

NEWS FROM BURUNDI

Dear Sisters,

With hearts full of gratitude and joy, we are happy to share with you the wonderful moments that marked this month in our school and communities in Burundi. These celebrations were much more than events: they were encounters with God's love, opportunities to deepen our faith, strengthen our bonds of fraternity, and renew our commitment to our mission.

1. Pilgrimage to Muyaga by the Staff of Colette De Brandt School

On February 28, 2026, the staff of Colette De Brandt School made a pilgrimage to Muyaga, a historic place where the first missionaries settled in Burundi. This Holy ground, considered the country's first parish, is also a recognized pilgrimage place, welcoming people of all religions seeking spiritual and physical healing.



Upon entering this holy place, the faithful are warmly welcomed by inscriptions displayed at the entrance. As they depart, another message gently sends them forth with a mission: to go out into the world and proclaim to all nations that God is King. This spiritual reminder beautifully frames the experience of worship, inviting all who enter not only to receive grace but also to share it beyond the sacred space.



During our visit, we learned about the history of the arrival of the first missionaries from Tanzania and Rumonge, as well as the construction of the parish. We were told that the place was once an uninhabitable forest before becoming a spiritual center. We

visited several significant sites: the sanctuary with the three tents of Moses, Elijah, and Jesus, the monument commemorating the 125th anniversary of the missionaries' presence in Burundi, and the "tomb of Jesus" with the statue of an angel. We also learned of a place where many couples come to pray together for their families and needs.

After 125 years of the arrival of the early missionaries, the first ever cross planted on the soils of Burundi and the first Altar on which Mass was celebrated in Burundi are still present and jealously guarded for centuries to come.



We continued our visit to the Cross of Muyaga, then to the Grottos of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary; at the grotto of the Virgin Mary, we prayed the Holy Rosary. A place of perpetual adoration is also present, allowing believers to pray continuously.



The pilgrimage concluded with the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, celebrated by the parish priest of Muyaga, which was a powerful moment of prayer and communion. The school staff greatly appreciated this spiritual experience and expressed the desire to live it again. Upon our arrival in Ngozi, we ended the day with a collective evaluation of our experience in a joyous manner.

2. Feast of Saint Colette (March 7, 2026)

On Saturday, March 7, our school community joyfully celebrated the feast of Saint Colette, patron saint of Colette De Brandt School. Since the feast fell on a Friday, the celebration was postponed to Saturday. That morning, we prayed that God's blessing would rest upon the day, especially for a favourable weather. A brief shower reminded us of God's presence, then the sun quickly shone, a visible sign that His love accompanied us throughout the celebration.



The Holy Mass, celebrated on the school's playground, was animated by students from the fourth and fifth grades; from their angelic voices rose songs in

French, English, Kirundi, Kiswahili, and Latin. The Eucharistic celebration was a powerful moment of communion among students, members of the school board, parents, guardians, and guests. At the end of the Mass, a prayer was addressed to Saint Colette, asking for her protection and intercession for our school and its mission.

After Mass, the students showcased their talents through sketches, traditional and modern dances, and poems in three languages (French, English, and Kirundi). Their performances reflected joy and creativity, filling the celebration with happiness and inspiration.



The students demonstrated great enthusiasm and talent through the presentation of dramas and poems.



The day ended in fraternity, with parents, students, staff, and guests sharing refreshments, a true moment of communion and gratitude. The success of the day was made possible by the generous support of parents, DMJ sisters and staff who worked hand in hand to make things happen. The active support of the Executives of the Parent-Teacher Association did not go unnoticed.

3. Feast of the Annunciation (March 25, 2026)

On March 25th, all our sisters present in Burundi gathered in the Holy Family community in Gatere to celebrate the Feast of the Annunciation, a sacred moment to reflect on Mary's "Yes" to God and to renew our own commitment to our call.



In his homily, the celebrant asked a question that deeply touched our hearts: "How many minutes or seconds have you devoted to God today? For how many moments have you been faithful to Him?" He reminded us that even when our fidelity weakens, God's Love and Faithfulness never fail. This reflection helped both our Temporary Professed sisters and Sisters with Perpetual vows to fully enter into the meaning of the renewal of the vows they were about to make.



After Mass, the celebration continued in joy and fraternity. The eldest of our sisters, Sr. Agnès Philips, and the youngest, Sr. Charlène Uwimana, together with the celebrant, Fr Jean-Paul, a Salesian of Don Bosco, cut the cake, a beautiful symbol of unity between generations.



The day concluded in gratitude, as each sister left with a renewed spirit, inspired to say “Yes” to God in her daily life.

As we continue to live the sacred time of the Holy Week, dear sister, may we follow Christ closely, offering Him our prayers, our service, and our faithful presence. May these celebrations remind us that God’s Love is always present and invites us to live fully for Him, as Mary did.

We wish you all a blessed Holy Week, filled with grace.

With our prayers and fraternal affection,

Sr. NTAKARUTIMANA Marie Goreth for Burundi