala Mwana wake... eee namufunditsa... aaa... tinsalu.
Namugoneka m'chodyera... aaa
M'chodyera cha ng'ombe... eee... m'chodyera.

Kuonetsa Mwana ndi Nyimbo ya Kazukuta

Waberekanji Maria?
Wabereka Yesu Woyera mbeee.
Taleka n'taona – eee wabereka Yesu!

Ulendo wa Abusa

Nyimbo:

Monga Mbusa adzaweta
Adzaweta khamu lake,
Adzagwira ana a nkhusa (2 x)
Ndi dzanja lake, (2 x)
Nadzawayangata pa chifuwa chake, (2 x)
Nadzalondola bwino nkhusa zoyamwitsa. (2 x)

[Abusa ali kuchezero mozungulira guwa.]

Pafupi ndi pamenepo abusa anali kuchezero... / kuchezero
Ndi kulonda gulu la nkhusa zawo, pa maulonda a usiku... / a usiku,
Ndipo mnjelo wa Ambuye adaima pafupi ndi iwo, (2 x) pafupi,
Ndipo ulemu wa Mulungu udawalira iwo / ponseponse, (2 x)
Ndipo ulemu wa Mulungu udawalira iwo; (2 x) nachita mantha.
Koma mnjeloyo adawauza kuti:

Nyimbo ya Mnjelo

Musaope, musaope chifukwa ndadzakuuzani
Uthenga Wabwino –
Umene udzakondwetsa anthu onse, / onse kwambiri.
O / lero, / lero Mpulumutsi amene
Ali / Khristu Ambuye / waku, / wakubadwirani
Mu mzinda, / mu mzinda wa Davide.

[Abusa ayimba:]

Abusa, bwerani, bwerani! (2 x)
Akuti tisachite mantha, (2 x)
Atiuzo zokomakoma,
Ndi mnjelo wa Ambuye, (2 x)
Ati: Khristu watibadwira. (2 x)
Mtendere, mtendere kwa inu:
Mnjeloyo abweratu ndi uthenga wa chimwemwe. (2 x)

[Mnjelo ayimba:]

Chizindikiro chake ndi ichi mudzapeza /
Kamwana kofunda tinsalu
Kali kugona m'chodyera cha ng'ombe.
O / lero, / lero Mpulumutsi amene
Ali / Khristu Ambuye / waku, / wakubadwirani
Mu mzinda, / mu mzinda wa Davide.

[Abusa ayimba:]

O lero!

Pompo pamodzi ndi mnjeloyo, kamu lalikulu, / lalikulu
La angelo a kumwamba litamanda, litamanda Mulungu.

Poona khama lalikulu la Angelo akumwamba
Likutamanda Mulungu ponena kuti: (2 x)

Nyimbo: Ulemu kwa Mulungu

Kwa Mulungu kumwamba,
Mtendere pansu pano kwa anthu (2 x)
Amene akuwakonda,
Amene akondwere nawo.

Anjelo atawasiya ndikubwerera kumwamba
Abusa anauzana kuti: Tiyeni
Inu Abusa, tiyeni, tipite!

Nanka ndi liwiro (3 x)
Napeza Maria ndi Yosefe, ndi kamwana (2 x)
Kugona m'chodyera muja, chodyera.

Ooo namuonadi Mpulumutsi,
Mpulumutsi wa anthu onse,
Zoonadi Mpulumutsi wa anthu onse!

Kupembedza

Atamuona anamvetsetsa mau, / anamvetsetsa mau aja. /
Tipembedza amene awauza za Mwanayo! (2 x)

Yesaya 45: 15

Ndithu ndinu Mulungu wobisika, (2 x)
Mulungu wa Israele, Mpulumutsi. (2 x)

Salimo 85: 9 - 10

Makamu onse amene munawapanga / (2 x) anadza,
Adzalalika dzina lanu, chifukwa / (2 x) ndi wamkulu
Ndipo muchita zodabwitsa. (2 x)

- THE HOLY GOSPEL

St. Luke 2: 1 - 18

- News of our salvation has come indeed.
- Let us follow Father Joseph and Mother Mary on their journey.

- [Here there is a pause for silence.]

- And it came to pass, that in those days there went out a decree from Caesar / Augustus
- That the whole world / should be enrolled, / the whole world.

- [Joseph and Mary are seen. They are on their journey.]

- This enrolling was first made by Cyrinus, /
The governor of Syria. /
And all / went to his own city.
And all / went to be enrolled.

- And this is Joseph, who went up / from his village,
From his village in Galilee, / from his village,
From his village in Nazareth. (2 x)

- And he went to Juda, / to Juda e,
Its name was the city of / David e,
Bethlehem its name. (2 x)

- Joseph arrived there, / there e
Because he was of the house / of David e,
And with him his wife Mother Mary, / who was with child, /
And with him his wife Mother Mary...

- [Here let them sing with deep thought and contemplation.]

- Saint Joseph arrived, (2 x) / Saint Joseph arrived... e, (2 x)
He arrived at Bethlehem, at Bethlehem... e,
He knock- knock- knocked at the doors of the people of that place.

- Joseph asked:

- Odi Odi! Is anyone at home?
Odi! Odi! Is anyone at home?

1

- [Householder:]	Who is it?
[Joseph:]	I am Joseph.
[Householder:]	What do you want?
[Joseph:]	I want a place to stay. (2 x)
[Householder:]	No, there's no place [At the East end:] there's no place...
[Householder:]	There's no place [At the East end:] there's no place, there's no place...
[Householder:]	Go somewhere else [At the East end:] there's no place...
[Householder:]	Try somewhere else [At the East end:] there's no place... there's no place... (2 x)
[Householder:]	Try to find [At the East end:] a place somewhere else...

2

- [Everything like the first verse except the last line.]

- [Householder:] Try to find [At the East end:] a place in the khola!

- [As the householder says this, she gives Joseph a lamp. Joseph and Mary enter in the dark and follow the way to the khola.]

- **The people from his village neither received him nor recognized him.**

- The light shines in the darkness
But the people who live in the darkness denied the light ... (2 x)
He came to his own village, the owner of light... (2 x)
The people of his own village denied him... (2 x)
But the animals received him (2 x)
In their khola! (2 x)

- **Let us be silent as we wait for the great event that is about to happen.**

[The officiants animate the congregation.]
[Joseph leaves the khola.]

- **The Birth of Jesus**

[This verse is sung twice. The first time the khola is closed with an nsalu, but the second time we can see that the child has been born.]

- But, but / when it was, /
When it was there, / the time had come / to bring forth... a/
Her time had come / to bring forth... /
Her Son... e / to bring forth her Son, /
Had come, / had come / to bring forth... a / to bring forth her Son.

- She brought forth her Son, / her firstborn Son, / (2 x)
Her firstborn Son, / her firstborn.
She brought forth her Son... eee she wrapped him up... aaa in swaddling clothes.
And she laid him in a manger... aaa
In the ox's manger... eee... in the manger.

- The Shewing of the Child and the Kazukuta Song

- What has Mary brought forth?
She has brought forth Holy Jesus mbeee.
Swear it – she has brought forth Jesus!

- Visit of the Shepherds

- Song:

- Just as a shepherd keeps
He keeps his flock,
He catches hold of a sheep (2 x)
With his hand, (2 x)
He holds it close to his breast, (2 x)
He follows well the nursing sheep. (2 x)

- [The shepherds keep the night watches, sitting around the altar.]

- And there were in the same country shepherds watching... / watching
And keeping their flock, and keeping the night watches... / the night watches,
And behold an angel of the Lord stood by them, (2 x) by them,
And the brightness of God shone round about them / everywhere, (2 x)
And the brightness of God shone round about them; (2 x) and they feared with a great fear.
And the angel said to them:

- Song of the Angel

- Fear not, fear not for I bring you
Good Tidings –
That shall bring great joy to all the people, / each and every one.
O / this day, / this day a Saviour who
Is / Christ the Lord / is born, / is born
In the city, / in the city of David.

- [The shepherds sing:]

- Shepherds, come, come! (2 x)
She said that we should not fear, (2 x)
She told us beautiful things,
She is an angel of God, (2 x)
She said: Christ is born. (2 x)
Peace, peace to you all:
The angel has come with tidings of joy. (2 x)

- [The Angel sings:]

- And this shall be a sign: You shall find /
The infant wrapped in swaddling clothes
And he is sleeping in the ox's manger.
O / this day, / this day a Saviour who
Is / Christ the Lord / is born, / is born
In the city, / in the city of David.

- [The shepherds sing:]

- O this day!

- And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude, / a multitude
Of the heavenly army, praising, praising God.

- And they saw the multitude of the heavenly army
Praising God and saying: (2 x)

- Song: Glory to God

- To God in the highest,
And on earth peace to all men (2 x)
Who are dear to Him,
Who rejoice with Him.

- And after the angels departed from them into heaven
The shepherds said one to another: Let us go,
Let us go, shepherds, let us go!

- And they came with haste (3 x)
And they found Mary and Joseph, and the infant
Sleeping in the manger, in the manger.

- Ooo I have seen him, the Saviour,
The Saviour of all men,
Indeed the Saviour of all men!

- Song of Praise

- And seeing, they understood of the word, / they understood of the word. /
Let us praise the one who spoke about the Son!

- Isaias 45: 15

- Verily thou art a hidden God, (2 x)
God of Israel, the saviour. (2 x)

- Psalm 85: 9 – 10

- All the nations thou hast made / (2 x) shall come,
They shall glorify thy name, for / (2 x) thou art great
And thou hast done wonderful things.

YOVINIRA MWANA YESU

[The Abusa ask permission to dance and Joseph tells them to ask Mary.]

Nyimbo 1:

[Ng'oma] – Tilemekeza Yesu – Ambuye adanena kuti:

Nyimbo 2:

Ukondwa ndi chimwemwe, ea, chachikulu,
Mwana wa Sioni.
Upfuulu ndi kusangalala, kusangalala! (2 x)
Mwana wa Jesualemu, ona Mfumu wako wakudzera,
Ndiye wolungama, ndi wopambana adani adzichepetsa. Alleluia!

Nyimbo 3:

Ambuye adandiuza kuti / eee, (2 x)
Iwe ndiwe Mwana wanga, (2 x)
Lero ine ndakubala, (2 x)
Ah, Iwe ndiwe (2 x) Mwana wanga, Mwana wanga, (2 x)
Lero ine ndakubala.

- DANCE IN HONOUR OF THE CHILD JESUS

[The Abusa ask permission to dance and Joseph tells them to ask Mary.]

- Song 1:

- [Drum] – Let us praise Jesus – The Lord has spoken:

- Song 2:

*-Rejoice with gladness, ea, with great gladness,
O daughter of Sion.
Shout for joy, for joy! (2 x)
O daughter of Jerusalem, behold Thy king has come,
The just, and the One that hath turned away thy enemies is Himself poor. Alleluia!*

- Song 3:

*- The Lord has spoken to me / eee, (2 x)
You are my Son, (2 x)
This day I have brought you forth, (2 x)
Ah, you are (2 x) my Son, my Son, (2 x)
Today I have brought you forth.*

Pano pali nthawi yopereka mphatso

- Offertory

[Misa ipitiriza monga nthawi zonse.]
- [The Mass continues as usual.]

Oyera

- Sanctus

[Atasanduliza mkate ndi vinyo, nayi nyimbo yoyamikira zodabwitsa za Chauta:]

1

Ndithu, ndinu Mulungu wobisika, (2 x) Mulungu wa Israele Mpulumutsi. (2 x)

2

Makamu onse amene munapanga (2 x) adzadza ndi kukupembedzani. (2 x)

3

Nadzalalika dzina lanu chifukwa, (2 x) ndinu wamkulu-wamkulu 'di ndipo muchita zodabwitsa.

- [After the consecration of the bread and the wine, the following songs praise the miracles of God:]

1

- Verily thou art a hidden God, (2 x) God of Israel the saviour. (2 x)

2

- All the nations thou hast made (2 x) will come and praise thee. (2 x)

3

- They shall glorify thy name, (2 x) for thou art great indeed and thou hast done wonderful things.

Atate Athu

- Pater noster

Nyimbo yothokozero

[Pang'onopang'ono kungatheke, kubaditsa ndi kayimbidwe ka kuno ku Mua, nyimbo za chikhalidwe. Komanso ndi bwino kupeka nyimbo ndi mau anuanu ogwirizana ndi chaka cha Khristmasi.]

[Magulu osiyana-siyana otsogolera:

Ana ndi mabuthu – Anyamata – Asungwana – Amai – Abambo]

Abusa anabwerera,
Ali kuyamika ndi kutamanda Mulungu,
Chifukwa cha zonse zimene anazimva
Ndi kuziona, monga adawuzira.
Anali kunena kuti:

'Imbirani Yahwe nyimbo zatsopano, Yahwe,
Chifukwa anachita zodabwitsa. (2 x) Imbirani Yahwe!
[Salimo 97: 1 ff.]

[Anjelo:]

'Dzanja lake lamanga linam'gonjetsera adani ake,
Ndi mkono wake woyera, yo yo, (3 x) ndi mkono woyera. (2 x)
Malire onse a dziko lapansi anaona chipulumutso cha Mulungu wathu.
Ooo chipulumutso, chipulumutso cha Mulungu wathu!
Malire onse a dziko lapansi anaona chipulumutso cha Mulungu wathu.'

'Kondwani mwa Yahwe maiko onse;
Sangalalani ndi kuchita chimwemwe ndi kuimba / ndi kuimba. (2 x)
Imbirani Yahwe pamodzi ndi gitara eee,
Pamodzi ndi gitara, ndi kulira kwa zeze, ndi kuimba.
Sangalalani pa maso pa Yahwe mfumu! Sangalalani
Pamodzi ndi lipenga ndi liu la mbetete! Sangalalani! Sangalalani!'

- Songs of Thanksgiving

- *[It may gradually happen that differences arise between the songs here at Mua and the custom of other places. It is also good to develop songs with words of special meaning to individual communities for the celebration of Christmastide.]*

- *[Different groups lead:*

Boys and Girls – Older Children – Maidens – Women – Men]

- *The shepherds returned
Glorifying and praising God,
For all the things they had heard
And seen, as it was told unto them.
They were saying:
'Sing ye to the Lord a new canticle, the Lord,
Because he hath done wonderful things. (2 x) Sing ye to the Lord!'
[Psalm 97: 1 ff.]*

- *[Angel:]*

- *'His right hand hath defeated His enemies,
And his arm is holy, yo yo, (3 x) and his arm is holy. (2 x)
All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.
Ooo the salvation, the salvation of our God!
All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.'*

- *'Sing joyfully to God, all the earth;
Make melody, rejoice and sing. (2 x)
Sing praise to the Lord on the harp eee,
On the harp, and with long trumpets, and with the voice of a psalm.
Make a joyful noise before the Lord our king! Make a joyful noise
With the sound of cornet and with a pleasing voice! Make a joyful noise! Make a joyful noise!'*

**MULUNGU ALI NAFE: EMMANUEL!
GOD IS WITH US: EMMANUEL!**

AFTERWORD

Mua Mission was established in 1902 and is the oldest station of the Missionaries of Africa (the White Fathers) in Malawi. It developed to become Mua Parish, which is situated in Dedza District, in the Central Region of Malawi, just off the Lakeshore road that connects Salima and Balaka.¹ Mua Parish continues to be served by the Missionaries of Africa: there is currently a community of three fathers and one brother.

The Liturgy of Christmas Day was observed in performance on Christmas Eve at Mganja village, which is an outstation of Mua Parish, and again on the morning of Christmas Day at the Parish

¹ <<http://www.kungoni.org>> includes some photographs of Mua Parish. It is considered at some length in Linden, I. (1973). *Catholics, Peasants & Chewa Resistance in Nyasaland 1889 – 1939*. Heinemann: London, Nairobi and Ibadan.

Church itself. Samson Phiri took the photographs at the Parish Church by kind permission of Fr. Claude Boucher and Br. Volker Schwill, officiants, and of the Church Council; and the text was subsequently made available for translation by Fr. Brendan O'Shea, the Parish Priest.

Although it is hoped that what has come before will serve to excite interest in the Liturgy of Christmas Day as it is celebrated at Mua Parish, it remains a desideratum that it should be filmed: it is not possible for either photograph or text to convey adequately the distinctive contribution of song and dance, in which the Church in Malawi expresses itself most naturally. The total movement of the Liturgy is strikingly beautiful and, by turns, tender and demonstrative, pathetic and joyful, contemplative and ecstatic.

The structure of the Liturgy is powerful in its simplicity. It consists in a penitential rite, which invokes images of sweeping and burning to demonstrate the putting aside of the sin of the community, and in a dramatization of two readings from Isaias and of St. Luke's account of the Nativity. The readings are accompanied by songs, which, rather in the manner of the Italian oratorio, reflect on the significance of the events described in the readings. The congregation is drawn into the sacred drama not only by its own contribution to the performance but also by the dynamic that is created between the liturgical group and the congregation: for example, both the prophecy of Isaias and the Child Jesus are brought into the nave; and the people make their offertory, in the sanctuary, at the khola. There is further a concern to express the Nativity in terms that relate to the traditional beliefs of the congregation (for the most part, Chewa): for example, it is not sufficient that the Child Jesus is born; rather, He must be presented to the community in the *kazukuta* song, and it is only at this point that He is considered a human being. The culmination of the dramatization of the Gospel is a *danse des bergers*, in which the shepherds, having received permission from Mary in an elaborate display of the Malawian respect code, celebrate the birth of the Child Jesus with song and dance. The young people who play Mary and Joseph remain before the altar throughout the rest of the Mass to emphasize the Incarnational theology of the Eucharist.

Although Christian sacred drama traces its origin at least as far back as the *Quem quaeritis* trope of a ninth-century St. Gall manuscript², the Liturgy of Christmas Day recorded here derives from the attempt of the Missionary Church in Malawi to give effect to the doctrine of the Second Vatican Council, which emphasized what came to be called the 'inculturation' of the Gospel: in Aylward Shorter's definition, 'the ongoing dialogue between faith and culture or cultures'³.

Toward the end of the 1960's, Fr. Claude Boucher, a Missionary of Africa newly arrived from Canada, discovered a tradition of liturgical innovation at the Convent of the Poor Clares in Lilongwe.⁴ In addition to the Liturgy for Christmas Day, he was able to observe plays on Elias and on the Martyrs of Uganda.⁵ At the time Boucher was posted to Nsipe Parish, also in Dedza District, and he conceived the idea that the Liturgy of Christmas Day should be performed there. Accordingly, he made arrangements to record the plays and to have the choir of Nsipe Parish instructed by the Poor Clares, although he also took the opportunity to render the Liturgy more suitable for Parish use by emphasizing the demonstrative over the contemplative element. The Liturgy was performed at Nsipe Parish in part (the appearance of the Angel to the Shepherds) in 1970, and in full, in 1971, to popular acclaim: Boucher recalls especially the joy of the congregation at seeing the Child Jesus represented as the Malawian child of a Malawian mother in its midst. However, the local African clergy objected to this African Liturgy, and it was not until 1975 that the (African) Bishop of Dedza was persuaded to give his consent for its renewed use at Nsipe Parish.⁶

² St. Gall MS. 484 f. 11. See Chambers, E. K. (1903). *The Mediaeval Stage*. Clarendon Press: Oxford. vol. 2 pp. 8 ff.: 'Quem quaeritis in sepulchro, [o] Christicolae? / Iesum Nazarenum crucifixum, o caelicolae. / Non est hic, surrexit sicut praedixerat. / Ite, nuntiate quia surrexit de sepulchro. Resurrexi.' Chambers comments, 'In the Easter *Quem quaeritis* the liturgical drama was born'.

³ There is a summary of the development of 'inculturation' in Ott, M. (2000). *African Theology in Images*, Kachere Monograph No. 12. CLAIM: Blantyre. pp. 21 ff. Aylward Shorter is himself a Missionary of Africa and, arguably, did most to alert his confreres to the implications of the new doctrine.

⁴ This had been founded by Mother Veronica Namoyo Le Goulard (d. 2013) in 1962. See her autobiography: *Le Goulard, V. N. (2000). A Memory for Wonders: A True Story*. Ignatius Press: San Francisco. Mother Veronica's confidante and assistant in liturgical innovation, Sr. Josepha Ng'ona, has left the convent and resides now in Mganja village.

⁵ Personal communication.

⁶ Nsipe Parish has returned to diocesan hands; and the Liturgy of Christmas Day is no longer celebrated there.

In 1976 Boucher returned from two years of study outside Malawi to establish Kungoni Centre of Culture and Art at Mua Parish. He brought with him the Liturgy of Christmas Day that he had developed at Nsipe Parish. Although more conservative than Nsipe Parish, Mua has subsequently made the Liturgy its own, to the extent that nowadays it is performed, according to the means and dramatic ability of the congregation, not only in the Parish Church but also in many of its outstations, and it is the most distinctive element of the celebration of the Feast of Christmas. The text of the Liturgy that is presented here is a redaction of the various traditions and accretions that have developed around Mua Parish over the years by Fr. Brendan O'Shea, the Parish Priest.

The performance of the Liturgy of Christmas Day at the outstation at Mganja village was substantially the same as that at the Parish Church, although the outstation is humbler, and the crowding and the onset of night lent an intensity to proceedings that exceeded even that at the Parish Church. It is unwise to point to differences that may not be real, but it is possible that the keener enthusiasm displayed (to this observer's eye) for their rôle by Mganja's shepherds reflects that congregation's greater reliance on subsistence farming and animal husbandry. It is interesting in this regard to note also a further instance of how the sacred drama has been inculturated to the individual community: the 'king', whether 'big man' or 'chief', in contemporary Malawi is all too often a malign influence, who exists only to prey upon the village⁷; accordingly, all reference to the visit of the Magi has been excised from the Liturgy, wherever performed.

The Liturgy of Christmas Day has inspired further an independent tradition of Passion Plays at Mua Parish, which are, however, much more the work of individual congregations and lack the normative influence of the model offered by the Poor Clares. It will be a separate project to record these. The texts of both Liturgy and Passion Plays will also repay more detailed attention.



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⁷ Hesiod's term *de:moboroi* ('devourers of the people') is appropriate. The implications of 'Cashgate' have yet to work themselves out – but this current scandal is only the most public manifestation of a system in which elites profit at the expense of the poor.