



Aerial view of the Kinshasa Temple, 20 January 2019 (Ronald Peterson)

**HISTORY OF  
THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST  
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS  
IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO**

**(PDF VERSION)**

Southeast Africa Area  
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints  
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Kinshasa stake conference, just before the start of the Sunday morning session, 6 May 2018. Elder Joni L. Koch, who presided at the conference, stated that so far as he knew the Kinshasa mission had both the highest number of baptisms and the highest rate of attendance at church meetings in the world. At this conference, each seat was full in the main chapel as well as in other suitable rooms in the building. Some people sat outside. During the conference, Tommy Muhemedy, one of the first members of the restored Church of Jesus Christ in the DR Congo, was sustained as president of the Kinshasa stake.

*In the days to come [may] great multitudes ... enjoy the priceless gifts available to those who embrace and live the true gospel of ... Jesus Christ.*

— Elder Marvin J. Ashton  
Zaire Dedicatory Prayer  
30 August 1987

## 1

# LAYING THE FOUNDATION

*Wherefore, be not weary in well-doing, for ye are laying the foundation of a great work. And out of small things proceedeth that which is great. (De&C 64:33)*

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### About the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DR Congo)

1. The DR Congo is the second largest African country in area, slightly smaller than Algeria and approximately the size of the continental United States east of the Mississippi River. It is home to the second largest forest in the world. There are other vast forests, as well as unique wildlife. The latter include the bonobo, the mountain gorilla, the okapi, and the Congo grey parrot.
2. The country is among the world's richest countries in natural resources. Well-harnessed, the Congo River system could provide enough hydro-electric power for the entire African continent as well as central Europe.
3. About 80 million people live in the DR Congo. It is the fourth largest country by population in Africa (after Nigeria, Ethiopia, and Egypt).
4. The DR Congo is the most populous officially French-speaking country. With an estimated 15 million inhabitants, Kinshasa, the capital, is the largest French-speaking city in the world. However, only about half the population speaks French fluently. There are approximately 242 other languages spoken, including the four government-recognized national languages of Kikongo, Lingala, Swahili, and Tshiluba.
5. An estimated 96% of the Congolese people are Christians. Approximately 47% are Catholic, 48% Protestant, 1.5% Muslim, and 2.5% other religions. About 1% hold exclusively to traditional African religious beliefs.
6. Total church membership is more than 60,000. The country accounts for about 10% of LDS Church membership in Africa and constitutes the largest group of French-speaking members in the world. There are currently twice the number of stakes (dioceses) in the DR Congo than in France and Belgium combined.

# Laying the Foundation

**T**HE twentieth century saw an “explosive growth” of Christianity in Africa. During that time the number of Christians “grew from 10 million to 360 million, representing an increase from 10 percent of the population to 46 percent. ... ‘By most measures, Africa should within thirty years contain more Christians than any other continent.’”<sup>1</sup> An expanded presence for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints will decidedly bless Africa. And, likewise, continued growth in “Africa will certainly reshape the ... Church.”<sup>2</sup>

The Latter-day Saints cooperate widely with other churches on issues of common concern<sup>3</sup> and share a core of essential, biblically consistent beliefs in common with other Christians. Paramount among these beliefs is that salvation comes only “in and through the grace of God”<sup>4</sup> and “the name of Christ.”<sup>5</sup> However, Latter-day Saints also believe that the authority of the early Christian church, along with certain essential doctrines and practices, were lost after the death of the original apostles and had to be restored in our day.<sup>6</sup> Some of these doctrines and practices — including a renewal of spiritual gifts, continuing revelation through modern prophets and apostles, and temple ordinances that can unite families across the generations — resonate deeply with many Africans.<sup>7</sup>

In this chapter we will relate the beginnings of the history of the Church in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (henceforth abbreviated DR Congo). We will discuss its early development — from the conversion of isolated pioneers to the establishment of a formal mission with its branches and districts. Then we will give a chronology of subsequent developments up to the creation of the first stake (diocese).

## **Beginnings: “A God-Fearing and Spiritually Sensitive People”**

In Elder Marvin J. Ashton’s 1987 dedicatory prayer for the DR Congo (then named Zaïre), he specifically described the Congolese as “a God-fearing and spiritually sensitive people.”<sup>8</sup> Although The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was not among the first Christian denominations in the country, nor is it currently among its fastest growing churches,<sup>9</sup> it has become a recognizable and increasingly respected presence in the major cities where it is now established. The expansion of the Church has been a robust and healthy growth of a steady and enduring kind.

# Beginnings



*Left:* MINGOTYI NDALA Gilbert (not yet a member of the Church), MUSHILWA WA KABILA (investigator),<sup>10</sup> Sister Simone B. Dock, and Elder Roger L. Dock, 1987. Gilbert, even before his baptism, served as an interpreter for the Docks, who were assigned to Lubumbashi in March 1987. Later, the Docks were joined by Elder Joseph and Sister Lorna Carrier.

*Right:* Gilbert (far left) and a missionary couple, Elder Arie and Sister Antje Noot, with three men (far right: MALANGO KASONGO KITUMBILE Ferdinand, husband of Gilbert's sister) who were about to be baptized by Gilbert on the edge of the abandoned Kalukulu copper mine, 10 km from Lubumbashi.<sup>11</sup> A first group of 80 people, including Gilbert, was baptized earlier in the same place on 9 May 1987.

For more than two decades before the Church was officially recognized in the country, letters were received at Church headquarters requesting literature, missionaries, and baptism. Some had already organized study groups on their own or even unsanctioned churches.<sup>12</sup> For example, in 1976 KASONGO MULUNDA NGOY saw a book that mentioned The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in a library. Impressed by the claim that the Church baptized its members with divine authority, he wrote to Church headquarters in October 1979 and received a reply from its president, Spencer W. Kimball. This reply was followed with literature about the Church sent over a period of years by the International Mission.<sup>13</sup> In March 1985, MINGOTYI NDALA Gilbert, a devout 18-year-old Christian, noticed a copy of Elder LeGrand Richards' book, *A Marvelous Work and a Wonder*, in the hands of KABONGO KUMWIMBA NGOMBE, who was visiting Gilbert's home.<sup>14</sup> Gilbert borrowed the book, read it, and took notes throughout the night. He came to know that what the book taught was true. He immediately joined KABONGO KUMWIMBA as part of a small study group of six individuals, led by KASONGO MULUNDA, that met twice each week. In 1987, several members of the study group and their friends were taught and baptized by Elder and Sister Roger L. and Simone B. Dock, the first senior missionaries sent to the city of Lubumbashi.<sup>15</sup>

Other early members learned of the Church while abroad. For example, in 1976 BANZA WA MUTOMBO Mucioko and his wife BANZA MBUYI Régine left Zaïre to study in Geneva, Switzerland. Mucioko and Régine had received scholarships



*Left to right: Elder Todd Clement, BANZA WA MUTOMBO Mucioko, BANZA Mucioko Junior, BANZA MBUYI Régine, BANZA Philippe, and Elder Dickson Call in Geneva, Switzerland, 27 September 1979.*

from the Ecumenical Council of Churches in the RD Congo. He was to study at the University Institute of Development and at the University of Geneva. After meeting the missionaries, they were baptized on 2 October 1979. They were among the first permanent residents of Zaïre to become members of the Church.<sup>16</sup>

Mucioko had already finished the first cycle of his studies, earning a degree in Development Studies. However, when their former church learned of their conversion, his scholarship was terminated. He was not able to complete his doctoral studies as planned. The family was obliged to return to Zaïre under extremely difficult conditions. So far as they knew, there were no other members of the Church in the country. After three years, they met members of the Church associated with the American Embassy — the family of Dr. Ron Larsen — with whom they met on Sundays in order to take the sacrament. When the Larsens left Kinshasa, Michael C. and Katie Bowcutt came with their children. Like Ron Larsen, Michael Bowcutt was employed by the American Embassy. Once the Church had been officially recognized, the two BANZA sons, Junior and Philippe, became the first members to be baptized in Zaïre. Mucioko shared the Gospel with the friends he used to sing with in his former church, and some of them also became members of the restored Church of Jesus Christ. Mucioko has served as a translator, a branch president, a bishop, and a patriarch in the Kinshasa Kimbanseke stake. Mucioko et Régine were sealed in the Johannesburg South Africa Temple on 11 November 1994.<sup>17</sup>



Elder Rob Clyde, Brother Mompeu, NKITABUNGI MBUYI Dieudonné, and Elder Jeffrey Kent Scott, Brussels, Belgium Ward, 19 July 1980. *Lower left:* Full-time missionaries Elder Shade and Elder NKITABUNGI MBUYI in Birmingham, England, 1982.

In 1969, NKITABUNGI MBUYI Dieudonné went to Belgium as a student. In May 1980, he was contacted by missionaries who tracted out his apartment in Brussels. Impressed by their teachings, he was baptized on 19 July 1980.<sup>18</sup> In 1982, he accepted a call to serve as a missionary in Birmingham, England, the first known native Congolese member to receive his temple blessings and to serve a full-time mission. After Dieudonné's return to Brussels in October 1983, he was called as a ward mission leader. But then, in April 1985, visa problems forced an unexpected and permanent return to Zaïre. This turned out to be the Lord's way of answering a heartfelt desire he had expressed a year earlier. "One of my righteous objectives is to build ... Zion in the heart of Zaïre," he had written to Church headquarters, "I know there [are] quite a few members from my country who are waiting for that opportunity. ... [T]ell me everything I have to do." Dieudonné's feelings proved prescient. He later served as a translator, branch president, and bishop in Kinshasa. He and LUMBAYI MUJINGA Maguy were sealed in the Johannesburg South Africa Temple on 7 June 1994. Following Dieudonné's example, their children, MBUYI NTUMBA Christelle, MBUYI NKITABUNGI Nephi, MBUYI LUBUYA Beverly, and MBUYI LUMBAYI Jonathan, have served full-time missions.<sup>19</sup>

These and other early members continued faithful to their testimonies despite the lack of missionaries and formally organized church units. It is true that on 13 February 1971 the organization of an initial group of expatriate members led by Belgian member Wilfried Decoo was authorized,<sup>20</sup> but Africans could not then



President Ralph Bay and Jean Hutchings led the Zaïre Kinshasa mission when it was first organized in 1987.

be ordained to the priesthood. Once these restrictions ended in 1978,<sup>21</sup> missionary work in Zaïre was ready to move forward, but there was still one requirement that had to be satisfied: the Church would not send missionaries to any country until it could be officially recognized by the government of that country.

## Official Recognition

In 1979 and 1982, Oscar W. McConkie, Jr., legal counsel to the Church, came to Zaïre on fact-finding visits at the request of the First Presidency. In 1985, he returned for a third visit.<sup>22</sup> On 22 September 1985, Michael Bowcutt arranged a dinner in Kinshasa that included, among others, the BANZA couple, NKITABUNGU MBUYI, and BUENO METUSUTA, an Air Force captain and an associate of MOBUTU SESE SEKO, the president of Zaïre.<sup>23</sup> McConkie learned that the Church needed to set up a non-profit entity (*Association sans but lucratif*) in order to be officially recognized. On 31 December 1985, the new entity was officially created.

In January 1986, Ralph Bay Hutchings and his wife Jean were set apart as the first official missionaries in Zaïre.<sup>24</sup> Shortly thereafter, David M. Kennedy, a special representative of the First Presidency assigned to meet with government and ecclesiastical leaders around the world, came for a formal visit.<sup>25</sup> On 12 February 1986, he was invited, along with the McConkie and Hutchings couples, to a meeting with the president of Zaïre in one of his three palaces at Gbadolite.<sup>26</sup> The visitors were accompanied by MANDUNGU BULA NIATI Antoine (“Tony”), a close associate of MOBUTU and “a firm friend of the Church.”<sup>27</sup>

Since Kennedy had formerly served as a US Secretary of the Treasury and as US Ambassador to NATO, MOBUTU was keen to question him about political matters. However, the primary purpose of the visit from the perspective of the invitees was to familiarize MOBUTU with the Church and to gain his verbal accord for government recognition. The only known firsthand account is by McConkie:<sup>29</sup>

## Official Recognition



Left to right: Mr. MINANI (Zaire intelligence service),<sup>28</sup> David M. Kennedy, BANZA WA MUTOMBO Mucioko, Oscar W. McConkie, Jr., NKITABUNGI MBUYI Dieudonné, BANZA MBUYI Régine, Jean Hutchings, Judith McConkie, and R. Bay Hutchings outside the Intercontinental Hotel (now the Pullman Hotel) in Gombe, Kinshasa on 13 February 1986. The photo was taken prior to their departure for the offices of Gittleman and Associates to continue formalities for the official recognition of the Church.

***I told [President MOBUTU that Elder and Sister Hutchings] would start to teach and testify and gather a congregation. The numbers of the congregation would be magnified and develop into their own leaders. We would give not take. God would bless him and Zaire for allowing the Mormons in. It would be a great blessing to Zaire.***

— Oscar W. McConkie, Jr.  
Statement to MOBUTU SESE SEKO  
12 February 1986

At 7:40 [am], BULA picked us up in the three cars and drove us to President MOBUTU's private plane. We were flown to [Gbadolite], about 25 miles from the Central Africa Republic, to where the president was vacationing. He had a summer retreat on the equator where we were to be his guests. We were taken to the smaller of two residences, which was quite lovely. President MOBUTU met us there since he had other guests in his home. He was a charming and gracious host. We were served elaborate and delicious hors d'oeuvres and soft drinks.

Ambassador Kennedy began by explaining the purpose of our visit. President MOBUTU wanted to first discuss some political issues he had with the United States.<sup>30</sup> Kennedy handled the situation as a professional. It was a delight to watch him at work.

When the discussion came to an end, we were treated to a scrumptious meal with a choice of 10 or 20 [entrées]. It was regal. After dinner David Kennedy presented the president with a porcelain figure of a seagull and told him the story of the gulls saving the Saints.<sup>31</sup>

BULA suggested that I tell MOBUTU about the Church. I started: "150 years ago, the pioneers came to the desert of the Salt Lake Valley and made it blossom as a rose." The President threw up his hands and said, "Not that far back. My friend Kasogi<sup>32</sup> spent two hours telling me about Utah. Make it short." I told him these two missionaries [i.e., the Hutchings couple] would start to teach and testify and gather a congregation. The numbers of the congregation would be magnified and develop into their own leaders. We would give not take. God would bless him and Zaïre for allowing the Mormons in. It would be a great blessing to Zaïre.

We spent four hours with President MOBUTU. He had TV cameramen join us. Reporters interviewing Kennedy learned the president had promised to recognize the Mormon Church in Zaïre. Indeed, President MOBUTU said he would sign the statute in 12 days, as soon as he returned from Europe. "Any problem?" I said, "No problem."

The next day, 13 February 1986, the group of church representatives went to the law offices of Gittleman and Associates<sup>33</sup> to continue formalities for Church recognition. The signatures of three Congolese members of the Church were required by law. As it happened, the three members who had been suddenly obliged to return from Europe to the DR Congo — apparently the only three baptized members available in Kinshasa at the time — now knew why the Lord had needed them to come back to their country of origin against their wishes. NKITABUNGI MBUYI Dieudonné, BANZA WA MUTOMBO Mucioko et BANZA MBUYI Régine — who, with President Hutchings, constituted the officers of the non-profit association created by the Church in 1985 — became the representatives of the Church named on the document that MOBUTU would later sign.

The twelve days promised by MOBUTU for his signature became two months. On 12 April 1986, he signed presidential order 86-117 that granted The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints the right to operate throughout the country. About eight months later, on 22 September 1987, the Commissioner of Public Health and Social Affairs signed these newly granted rights into law.<sup>34</sup>



REPUBLIQUE DU ZAIRE

Kinshasa, le



Conseil Exécutif  
 Département de la Santé Publique  
 et des Affaires Sociales  
 CABINET DU COMMISSAIRE D'ETAT

ARRETE N° BUR/CE/SPAS/A/ 0033 /87 PORTANT AGREATION DE L'ASSOCIATION SANS BUT LUCRATIF DENOMME "EGLISE DE JESUS-CHRIST DES SAINTS DES DERNIERS JOURS

**LE COMMISSAIRE D'ETAT**  
 Affaires Sociales;

Le Commissaire d'Etat à la Santé Publique et aux

Vu la Constitution de la République du Zaïre;

N/Réf. :

Associations sans but lucratif;

Vu le décret-loi du 18 septembre 1965 relatif aux

Réf. :

Vu l'Ordonnance n° 86-117 du 12 avril 1986 accordant la personnalité civile à l'Association Eglise de Jésus-Christ des Saints des derniers jours au Zaïre";

Objet :

Vu le dossier de demande d'agrégation introduit par le président de ladite Association qui accepte de se conformer à l'esprit de l'arrêté n° 81-00018 du 10 novembre 1981 complétant et modifiant l'arrêté ministériel n° 0043 du 10 janvier 1967 fixant les conditions d'agrégation et de subsidiarité des Associations sans but lucratif;

Vu l'arrêté départemental n° 81-00018 spécialement en ses articles 1er et 2;

Sur proposition du Secrétaire Général aux Affaires Sociales;

**ARRÊTE :**

Article 1er : L'Eglise de Jésus-Christ des Saints des derniers jours au Zaïre est agréée en tant qu'Association sans but lucratif.

Article 2 : Le présent arrêté entre en vigueur à la date de sa signature.

Fait à Kinshasa, le 22 SEP. 1987

*[Signature]*  
 DR. V. GANDA - KAREYA  
 Chevalier de l'Ordre National du Léopard.

ORDONNANCE N° 86-117 DU 12 AVR. 1985 ACCORDANT LA PERSONNALITE CIVILE A L'ASSOCIATION SANS BUT LUCRATIF DENOMMEE "EGLISE DE JESUS-CHRIST DES SAINTS DES DERNIERS JOURS AU ZAIRE".

LE PRESIDENT-FONDATEUR DU MOUVEMENT POPULAIRE  
DE LA REVOLUTION, PRESIDENT DE LA REPUBLIQUE,

Vu la Constitution, spécialement son article 45 ;

Vu le décret-loi du 18 septembre 1965 relatif aux associations sans but lucratif, spécialement son article 2 ;

Vu, telle que modifiée et complétée à ce jour, la Loi n° 71-012 du 31 décembre 1971 réglementant l'exercice des cultes, spécialement son article 6 ;

Vu la requête en obtention de la personnalité civile en date du 31 décembre 1985 introduite par l'association sans but lucratif dénommée "Eglise de Jésus-Christ des Saints des Derriers Jours au Zaïre" ;

ORDONNE :

Article 1er. - La personnalité civile est accordée à l'association sans but lucratif dénommée "Eglise de Jésus-Christ des Saints des Derniers Jours au Zaïre", dont le siège est établi à Kinshasa, B.P. 12.368; Kinshasa I.

Le but de cette association est d'enseigner l'Evangile de Jésus-Christ et d'implanter dans le coeur des hommes et des femmes les idéaux du christianisme.

Article 2. - Est approuvée la nomination en date du 31 décembre 1985 par la majorité des membres effectifs de l'association citée à l'article 1er, des personnes ci-après aux fonctions indiquées en regard de leurs noms :

- HUTSHINGS RALPH BAY : Président  
- BANZA MUCIOKO : Vice-Président/Conseiller  
- NKITABUNGI MBUYI : Vice-Président/Conseiller  
- BANZA MBUYI : Secrétaire-trésorière.

Article 3. - Le Secrétaire d'Etat à la Justice est chargé de l'exécution de la présente Ordonnance, qui entre en vigueur à la date de sa signature.

Fait à Kinshasa, le 12 AVR. 1985



à récha l.



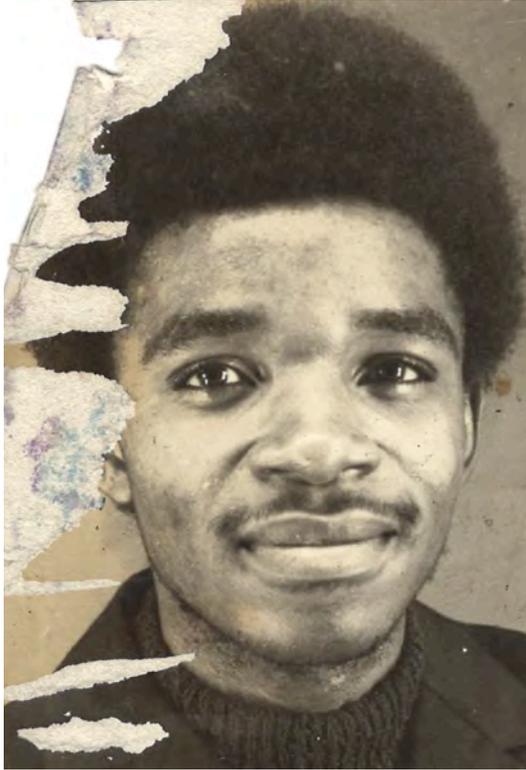
Elder Hutchings baptized the MUTOMBO parents and NKITABUNGI MBUYI Dieudonné baptized their son, Thiéry, in the swimming pool of the Hotel Okapi, Kinshasa, 22 June 1986. *Front:* MUTOMBO Thiéry and Fifi. *Rear:* MUTOMBO KASUANGI Antoine, President and Sister Hutchings, and MATSANGA NZAMBU Marie Therèse. Thirty-two years later, Thiéry was called to serve as president of the Baltimore Maryland, USA mission.<sup>35</sup>

## Baptisms, Branches, and a Mission

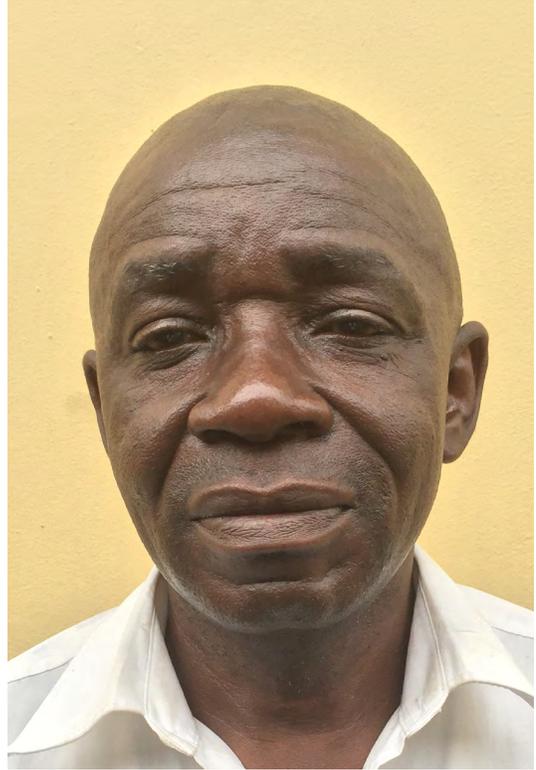
Under the direction of Elder Hutchings, the first official meeting of the Church was held in the living room of the home of the non-member parents of NKITABUNGI MBUYI Dieudonné in Bon Marché, Barumbu, Kinshasa, on 23 February 1986. Twenty-five people attended. The first baptisms in Zaïre, those of BANZA Mucioko Junior and BANZA Philippe, took place on 1 June 1986. A few weeks later, on 22 June 1986, three members of the MUTOMBO family were baptized.

On 14 September 1986, the Kinshasa Branch was organized by Elder Hutchings: Michael Clifford Bowcutt was sustained as branch president, with BANZA WA MUTOMBO Mucioko and NKITABUNGI MBUYI Dieudonné as counselors and MUTOMBO KASUANGI Antoine as clerk. Called to the Relief Society presidency were BANZA MBUYI Régine (president), Katie Bowcutt (first counselor), MBOMBO Monique (second counselor), and Sister MBIYE (secretary). In the Elders Quorum presidency, those set apart were Wiley Cragun (president), MVEMBA Pierre (first counselor), KAMUANGA Daniel (second counselor) and ETENDJI WIYOMBO (secretary).<sup>36</sup>

The Kinshasa Branch was divided into two branches, Limete and Binza, on 3 May 1987. NKITABUNGI MBUYI was sustained as president in Limete, with BOFANGA MPUNGA Jules and SHAMBUYI BIAZA KATEMBWE Laurent Clément as counselors. Michael Clifford Bowcutt became président in Binza, with counselors MUTOMBO KASUANGI Antoine and KABAMBA Sesuka.



TAMBA-TAMBA Jean Jacques, as a student in Belgium.



Member of the Church in Ngaliema, Kinshasa, 2019.

**EGLISE DE JÉSUS-CHRIST DES SAINTS DES DERNIERS JOURS**

## Certificat de baptême et de confirmation

Date 10 OCTOBRE 1977

Branche \_\_\_\_\_ Mission \_\_\_\_\_

Paroisse CHARLEROI Pieu BELGE DE BRUXELLES

Ceci certifie que TAMBA-TAMBA Jean-Jacques

FILS de TAMBA-MBAMBI Jacques et MWANDA Marth  
Fils ou fille Nom du père Nom de jeune fille de la mère

Né(e) le 6 NOVEMBRE 1953 à TSHELA AFRIQUE

A été baptisé(e) le 10 JUL 77 par TRICOT Joseph SOIXANTE-DIX et  
Prêtre

confirmé(e) membre de l'Eglise de Jésus-Christ des Saints des Derniers Jours le 10 JUL 77 par DELOGNE Marcel  
**GRAND-PRETRE**

Signé [Signature] Greffier Signé [Signature] Evêque-Président de la Région

Jean Jacques became a member of the Church at a time when Africans could not yet be ordained to the priesthood (restriction ended in 1978). On this subject, he wrote: “My African friends at the time did not understand me anymore. ... Many of my African colleagues told me pointedly that it was a racist church. In spite of all I heard, I understood that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was unique in character. ... At the end of that year, I had just finished my graduate studies and I returned to my country. Whole families came to say goodbye. ... I saw Brother Joseph Tricot shed tears at the airport. ... All of them wanted me to stay with them in Belgium. But it was not God’s plan for me. For the door was open to see many other blacks like me receive baptism into The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Belgium and elsewhere.”<sup>37</sup>

THE CHURCH OF  
JESUS CHRIST  
OF LATTER-DAY  
SAINTS

GENEALOGICAL DEPARTMENT  
50 East North Temple Street  
Salt Lake City, Utah 84150

Le 25 février 1984

à

Jean Jacques Tamba-Tamba  
B.P. 3287  
I.S.P.T./Kin  
Kinshasa-Gombe  
Zaire

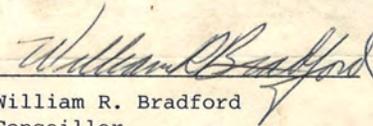
Cher Frère Tamba-Tamba:

Nous avons récemment reçu une lettre du dirigeant de mission de la paroisse de Bruxelles nous indiquant que vous êtes devenu membre de l'Eglise il y a quelques années et que vous vivez maintenant au Zaire. Nous voulons profiter de cette occasion pour vous souhaiter la bienvenue comme membre de la Mission Internationale.

Nous tenons à vous signaler que l'Eglise n'est pas actuellement implantée au Zaire; cependant, nous sommes en train d'essayer d'obtenir une reconnaissance légale dans ce pays. Nous avons une famille membre de l'Eglise au Zaire que vous pouvez contacter. Dr. Ron Larsen fait partie du personnel de l'ambassade américaine à Kinshasa et pouvez le contacter à cet endroit. Lui et sa famille tiennent régulièrement des réunions et ils seraient heureux de vous accueillir.

Que le Seigneur vous bénisse.

Bien sincèrement à vous,

  
William R. Bradford  
Conseiller

jp/yp  
cc: R. Larsen

The letter of welcome above notified Jean Jacques of the presence of the Larsen family in Kinshasa and of the Church's ongoing effort to obtain legal recognition in the DR Congo. Jean Jacques summarized his experiences after his return as follows: "Once back in my country where the Church was not yet established, I needed to keep in contact with my brothers and sisters in Charleroi through frequent correspondence. After my baptism, Nkitabungi (a Zairian), Nicolas Peters (another Zairian) and so many others were also touched in Belgium by the same flame of the Gospel. In Kinshasa I had a large family of ten children, all of whom I took to Church. I served as a member of the bishopric several times, as president of the elders quorum, [and] as a member of the high priests group and elders quorum. I sent two children on full-time missions — a son and a daughter. I am preparing another daughter to serve a mission this year with the help of God. I am over 65 years old and I have six wonderful grandchildren. All have been blessed in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. It is always with great gratitude that I express to my Heavenly Father the many paths He had me travel until I saw with my own eyes thousands of black people like me become members of the Church. The true Church directed by Jesus Christ Himself."<sup>38</sup>



First missionary lesson at the BANZA home in Masina, Kinshasa. The Hutchings, the BANZAs, NKITABUNGI MBUYI, BANZA Junior, two friends, BANZA Philippe, and additional friends, 5 May 1986.



First baptisms in Zaïre, BANZA Junior and Philippe, 1 June 1986 in the swimming pool of the Bowcutt home in Binza, Kinshasa. BANZA family, Hutchings, NKITABUNGI MBUYI, Bowcutt family.



Twenty-five people attended the first Sunday meeting on 23 February 1986, held in the living room of the NKITABUNGI family. Thereafter meetings were held in the parking carport. Last row, BANZA MUCIOKO, Ralph Bay Hutchings and NKITABUNGI MBUYI DIEUDONNÉ, photo March 1986.<sup>39</sup>



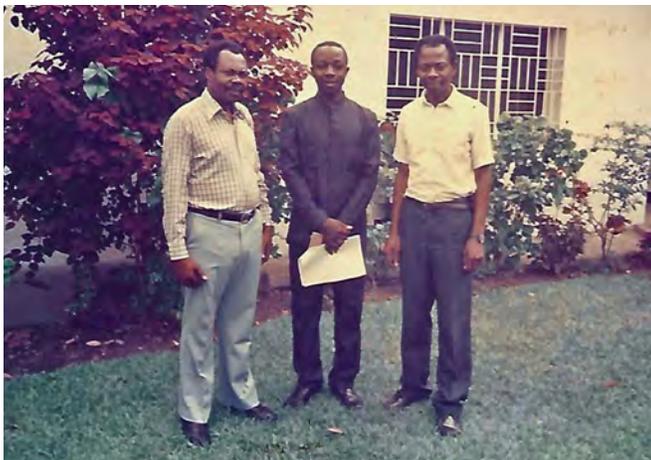
NKITABUNGI MBUYI Dieudonné, Gombe, Kinshasa, 19 September 2017.



Members of the Limete branch with President NKITABUNGI MBUYI Dieudonné after the branch had moved to a newly renovated building at 815, Avenue de la Révolution (formerly), Limete, Kinshasa on 28 September 1986. Young men, young women (right), Primary children (center).<sup>40</sup> Photo taken about January 1988.

# Baptisms, Branches, and a Mission

FOUNDATION



Limete branch presidency at Limete building, sometime after 3 May 1987. *Left to right:* SHAMBUYI BIAYA (2c), NKITABUNGI MBUYI (pt), BOFANGA MPUNGA (1c).



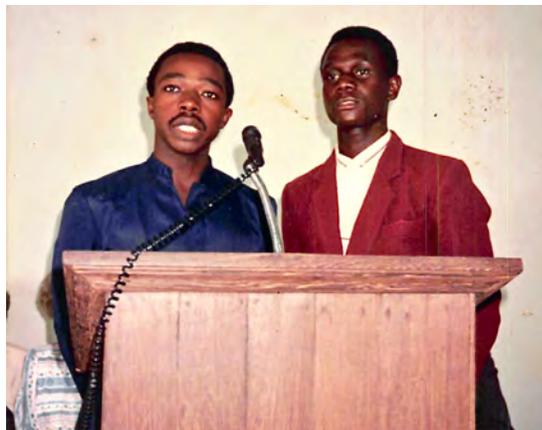
Masina branch presidency, after 18 September 1988. *Left to right:* SHAMBUYI BIAYA (1c), BANZA Mucioko (pt), KAZADI MUSUNGAYI Big (2c); KIMBULU NZAMU (clerk, front).



Masina branch meeting, ca. 1989. *First row:* Jean Denis, KOLA Julor, KOLA Berlo Belebele. *Second row:* BANZA Philippe, KIMBULU, others unknown; *Third row:* unknown; *Fourth row:* RANY, DIAMANY, unknown, MZILA, two unknown, BANZA Mucioko, five unknown, KOLA Daniel, Brother TSHIMANGA.



Masina Branch Relief Society Presidency. Sisters BOKETSHIO, KAJINGA, TSHIOLO and NTUMBA.



MVEMBA Pierre translates from French into Lingala for President NKITABUNGI MBUYI, 30 August 1987.<sup>41</sup>



Kinshasa District Presidency, 1988. SHAMBUYI BIAYA (1c), Benjamin Walton (pt), MBUYI MPAKASA (2c).

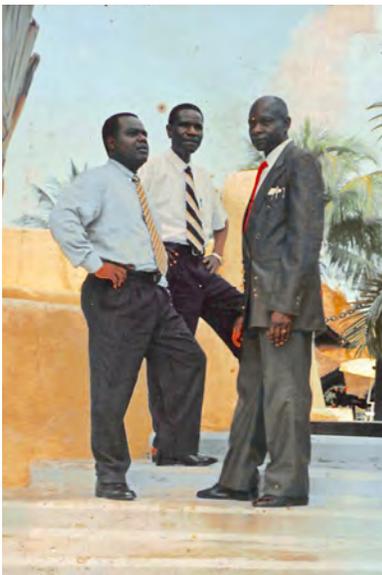


Kinshasa District Presidency, July 1990. Benjamin Walton (former pt), Sister MUTOMBO, MUTOMBO Antoine (2c), Sister SHAMBUYI, SHAMBUYI BIAYA (pt), Sister MBUYI, MBUYI MPAKASA (1c).



**Accra, Ghana Training Meeting, October 2000**

- President MILEMBOLO (Brazzaville Rep. of Congo District)
- President MUKADI (Kolwezi DRC District)
- President MILAMBO (Lubumbashi DRC Stake)
- Unidentified Primary leader (Accra, Ghana)
- President KOLA (Masina, Kinshasa DRC District)
- Unidentified Relief Society Leader (Accra, Ghana)
- President MULIELE (Ngaliema, Kinshasa DRC District).



Presidents MULIELE, KOLA, and MILAMBO in Abidjan on their way to Accra, Ghana, October 2000.



KOLA Daniel and Thèrese, Bibwa-Nsele, Kinshasa, 8 July 2017.



MILAMBO Kefa and Célestine, Gombe, Kinshasa, 9 June 2017.

The Hutchings couple was called to lead the newly organized Zaïre Kinshasa Mission that officially opened on 1 July 1987. Elder Alexander B. Morrison gave this summary of the accomplishments of the following year:<sup>42</sup>

By the time President and Sister Hutchings were released at the end of June 1988, a firm base had been laid for future growth in Zaïre. Two large, well-organized branches were functioning in Kinshasa. Both were well housed — the Binza Branch in excellent rented quarters and the [Limete] Branch in an equally fine Church-owned building. Twelve hundred miles to the south, the Lubumbashi Branch, with over four hundred members, was approaching the point where division into two units could be considered.

## Dedicatory Prayer for Zaïre

On 30 August 1987, Elder Marvin J. Ashton (member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles) dedicated Zaïre for the preaching of the Gospel. In attendance with Elder Ashton were Elder Alexander B. Morrison (member of the First Quorum of Seventy and of the Area Presidency for the British Isles and Africa), President and Sister Hutchings, two senior missionary couples, and leaders of the Limete and Binza Branches with their families. The prayer was held in the garden area of the Bowcutt home in Binza, Kinshasa, under the branches of a large flamboyant tree. Elder Morrison conducted and made opening remarks:<sup>43</sup>

This is a sacred and glorious occasion, as we meet under the protecting and sheltering canopy of the trees in this gentle garden, to carry out the Lord's business in this choice land. We meet in near obscurity, in the very infancy of the Church in Zaïre, little noticed by the world but perfectly secure in the knowledge of who we are and in whose cause we serve. We are here on the Lord's errand. This action ushers in a new era in the history of the Church in Zaïre. It is the dawning of a new day — a day whose beneficent influence will be felt through all generations of time. . . .

Ours is the responsibility, as the bearers of God's priesthood and His authority, to bring that glorious message to all the world. The message we bring is one of joy and hope. It speaks of prophets and revelation. It proclaims that the heavens are not closed. Its central figure is the Christ. It tells of His atoning sacrifice which opens the way for each of us to return to our Father's house, on condition of faithfulness.

This is our message to the world, and we will not rest until it has "penetrated every continent, been preached in every clime, and sounded in every ear."<sup>44</sup> "Come," we say to all of God's children. "Come sup at the table of the Lord. Come learn of Him. Come and partake of sacred ordinances and covenants which will enable you, if you remain faithful, to taste the sweet joys of your Heavenly Father's kingdom." "Come listen to a prophet's voice and hear the word of God."<sup>45</sup>

Afterward, Elder Marvin J. Ashton of the Council of Twelve Apostles gave the following dedicatory prayer, extracts of which were published in a book by Elder Morrison. The prayer was not written out in advance, but rather was expressed spontaneously:<sup>46</sup>



Limete Branch leaders with Elder Ashton and Elder Morrison after the dedicatory prayer, 30 August 1987. Note that some of the Congolese brethren are wearing the *abacost* (French “à bas le costume” = “down with suits”) required by MOBUTU SESO SEKE as part of his authenticity campaign between 1972 and 1990. Western-style suits and ties were seen as vestiges of the colonial past.

*Left to right:* Brother MAYELE (executive secretary), SHAMBUYI BIAAYA KATEMBWE Laurent Clément (second counselor, branch presidency), MAWANGI Mansiku (branch clerk), Elder Marvin J. Ashton (Council of the Twelve Apostles), LENDO-VANDAM Simon Wamande (elders quorum president), NKITABUNGI MBUYI Dieudonné (branch president), BOFANGA Mpunga Jules (first counselor, branch presidency), Elder Alexander B. Morrison (First Quorum of the Seventy), and ETENDJI WIYOMBO (elders quorum secretary).

***I now humbly exercise the authority of the holy apostleship and dedicate and bless this great land of Zaïre to Thee and Thy purposes for the sharing of the gospel of Jesus Christ in its fullness. May the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints now roll forward according to Thy will and eternal plans with rapidity and permanence.***

— Elder Marvin J. Ashton  
Zaïre Dedicatory Prayer  
30 August 1987

# Dedicatory Prayer

O God, our Eternal and Heavenly Father, unitedly on this beautiful morning . . . , we assemble with bowed heads and thankful hearts. By appointment of the First Presidency and the Council of the Twelve Apostles, I now humbly exercise the authority of the holy apostleship and dedicate and bless this great land of Zaïre to Thee and Thy purposes for the sharing of the gospel of Jesus Christ in its fullness. May the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints now roll forward according to Thy will and eternal plans with rapidity and permanence.

Heavenly Father, we thank Thee for this historical situation. We express sincere appreciation for friendly government officials for signing a document giving the Church legal authority to continue our missionary efforts among these choice people. We are also grateful to full-time missionaries whose labors and commitment have been an important element in this day's significant recognition. . . .

May those who live, labor, and lead in this choice country which is ripe for the Gospel find joy in their labors. May all of us who relate to and serve in this country proclaim with excitement and anxiousness the reality that the gospel of Jesus Christ has been restored in its fullness through the Prophet Joseph Smith and is now available to all of God's children. Almighty God, inspire and lead our missionaries to teach and baptize individuals and families — not groups or tribes during this season of time. . . .

Heavenly Father, we thank Thee for this great nation and these God-fearing and spiritually sensitive people. We pray that in the days to come great multitudes will enjoy the priceless gifts available to those who embrace and live the true gospel of Thy son Jesus Christ. May Thy earthly kingdom roll forward now in Zaïre with stability, love, and eternal purpose. . . .

Elder Morrison described this prayer as “short, quiet, . . . spiritually powerful, [and] delivered with great eloquence and sincerity.”<sup>47</sup> Later that day, a branch conference was held in which 215 members attended.<sup>48</sup> After leaving Kinshasa, Elder Ashton and Elder Morrison went to Monrovia (Liberia) and Abidjan (Ivory Coast) to dedicate those lands. Elder Morrison expressed his feelings as follows:<sup>49</sup>

It was a great thrill for me, loving Africa as I have for much of my adult life, to see the power of the priesthood mobilized to call blessings down on those countries. . . . The Lord's errand was complete. Three great lands had been dedicated to Him, that His glorious work might roll forth with power and majesty to bless the lives of millions.

## Chronology from the First Missionaries to the First Stake

### 1986

*January:* Ralph Bay and Jean Hutchings set apart as the first missionaries in the DR Congo.

*12 February:* Church representatives meet with the President of Zaïre, MOBUTU SESE SEKU à Gbadolite, in the north of the country. He gave a verbal permission for the Church to hold meetings and send other missionaries to Zaïre.

*23 February:* First official meeting of the Church held in the carport of the MBUYI home in Bon Marché, Barumbu, Kinshasa. R. Bay Hutchings presided. Michael C. Bowcutt and NKITABUNGI MBUYI Dieudonné blessed the sacrament. Twenty-five people attended.

*12 April:* Presidential order 86-117 is signed, granting The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints the right to operate throughout the country.

*1 June:* First baptisms in Zaïre, BANZA brothers Junior and Philippe, performed in the swimming pool of the Bowcutt home in Binza, Kinshasa.

*12 June:* Kinshasa Zaïre District is created, with Elder Robert L. Backman of the Presidency of the Seventy as Acting District Leader.

*14 September:* The Kinshasa Branch was organized by President Hutchings. Michael Clifford Bowcutt was sustained as branch president with BANZA WA MUTOMBO Mucioko and NKITABUNGI MBUYI Dieudonné as counselors.

*28 September:* The Kinshasa branch moved to a newly renovated building at 815, Avenue de la Révolution (formerly), Limete. The building was dedicated by Elder Russell C. Taylor of the Seventy on 20 January 1987.

### 1987

*March:* Elder and Sister Roger Louis and Simone B. Dock were transferred from Kinshasa to Lubumbashi, Shaba (Katanga) province.

*3 May:* The Kinshasa Branch was divided into two branches, Limete and Binza. NKITABUNGI MBUYI Dieudonné was sustained as president in Limete. Michael Clifford Bowcutt became branch president in Binza.

*1 July:* The Zaïre Kinshasa Mission opened, led by President and Sister Hutchings.

# Chronology

*30 August:* Elder Marvin J. Ashton of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles dedicated Zaïre for the preaching of the Gospel at 7:00 am. A branch conference was held with 215 persons in attendance.

*11 Septembre:* President Hutchings traveled to Lubumbashi to organize a branch of the Church. KAVUALA Clément was called as president.

*22 September:* The Commissioner of Public Health and Social Affairs for the DR Congo signed the rights granted by the presidential declaration into law.

## 1988

*18 Septembre:* The first Kinshasa District was organized, with Michael Clifford Bowcutt (president), NKITABUNGI MBUYI Dieudonné (first counselor), and KASONGO WEMBO (second counselor). On the same day, the Limete and Binza branches were each divided to create the new Masina and Ngaliema branches respectively.

*December:* The Lubumbashi District was organized by C. Steven Hatch, DR Congo Kinshasa mission president. Virgil J. Parker was sustained as district president, with KITOBO MUTOMBO and KAVUALA MUBALAMATE as counselors.

## 1991

*January-June:* The first missionaries called from the DR Congo began their missions. DIAMANY Ngalamuleme and MUTOMBO NKADI Thomas were sent to Kolwezi and BANZA Mucioko Junior and MALU-MALU Kanda went to Likasi.

*9 June:* The Makelekele Branch in Brazzaville, Republic of Congo is organized.

*13-15 September:* Church Education System representatives came to begin a seminary program in Zaïre, with KABWIKI NTAMBWE as country director.

## 1992

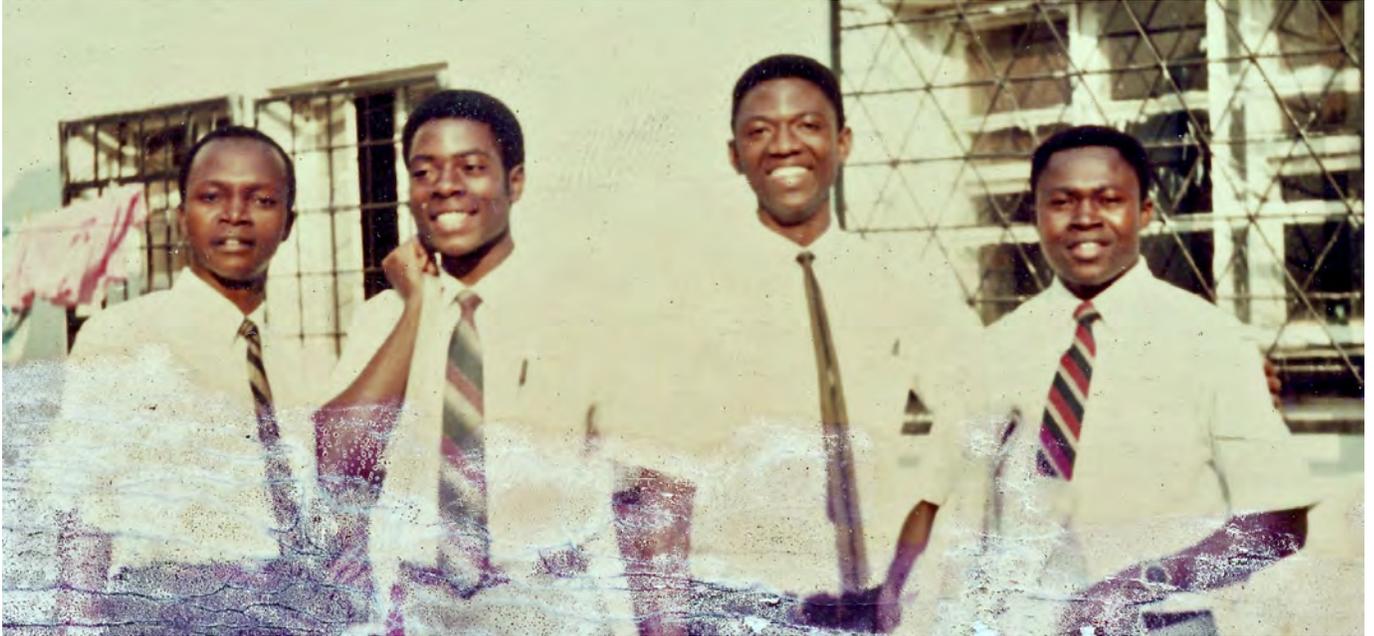
*12-13 October:* Mission President Homer LeBaron and other members met with Prime Minister TSHISEKEDI WA MULUMBA Étienne and presented him with a copy of the Book of Mormon and other works of scripture. They also met with GISANDA Roger, Minister of Justice.

## 1993-1994

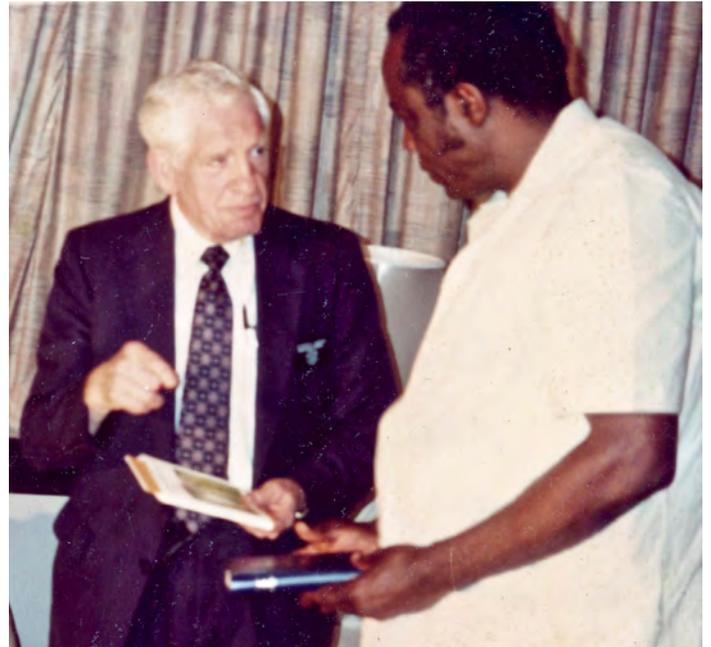
*29 December:* Mission closed was until 17 July 1994, due to wars in the region.

## 1996

*10 November:* Kinshasa Zaïre Stake was created with MULIELE WA MUSHITI Jacques as president.



The first four missionaries called from the DR Congo. *Left to right:* MUTOMBO NKADI Thomas, BANZA Mucioko Junior, DIAMANY Ngalamuleme, and MALU-MALU Kanda. Photo taken at Kolwezi, DR Congo, at a missionary converence, ca. 1991.



*Left:* On October 12 and 13, 1992, Mission President Homer LeBaron and Sister LeBaron (accompanied by BANZA WA MUTOMBO Mucioko, BOKOLO Mathieu and MBUYI Mukuna) went to the office of the Prime Minister, TSHISEKEDI WA MULUMBA Étienne, during his second term in the transitional government of MOBUTU, to present him a volume containing the Book of Mormon and other works of scripture. BANZA Mucioko remembers him as being very receptive to the Book of Mormon and regrets not having the opportunity to make follow-up visits with him.

*Right:* The group also met Roger GISANDA, deemed to be a “reform-minded” Minister of Justice.<sup>50</sup>

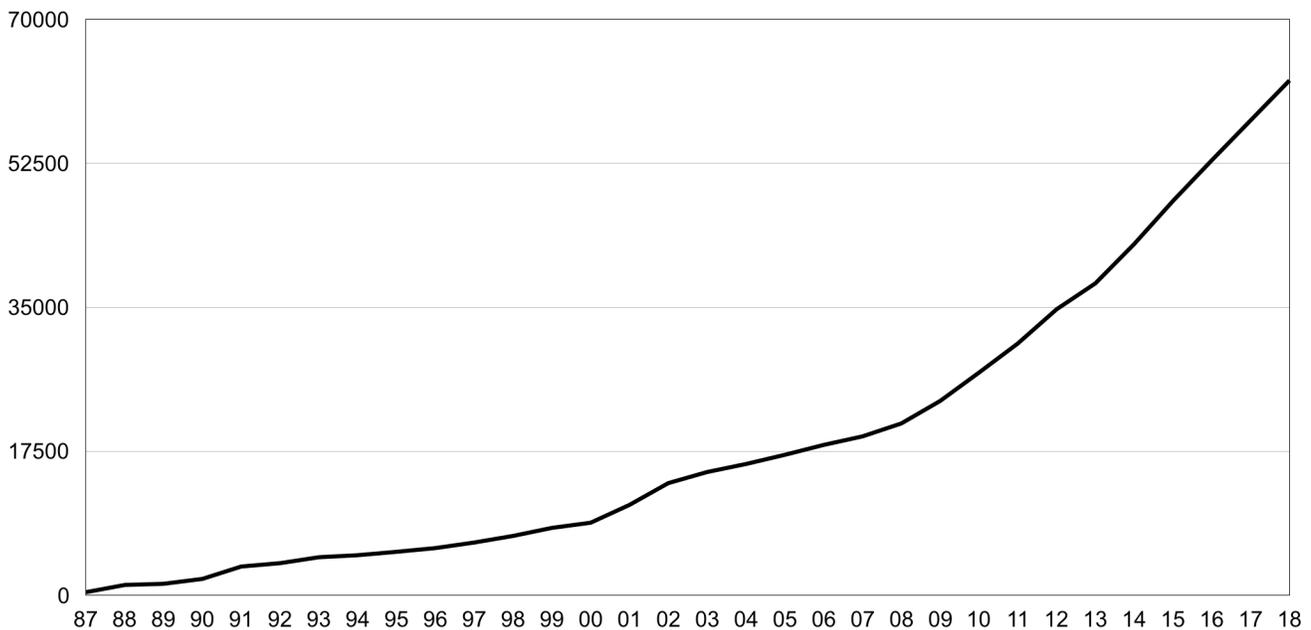
## DR Congo Statistical Snapshot December 2018

Missions (7/19)	4	Adult Men	28,805
Stakes (2/19)	22	Melchizedek Priesthood	10,616
Districts (2/19)	2	Adult Women	17,803
Wards	153	Young Women (12-18)	3,655
Branches	43	Young Men (12-18)	5,301
Total Wards and Branches	196	Children (0-11)	6,999
		<b>Total Membership</b>	<b>62,563</b>

Missionaries Serving in the DRC (12/17)	431
Missionaries Serving from the DRC	570
Membership Increase in 2018	4,849

## DR Congo Membership Growth December 2018



# DRC, RC and Cameroon Districts and Stakes February 2019

03 Oct 91	<b>Kolwezi DRC District</b>	25 Aug 13	<b>Kisanga DRC Stake</b>
03 Nov 96	<b>Kinshasa DRC Stake</b>	31 Aug 14	<b>Makelekele RC Stake</b>
07 Sep 97	<b>Lubumbashi DRC Stake</b>	19 Jul 15	<b>Pointe-Noire RC District</b>
02 May 99	<b>Kinshasa Masina DRC Stake</b>	13 Dec 15	<b>Katoka DRC Stake</b>
19 Oct 03	<b>Brazzaville RC Stake</b>	24 Apr 16	<b>Mbuji-Mayi DRC Stake</b>
09 Nov 03	<b>Kinshasa Ngaliema DRC Stake</b>	29 May 16	<b>Kinshasa Ngaba DRC Stake</b>
13 Apr 08	<b>Kinshasa Mont Ngafula DRC Stake</b>	26 Jun 16	<b>Likasi DRC Stake</b>
15 Mar 09	<b>Katuba DRC Stake</b>	06 Nov 16	<b>Ngandajika DRC District</b>
23 Aug 09	<b>Kinshasa Kimbanseke DRC Stake</b>	18 Dec 16	<b>Douala Cameroon District</b>
22 May 11	<b>Kananga DRC Stake</b>	22 Oct 17	<b>Ruashi DRC Stake</b>
26 Jun 11	<b>Luputa DRC Stake</b>	24 Jun 18	<b>Kinshasa Mpasas DRC Stake</b>
11 Mar 12	<b>Yaounde Cameroon District</b>	24 Jun 18	<b>Kinshasa N'Djili DRC Stake</b>
22 Nov 12	<b>Kinshasa Binza DRC Stake</b>	03 Feb 19	<b>Mwene-Ditu DRC Stake</b>
16 Dec 12	<b>Kinshasa Mokali DRC Stake</b>	10 Feb 19	<b>Kinshasa Lukunga DRC Stake</b>

## Seventies February 2019



Daniel T. Kola  
2007-2012



Alfred K. Kyungu  
2011-2016



L. Jean Claude Mabaya  
2012-2017



W. Jean-Pierre Lono  
2014-



B. Christophe Kawaya  
2016-



Elie K. Monga  
2017-



Eustache Ilunga  
2018-



Sylvain P. Kongolo  
2018-

## DR Congo Kinshasa Mission

President and Sister Ralph Bay Hutchings, 1987-1988	President and Sister Scott G. Waldram, 2003-2005
President and Sister C. Stephen Hatch, 1988-1990	President and Sister William W. Maycock, 2005-2007
President and Sister Scott H. Taggart, 1990-1992	President and Sister Donald H. Livingstone, 2007-2009
President and Sister Homer M. LeBaron, 1992-1994	President and Sister Michael Steven Headlee, 2009-2011
President and Sister Clair W. Andrus, 1994-1995	President and Sister Brent L. Jameson, 2011-2013
President and Sister Roberto Mario Tavella, 1995-1998	President and Sister Bryce W. Cook, 2013-2015
President and Sister Merwin Leonard Waite, 1998-1999	President and Sister Hervé J. Baehrel, 2015-2018
President and Sister Brent L. Nielson, 1999-2001	President and Sister Mingotyi François Mukubu, 2018-
President and Sister Phil Brent Petersen, 2001-2003	

## DR Congo Lubumbashi Mission

President and Sister Gary L. Packer, 2010-2012
President and Sister Phillip W. McMullin, 2012-2014
President and Sister Forast Brent Thomas, 2014-2016
President and Sister Larry D. Shumard, 2016-2019
President and Sister L. Jean Claude Mabaya, 2019-

## Republic of Congo Brazzaville Mission

President and Sister Elie K. Monga, 2014-2017
President and Sister Jerry R. Thompson, 2017-

## DR Congo Mbuji-Mayi Mission

President and Sister Alfred Kyungu, 2016-2019
President and Sister W. Jean-Pierre Lono, 2019-

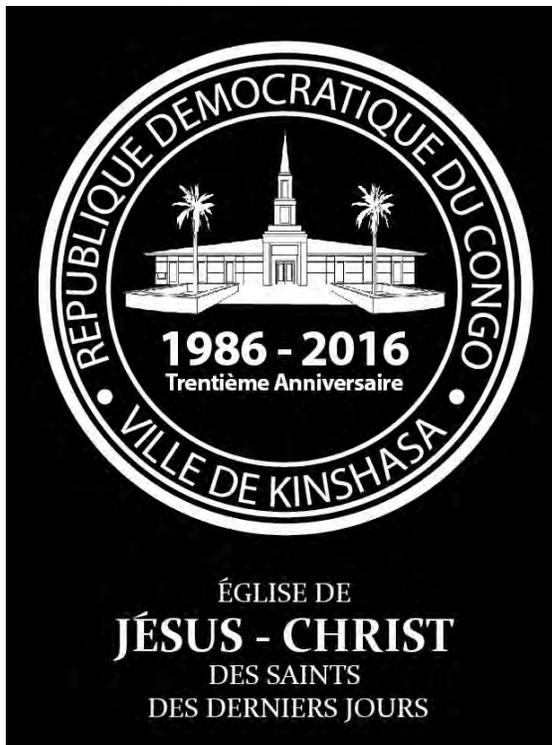
## DR Congo Kinshasa East Mission

President and Sister Rion B. Needs, 2019-
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# Thirtieth Anniversary



BAENDE ISE-EKUNGOLA LIYANZA EKEZI IMBALE, LONO WEMBO Jean Pierre, NKITABUNGI MBUYI Dieudonné and TWIKALA KALALA Elie.  
National broadcast television (RTNC), 4 July 2016<sup>51</sup>



Photos taken from a video prepared for the thirtieth anniversary of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the DR Congo, 2 July 2016.<sup>52</sup>

# Thirtieth Anniversary

FOUNDATION

MWAMBAKANA, Pierre



NKITABUNGI MBUYI Dieudonné





1. Philip Jenkins. "Letting go: Understanding Mormon growth in Africa." In *From the Outside Looking In: Essays on Mormon History, Theology, and Culture (The Tanner Lectures on Mormon History)*, edited by Reid L. Neilson and Matthew J. Grow, p. 331 (pp. 330-52). New York City, NY: Oxford University Press, 2016. <https://books.google.cd/books?id=Yc9xCgAAQBAJ> (accessed October 7, 2017).

Jenkins describes in detail the historical, sociological, and demographic factors that seem to have prepared the African continent for the growth of Christianity. These "mega-trends" in Africa include, among others, "the rise of indigenous, spontaneous Christian culture; the spread of American styles of marketing and promotion; the continuing power of poverty and the rise of the prosperity gospel; and the thorny issues of indigenization and enculturation for western religious traditions" (Reid L. Neilson, "Introduction to Part 4: The study of global religions." In *From the Outside*, p. 297. See Jenkins' more comprehensive discussion of these factors in "Letting Go," pp. 333-338). Jenkins also provides an insightful discussion of factors that may have contributed to the relatively slower numerical growth of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Africa when compared to other denominations (*ibid.*, pp. 344-350). For a nuanced, well-written Latter-day Saint perspective on God's hand in history, see Alexander B. Morrison, "God in History." In *Window of Faith: Latter-day Saint Perspectives on World History*, edited by Roy A. Prete, Brian Q. Cannon, Richard O. Cowan, D. Mark Prescott and Craig J. Ostler, 1-12. Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 2005. <https://rsc.byu.edu/archived/window-faith-latter-day-saint-perspectives-world-history/god-history>. (accessed January 14, 2019).

2. P. Jenkins, "Letting Go," pp. 330-331.
3. In the spirit of "linking arms with those of other faiths" in causes of common concern, the Church cooperates extensively with other faith communities (both Christian and non-Christian) throughout the world in humanitarian projects, in efforts to promote high moral values in society, in measures to strengthen marriage and families, and in the protection of religious freedoms.

The Prophet Joseph Smith taught (Joseph Smith, Jr. 1938. *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*. Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book, 1969, 9 July 1843, pp. 313-314):

If it has been demonstrated that I have been willing to die for a [Latter-day Saint], I am bold to declare before Heaven that I am just as ready to die in defending the rights of a Presbyterian, a Baptist, or a good man of any other denomination; for the same principle which would trample upon the rights of the Latter-day Saints would trample upon the rights of the Roman Catholics, or of any other denomination who may be unpopular and too weak to defend themselves. ...

If I esteem mankind to be in error shall I bear them down? No. I will lift them up, and in their own way too, if I cannot persuade them my way is better; and I will not seek to compel any man to believe as I do, only by the force of reasoning, for truth will cut its own way. Do you believe in Jesus Christ and the Gospel of salvation which he revealed? So do I. Christians should cease wrangling and contending with each other, and cultivate the principles of union and friendship in their midst.

In the April 1928 General Conference, Elder Orson F. Whitney said (Orson F. Whitney, "Discourse (April 1928)." In *General Conference Report of The Church of Jesus Christ of*

*Latter-day Saints, Ninety-Eighth Annual Conference*, p. 59 [pp. 56-61]. Salt Lake City, UT: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1928. <https://archive.org/details/conferencereport1928a>. [accessed October 9, 2017]:

God is using more than one people for the accomplishment of His great and marvelous work. The Latter-day Saints cannot do it all. It is too vast, too arduous for any one people. ... We have no quarrel with [other churches]. They are our partners in a certain sense.

4. 2 Nephi 10:24. See also Ephesians 2:8.
5. Mosiah 3:17. See also Acts 4:12.
6. For a summary of resemblances between the early Christian church and the restored Church of Jesus Christ, see John W. Welch, “Early Mormonism and early Christianity: Some providential similarities.” In *Window of Faith: Latter-day Saint Perspectives on World History*, edited by Roy A. Prete, Brian Q. Cannon, Richard O. Cowan, D. Mark Prescott and Craig J. Ostler, 17-38. Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 2005, <https://rsc.byu.edu/archived/window-faith-latter-day-saint-perspectives-world-history/early-mormonism-and-early> (accessed January 14, 2019).

The eminent Protestant scholar George Nickelsburg makes a commendable charge to all Christians to “build wisely, responsibly, and with love both for those within the immediate community of faith and for those within the broader community” (G. W. E. Nickelsburg, “Revealed wisdom as a criterion for inclusion and exclusion: From Jewish sectarianism to early Christianity.” In *“To See Ourselves as Others See Us”: Christians, Jews, “Others” in Late Antiquity*, edited by Jacob Neusner and Ernest S. Frerichs, p. 91 [pp. 73-91]. Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1985). However, while warmly and sincerely accepting this charge of love and mutual service in the spirit of its eleventh Article of Faith, the restored Church of Jesus Christ continues to maintain its bold and exclusive claim of continuing revelation through modern-day apostles and prophets. This is not a mere footnote to the teachings of the Church but at the very heart of the faith. Latter-day Saints realize that denying this claim would be, to use the apt metaphor of Nickelsburg, more than “simply pulling a little theological splinter that has been the source of great irritation” in the interest of promoting “a new, wiser, and more loving and ecumenical age.” Instead, it would be tantamount to performing “radical surgery on a vital organ of the faith” (*ibid.*, p. 91). In submitting to such surgery, the patient would not merely be risking his life but rather ending it.

For an excellent discussion of what the claims of the Church regarding exclusivity do and do not mean, see Robert L. Millet. “Joseph Smith and ‘the only true and living church.’” In *A Witness for the Restoration: Essays in Honor of Robert J. Matthews*, edited by Kent B. Jackson and Andrew C. Skinner, 201-31. Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 2007. <https://rsc.byu.edu/archived/selected-articles/joseph-smith-and-only-true-and-living-church>. (accessed October 9, 2017).

7. See P. Jenkins, “Letting Go,” pp. 338-344.
8. Alexander B. Morrison, *The Dawning of a Brighter Day*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book, 1990, p. 71.

9. See P. Jenkins, "Letting Go," p. 344.
10. MUSHILWA WA KABILA "had come from a village near Kundelungu Park more than 600 [kilometers] from Lubumbashi. He had traveled for the sole purpose of taking the missionary lessons and getting baptized" (email message from MINGOTYI Gilbert sent to Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, 18 February 2019 [B]).
11. MINGOTYI Gilbert noted: "The company where I work, Ruashi Mining, is currently extracting copper from the same mine where I was baptized. And the name MINGOTYI (which means 'mines') comes from that place, because one of our progenitors was among its first miners" (ibid.).

Describing his role at the very beginning of the Church in the area surrounding Lubumbashi, Gilbert wrote (email message from MINGOTYI Gilbert sent to Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, 14 February 2019):

I was honored to be a translator for several missionary couples throughout the first years of the Church as well as General Authorities who passed through the area. I have worked side-by-side with the [missionary couples] Dock, Carrier, Noot, Thomas, Shaver ...

I participated in the first missionary lessons given in Lubumbashi, Likasi, Kolwezi, and Kasumbalesa. I baptized the first members in Kolwezi, including [Elie] MONGA, currently a member of the Seventies Quorum, and when I was in Kinshasa in 2002, I gathered personal conversion histories of members of the Church that I sent to Brother [Matthew] Heiss of the [Church History] Department. I acknowledge that I played an important part in the history of the Church here in Katanga, from Lubumbashi to Kolwezi.

12. For example, in 1979 MAKANZA WA KALA KIPEPO sent a letter requesting that the Church be organized in Zaïre and received a written reply from the president of the Church, Ezra Taft Benson. On 21 November 1979, KIPEPO created, without Church authorization, a non-profit association in the name of the Church. However in 1986, when mission president R. Bay Hutchings arrived in Lubumbashi with the Docks, a senior missionary couple, KIPEPO was baptized at their hands. In spite of the differences that sometimes arose between him and the leaders of the official Church over the years, he gave a testimony on 25 September 2013 that "The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the true church in the world" and that "the Prophet T[H]OMAS S. MONSON is a prophet ... [called] to lead the Church on this earth" (MAKANZA WA KALA KIPEPO, KIPEPO MAKANZA WA KALA Papers, 1982-2013. Church History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah, USA [MS ZA-01-00074], part 4, p. 2; part 1, p. 3; part 2, p. 2).

Oscar W. McConkie, who, as a founding partner of the law firm Kirton and McConkie, carried out the initial legal work for the official recognition of the Church in the DR Congo, answered a request from Karen Elieson in about 2007 (at the direction of the mission president) for historical information relating to the DR Congo Kinshasa mission (see Karen Elieson (compiler), Kinshasa Zaire Mission History, Official Beginnings, 1986-1988, compact disc, Church History Library, Salt Lake City [R 2012210 30]. Chapter 1 is taken from McConkie's journal and chapter 2 was written by Ralph Bay Hutchings. No authors are indicated for the remaining chapters.). McConkie included a large part of his reply, in a

slightly modified form, in his privately published biography (Oscar W. McConkie, Jr. *And the Oscar Goes To ...: Glimpses from the Life of Oscar W. McConkie, Jr. As Told By Himself*. Salt Lake City, UT: Privately published, 2015).

McConkie said that in August 1979, President Spencer W. Kimball told him that he had received a letter from a Reverend M’Baki Dinganga on a letterhead featuring the full name of the Church. President Kimball asked McConkie to make a fact-finding visit to the DR Congo. McConkie learned that Reverend M’Baki had received a French copy of the Book of Mormon as a gift from Charles Didier, later a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy. M’Baki also showed him a letter from the secretary to the First Presidency dated 15 December 1971 (O. W. McConkie, *ibid.*, p. 129):

M’Baki claimed to be a Baptist minister schooled in the Theological School of the University Zaïre. ... He said he organized a congregation calling themselves The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and [that they] called themselves Mormons. He said there were 1,300 members in his congregation. ...

M’Baki said he teaches his people about “the Prophet Smith.” When I spoke to them they said that the Prophet Smith and his message [were] for the whole world and especially for “the very center of Africa.” I told them that I was just a lawyer, but I would recommend that missionaries be sent to them. They broke into applause. It was a lovely experience, particularly because I thought we had been guided to them.

On a second trip in September 1982, after relating the details of a follow-on meeting with Reverend M’Baki, McConkie wrote (O. W. McConkie, *ibid.*, p. 133):

We found a second man in Zaïre who had contacted the Church. His name is Ntumba Ngandu. He said that he had registered The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in his zone. He said that he had 25 people in his parish. I asked him how he found out about the Church. He said that he had a son studying in Belgium who had been contacted by representatives of the Church. His son had not been baptized but had spent some time associated with church services and the like. The son is now in Kinshasa. He had a letter from Elder Jacob de Jager and a French language copy of the Book of Mormon that Elder de Jager had sent to him.

13. KASONGO MULUNDA NGOY Oral History Interview, conducted 22 June 1988 by E. Dale LeBaron in the Lubumbashi DR Congo chapel, African Oral History Project, Church History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah, USA (AV 1077, 14AT0096\_00002.mp3). KASONGO was born on October 10, 1928 at the Congil (?) mission, Garinganze Evangelical Mission (See Joseph I. Parker, ed. *Interpretive Statistical Survey of the World Mission of the Christian Church: Summary and Detailed Statistics of Churches, Missionary Societies, Interpretive Articles, and Indices*. New York City, New York: International Missionary Council, 1938. [https://archive.org/details/MN41422ucmf\\_0](https://archive.org/details/MN41422ucmf_0). [accessed February 24, 2019, p. 106]), which, according to KASONGO in 1988, was later called Brothers in Christ at Garinganze. All or part of Garinganze was apparently located in “the kingdom of Msiri ..., west of Lake Bangweolo,” situated today in the upper Congo River basin in Zambia (H. Chatelaine, “England’s possessions in Africa.” *The Chatauquan: A Monthly Magazine - Required Reading for the Chatauqua Literary and Scientific Circle*, 13 (new series), no. 2 (May 1891): 164-70.

<https://archive.org/details/chautauquanvolu00circgoog>. [accessed 24 February 2019], p. 169; [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lake\\_Bangweulu](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lake_Bangweulu) [accessed 24 février 2019]).

KASONGO said that his grandmother was the first Christian in Shaba (Katanga). His grandfather was a tribal chief in north Shaba. Through the influence of his mother, the father of KASONGO became Christian and members of his family were raised as Christians.

The brother of MINGOTYI NDAYA Gilbert, MUKUBU MINGOTYI François, was called as the president of the DR Congo Kinshasa mission in 2018. After having described KASONGO MULUNDA NGOY as “the man through whom the Church came to Lubumbashi,” President MUKUBU wrote the following about KASONGO’s subsequent Church activity: “He is already deceased and at the time of his death he was active in Church and a member of the high council in the Lubumbashi district, but soon after the organization of the first branch he withdrew and some years afterward he came back and was very active until the time of his death” (email message sent to Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, 8 February 2019).

14. See KABONGO KUMWIMBA NGOMBEI [called KUMWIMBA 1 by the members of his branch because there was another KABONGO KUMWIMBA in his branch (i.e., KUMWIMBA 2)] [KABONGO KUMWIMBA NGOMBE] Oral History Interview, conducted 22 June 1988 by E. Dale LeBaron at the Lubumbashi, DR Congo chapel, African Oral History Project, Church History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah, USA (AV 1077, 14AT0094).

The identity of certain individuals with the names KABONGO and KASONGO are sometimes confused in the records of the early history of the Church in Lubumbashi and surrounding areas. MINGOTYI Gilbert confirmed the identity of the people with incomplete names that were included in an article he wrote for the Church’s *Liahona* magazine (email message of MINGOTYI Gilbert sent to Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, 18 February 2019 [A]):

The person who came to my house with the book *A Marvelous Work ...* was named KABONGO KUMWIMBA NGOMBE. He was my nephew’s elementary school teacher and came to see my parents so they could work together on behalf of my nephew. KABONGO was already attending the little study group at KASONGO MULUNDA’s place. He is the one who brought me [into the Church].

KUMWIMBA KABONGO Albert was also brought into the Church by KABONGO KUMWIMBA NGOMBE (Conversion story of Albert Kabongo Kumwimba of the Lubumbashi I Ward, Lubumbashi Stake, Kinshasa Congo (born: 28 December 1950; baptized: 1987; residence: 268 Avenue Mpolo, Lubumbashi, RDC), unpublished manuscript found in the office of the DR Congo Kinshasa mission, 2018. [English typescript]). Here is the story of his conversion:

In my childhood, I had to be baptized in the Roman Catholic Church in order to study in a Catholic school. That was an obligation. So the only baptism I had in my life before coming into the church was in the Catholic Church, though years later I started attending Protestant meetings.

It was through the power of the Holy Ghost that I came to know about the Church. I was in Bukavu, a town 1,000 kilometers away from Lubumbashi in the eastern part of Congo, where I was studying for my degree. My wife and the children remained here in Lubumbashi. While I was there I fell so

sick that I had to be taken back home to Lubumbashi. I was then admitted in a hospital and my health was getting worse and worse every coming day. It was during one of my unconscious sleeps that I had a dream or a vision. I saw a flowing stream with a blue book upon the water. I could easily read what was written on the cover: The Book of Mormon. I woke up, narrated the dream to my wife and as a conclusion told her to look after my children because I thought I had seen the book of life [Revelation 20:12] and I was going to die.

Curiously from that night, my health started getting better because I could gain one kilo on my weight each one or two days. I recovered miraculously and the vision was printed in the memories of my wife and I.

One year later, as I was taking a nap, I was awakened by my wife's voice who was calling me from the living room. She came running into the bedroom and told me that my dream had come true. She had seen with her own eyes on the TV a man who said he was a missionary and who was going to talk about the Book of Mormon at the office of the Prime Minister in Kinshasa. It was Mission President Hutchings who was being interviewed by a journalist as he came from being received by the Prime Minister [perhaps the 12 February 1986, after the meeting of President Hutchings with MOBUTU at Gbadolite]. It took one more year for me to discover the Church in Lubumbashi. That's how it happened.

One day I paid a visit to my young sister whose husband is a Protestant leader. During our chat my brother-in-law asked me why I was not considering joining a church. I answered that the Lord had revealed a church using a Book of Mormon and that was the church I was waiting for. He said, "That church is already here in Lubumbashi. There's a friend of mine who belongs to it." He gave me his friend's address. I immediately went to look for Mr. KABONGO KUMWIMBA NGOMBE; that was his name. He was not at home, so I left him a message. The next morning KABONGO came to my house. He put me in contact with the couple-missionaries. A few days later I received at my home Elder and Sister Noon, accompanied by brother MINGOTYI Gilbert, who was the interpreter.

I told them that I didn't need to be preached to because I had a testimony of the Church through a dream. They answered that according to the instructions of the Church, one needs to have the six missionary lessons before being accepted for baptism.

I was later baptized along with my wife, my daughter and my cousin, who stayed at my home by Brother KABONGO in the former copper mine of Kalukulu. After my baptism I had the assurance that the Lord had spared my life for a purpose.

It is possible that KABONGO KUMWIMBA Albert is the same person who is called KABONGO NKUMWIMBA 2 in this history: KABONGO NKUMWIMBA 2 Oral History Interview, conducted 22 June 1988 by E. Dale LeBaron in the Lubumbashi DR Congo chapel, African Oral History Project, Church History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah, USA (AV 1077\_14AT0095\_00001.mp3, AV 1077\_14AT0095\_00002.mp3, AV 1077\_14AT0096\_00001.mp3). The birth year is the same and there are no inconsistencies in their stories, but the conversion history detailed above is not found in the oral history.

Finally, there is a third conversion story that involves KABONGO KUMWIMBA NGOMBE. Two weeks after having a vision about a book that contained "the fulness of the Gospel," FOT KABEY Joseph discovered that someone who worked with him, KABONGO KUMWIMBA NGOMBE, was a branch president in the Church and afterward became a member of the

Church himself. FOT was baptized in June 1991 and became bishop of the Ruashi 1 Ward, Lubumbashi Stake, 5 October 1997 (David W. Peterson Papers, Conversion Stories, 2002-2004, folder 2, Church History Library, Salt Lake City [MS 18655]).

15. MINGOTYI NDAYA Gilbert, Gilbert N. Mingoty Conversion Story, 2002, Church History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah, USA (MS 17285). See also Mingoty, Gilbert Ndala. "Finding a gem." *New Era*, 34, June 2004, 10-11. <https://www.lds.org/new-era/2004/06/finding-a-gem?lang=eng>. (accessed January 14, 2019).
16. For the history of the BANZA couple, see Interviews with BANZA Mucioko et Régine, Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, Salt Lake City, Utah, 12 and 15 November 2018. Junior Banza had previously stated in error that the scholarship of the BANZA couple came directly from the Presbyterian Church (Junior and Annie Banza Interview, Salt Lake City, Utah, 2010 December 7, Church History Library, Salt Lake City, [OH 4740]).

According to a timeline of Church history in the DR Congo produced by the Africa Southeast Area in 2017, the first recorded baptisms of Congolese members in Europe were ZOLA Mululendo (baptized in France in 1974) and TAMBA-TAMBA Jean Jacques (senior) (baptized in Belgium in 1977). BOKOLO Mathieu K. and Astrid were baptized in Nancy, France in 1979, and LENDO-VANDAM Simon Wamande was baptized in Belgium in 1981.

ZOLA Mululendo was baptized on 8 November 1974 in Montpellier, France, where he had been studying at a theological school (Sidney F. Sager, President, Switzerland Geneva Mission, 12 May 1975, International Mission Files, box 2, fdr 7, Church History Library, Salt Lake City, [CR 74 8]). A young man with a fervent testimony with a strong member-missionary zeal, he was obliged to return to the DR Congo in early 1975 and, after that time, it appears that contact was lost with the Church. A Google search revealed only one viable candidate for ZOLA Mululendo [= ZOLA MULULENDO LUA NZAMBI?], who finished his third cycle at the University of Paris 4 in the history of religions in 1984 (<http://www.sudoc.fr/006665470> [18 February 2019]) and who appears on a faculty list for the Administration des Affaires et Sciences Économiques as scientific secretary at the Protestant University of Congo (UPC) (<https://sacrebopol.blog4ever.com/l-universite-protestante-au-congo> [18 February 2019]). An effort is underway to find and contact him, if possible.

Extracts from the history of TAMBA-TAMBA Jean Jacques (senior) are presented above. See Histoire de conversion de TAMBA-TAMBA Jean Jacques (senior), manuscript and typescript prepared by NKITABUNGI MBUYI Dieudonné, 17 February 2019.

After their baptisms in 1979, the BOKOLOs returned to Zaïre in 1990. Since their return they have made significant contributions to the Church through their service and leadership. See Mathieu K. and Astrid Bokolo Oral History Interview, conducted 16 October 2009 by Matthew K. Heiss, Church History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah, USA (OH 4354); Interview with BOKOLO Mathieu K. and Astrid by Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, Kinshasa, DR Congo, 10 February 2018.

After his baptism in Belgium on 14 February 1981, LENDO-VANDAM Simon Wamande returned to Zaïre. He was present as elders quorum president in the Limete branch for the

dedication of the country for the preaching of the Gospel in 1987 by Elder Marvin J. Ashton. He and his wife Marceline have served faithfully in many callings and leadership positions. See Interview with LENDO-VANDAM Simon Wamande and Marceline KUNANGIKA KUKALUKILA by Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, Kinshasa, DR Congo, 11 February 2018.

Before meeting the BANZAs, Todd Clement and Dickson Call — the missionaries who taught them in Switzerland and have continued as friends with them to this day — asked and were granted the opportunity to continue serving together in Geneva by their mission president. At that time, Elder Clement, who had only two months remaining to serve as a missionary, had told the president that they: “were going to baptize a family before my mission ends” (Dickson Call, *Missionary Journal*, August 1979, quoted in *A Journey of Faith: The Banza Family*, privately published, n.d., copy in the possession of Jeffrey M. Bradshaw). This, despite the fact that baptisms in the mission were infrequent. After a missionary lesson and before the family had attended church for the first time, Brother BANZA stated that he “wants to take the gospel and truth back to Africa with him” (Todd R. Clement missionary journal, 7 September 1979, *ibid.*). Elder Clement continued: “So he is really studying hard. He and his family could very well be some of the first pioneers in the African country in which they live. They are from Zaïre” (*ibid.*). After their missions, Clement and Call lost contact with the BANZAs for a several years and were unaware that the family had remained active and that the BANZA sons had been baptized. However, in May 2007, Dickson Call saw their story in a copy of the *Deseret News Church Almanac* for 2003. Dickson recounted: “I totally lost my emotions.” After contacting his former companion about it, he wrote: “We vowed to find them and make contact” (*ibid.*). The two former missionaries have remained in contact with the BANZAs ever since.

17. Kinshasa Democratic Republic of the Congo Kimbanseke Stake, Historical Information, Church Directory of Organizations and Leaders (CDOL), 23 August 2009, [cdol.lds.org](http://cdol.lds.org); Interviews with BANZA Mucioko et Régine, 12 and 15 November 2018.
18. Later, he wrote: “When I returned home after the baptism, I was lying on my back, and a warm feeling came into my chest. I cannot describe the feeling, but I can testify that it was the Holy Ghost telling me that I had made the right decision in getting baptized that day” (MBUYI NKITABUNGI. “Something touched me. . . . It was the Spirit.” In *All Are Alike Unto God*, edited by E. Dale LeBaron, p. 111 [pp. 110-115]. Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1990).
19. Dieudonné served his mission from April 1982 to October 1983. Though he had originally been called to serve for 24 months, his mission was shortened to 18 months consistent with a new policy that had been announced by the First Presidency soon after he received his call (Missionary Length of Service for Young, Single Elders Reduced to 18 Months, *Ensign*, May 1982, <https://www.lds.org/study/ensign/1982/05/news-of-the-church/missionary-length-of-service-for-young-single-elders-reduced-to-18-months?lang=eng> [accessed March 3, 2019]).

Recalling the challenge of serving an English-speaking mission, Dieudonné wrote: “As I was really limited in English. I had to memorize by heart all seven missionary discussions (the old version) plus the scriptures in English. Everybody, even the English people were really

impressed by my English. It was ... pure English, even though I couldn't understand myself what I was teaching in the beginning" (email message sent to Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, 1 March 2019). After six months, however, Dieudonné had already begun to master the language — a gift of tongues that became a blessing not only for the remainder of his mission, but also during his later service as a translator, leader, and employee of the Church.

Dieudonné's letter to Church headquarters is quoted in "A Brief History of the Church in the Democratic Republic of the Congo," *Global Histories*, history.lds.org.

See, more generally, MBUYI NKITABUNGI, *Something Touched Me*, pp. 110-115 and Interview with MBUYI NKITABUNGI Dieudonné conducted by Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, Kinshasa, DR Congo, 17 April 2018; DR Congo Celebrates 30th Anniversary of the Church, 11 July 2016, <https://www.mormonnewsroom.co.za/article/dr-congo-to-celebrate-30th-anniversary-of-the-church?imageView=congo-6.JPG> (accessed January 16, 2018); Conversion story of Mbuyi Nkitabungi, 2001-2003, Church History Library, Salt Lake City (MS 23897).

20. On 25 January 1971 President Spencer W. Kimball, then president of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, wrote to the president of the Swiss Mission and told him that the Quorum of the Twelve had determined that members of the Church in Zaïre should be "under the jurisdiction of his mission." On 13 February 1971, the president of the Swiss Mission wrote a letter to the expatriate members in Zaïre to welcome them to the mission and to call Wilfred Decoo to be group leader. See Zaïre Group Manuscript History and Historical Reports, Zaïre Group, Switzerland Mission, 25 January 1971, 1, Church History Library, Salt Lake City (LR 3607 2).
21. See Official Declaration 2, Doctrine and Covenants; K. Elieson, Kinshasa Zaïre Mission History, Introduction, p. 1.
22. The account of the official recognition of the Church is taken in large measure from O. W. McConkie, *And the Oscar*, pp. 134-146. See also K. Elieson, Kinshasa Zaïre Mission History, Chapter 1, pp. 6-14.
23. The spelling of the captain's name is uncertain. All of those interviewed who remember him pronounce it "BUENO." McConkie described the the government representative at the dinner as follows: "Another guest was a captain in the Air Force that I had met two years previous. He became acquainted with the Latter-day Saints when learning to fly at a base in the Southern States during a tour of duty in the United States. He was presently working on the personal staff of the president of Zaïre. Again I could see that the Lord was arranging circumstances so that His goal of registering His Church in Zaïre could be accomplished." He later added: "BUEM, METUSUTA and his wife and children. They were not members. He served a tour of duty in Alabama and Texas while in the Zairian Air force. He was a Captain in the Air Force and an Aide to the President of Zaïre. He had a spiritual inclination and should be the first person baptized after the Church is registered" (*ibid.*, pp. 134-135).

Another guest included "Stewart Burton and wife, Shauna and child. This young man served a mission for the Church in Chile. He looks to be about 26 or 27. He should be a big help

here.” McConkie also mentioned the presence of the BANZA couple and of NKITABUNGI MBUYI Dieudonné (who he called “Bob”) (ibid., p. 135).

Finally, Brother McConkie mentioned one other member, not at the dinner: “Michael Bowcutt gave me a letter addressed to me from KAMATANDA NGOY-NDOUBA, a lawyer. He had joined the Church while in Europe. He was then teaching law in Lubumbashi, a mining center, some 2,000 miles from Kinshasa. The purpose of the letter was to help in the registration process. The letter was to be presented to Professor KASONGO M., Secretary General in the Department of Justice, who was a colleague that had oversight in the registering of churches in Kinshasa.” (ibid.)

24. O. W. McConkie, *And the Oscar*, p. 140.

25. For a description of the role and experiences of Kennedy as a special representative of the First Presidency, see Martin Berkeley Hickman. *David Matthew Kennedy: Banker, Statesman, Churchman. Monograph Series of the David M. Kennedy Center for International Studies 1*. Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book, 1987, pp. 334-365.

According to Michael Bowcutt, David Kennedy’s visit to Kinshasa for the Church immediately followed a diplomatic trip for the United States government in Saudi Arabia (Michael Clifford Bowcutt, Cathleen Anne Sullivan Bowcutt, Michael Cannon Bowcutt et Shauna Elizabeth Bowcutt, Church in Zaïre, 1989 May 13, video interview with Barnard Stewart and Cherry Silver, Church History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah, USA [AV 1212], about 9:23). McConkie said that he flew from Kinshasa to Switzerland in order to accompany David M. Kennedy on his visit to the DR Congo. David Kennedy, the McConkies, and the Hutchings arrived in Kinshasa the night of 11 February 1986 at 10:20 PM (K. Elieson, Kinshasa Zaïre Mission History, Introduction, p. 12).

26. Gbadolite, the birthplace of MOBUTU, is situated in the north of DR Congo, not far from its border with the Central African Republic. During the 1970s, the village of 1,500 people was transformed into a “Versailles of the Jungle,” with “houses, schools, hospitals, municipal buildings, a five-star hotel, a 3,200m runway for the supersonic Concorde and — the *pièce de résistance* — three palaces of kleptocratic kitsch” (David Smith, “Where Concorde once flew: The story of President MOBUTU’s African Versailles,” *The Guardian*, 10 February 2015, <https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2015/feb/10/where-concorde-once-flew-the-story-of-president-mobutus-african-versailles> [accessed October 7, 2017]).

The complex not only served to impress friends of MOBUTU and visiting world leaders, but also increasingly offered a place of distant retreat during troubled periods of his rule. Describing his visit to Gbadolite in 1988, two years after the visit of church representatives, a journalist wrote: “At a marble-tiled terrace, voices rose from banquet tables set against a backdrop of illuminated fountains. Liveried waiters served roast quail on Limoges china and poured Loire Valley wines, properly chilled against the equatorial heat. ‘Bon appetit,’ said the 58-year-old president” (ibid.).

The palace complex is now in ruins — following a rapid pillage by the people after the fall of MOBUTU, it has now been reclaimed by the jungle.

27. Morrison, *Dawning*, p.128. Morrison also gives a short history of Zaïre and early events in Church history on pp. 140-145. Note that Morrison and McConkie both misspelled MANDUNGU as MANDUNGA, writing the full name respectively as “Mandunga BULA Niate” and “MANDUNGA BULA NYATI.” (Elsewhere “Niati” is sometimes written, legitimately, as “Nyati.”) The spelling of the name is silently corrected in McConkie’s account below.

McConkie was perhaps too enthusiastic in describing BULA as “the second man in the government.” However, BULA was certainly a political power — having served for decades as a governor, minister, strongman, and sometime spokesman for MOBUTU. BULA is perhaps best known for his prominent role in supervising arrangements the famous “Rumble in the Jungle” boxing match between Mohammed Ali and George Foreman for MOBUTU in 1974 (see [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Rumble\\_in\\_the\\_Jungle](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Rumble_in_the_Jungle) [accessed 27 December 2018]).

As to BULA’s official position during the events described in the present chapter, Elder Morrison mistakenly described him as “the Minister of Communications in the government of Zaïre” (Morrison, *Dawning*, p. 128) at the time of the meeting with MOBUTU in February 1986. However, BULA’s biography lists him as the President and Director-General of the National Guard from early 1985 (consistent with McConkie’s 22 September 1985 description) until 18 April 1986, when he was made the Minister of Foreign Affairs (<http://www.mbokamosika.com/2018/03/la-biographie-de-mandungu-bula-nyati.html> [accessed 5 December 2018]). He was not made the Minister of Communication until January 1987.

McConkie described his interactions with BULA on 22 September 1985, after Michael Bowcutt had arranged the dinner with government officials and Church members described earlier (O. W. McConkie, *And the Oscar*, pp. 134, 136-139):

[Bowcutt] had ... made appointments for me to see our attorney and then to see the Chargé [d’Affaires] in the U.S. Embassy. He had already made an appointment for me to see Mr. MANDUNGU BULA NYATI, Director of Zaïre’s Civil Guard. He is the second man in the government here and was contacted by Elder Sonenburg from Germany last spring. At that time, he expressed a willingness to help move our petition forward. It has truly been a group effort. Elder Carmack worked closely with Rose Jennings to develop this contact. I planned to continue that relationship and solicit the help of Mr. NYATI in getting the Church registered. ...

[Gittleman] told us that the Honorable MANDUNGU BULA had himself come to his law office and picked up the file and said he was taking it to the head of the Department of Justice himself. MANDUNGU BULA has indeed done more than he had promised. Gittleman says if we are to be registered in the next two years, it should happen in the next two weeks. We have an appointment with MANDUNGU BULA tomorrow morning. Gittleman says his office is very close to BULA and has worked with him on many matters since his days as Governor.

We are trying to get an appointment with Professor KASONGO, Secretary General of the Department of Justice. As it turns out, he is the official who must eventually sign our registration forms. Hopefully, I will see him tomorrow. If not, Michael and Gittleman will see him within the next few days. Michael and I then went to the U.S. Embassy and saw the Chargé [d’Affaires], John McDonald. He is a laid-back type. He seemed genuinely pleased to have the Church established

here. He will do everything he can to help us. He says if MANDUNGU BULA wants us in Zaïre, we will have no problem in getting in. ...

Michael Bowcutt and I went to Duncan, Allen & Mitchell, our attorneys, and saw Richard Gittleman, the young attorney assigned to our matter. This morning we went an hour early upon an urgent telephone request. MANDUNGU BULA NYATI, President General of Zaïre's Civil Guard and former Governor of [a] State in Zaïre, (a combination of the FBI and crack troops) had told our attorneys that he would meet us at the law office.

MANDUNGU BULA is a remarkable man. He had read about the Church. He had visited Idaho and met Governor Evans and knew that he was a Mormon. I asked if he would take us to see Professor KASONGO, Secretary General of the Department of Justice. He said, "I will take you to his boss."

He took us to the Department of Justice.

[According to Bowcutt, BULA told the Minister of Justice: "I am not a Mormon. I am an animist. But I think it would be in our interest for the Church to be established here. I've seen in the United States what they can do." This was strong encouragement to the Minister of Justice to complete the administrative formalities that had been sitting untended in his office for one or two years (Michael Clifford Bowcutt, et al., Interview [AV 1212], about 7:05).]

We then saw Mr. PHANZO LEVO, Secretary of State. On the national scale, this is a diagram of authority:

- President MOBUTU (Absolute Monarch)
- Commissioner, Minister of State (Cabinet rank in Justice Dept.)
- Secretary of State PHANZO (Like our under Secretary of State)
- Secretary General of the Department of Justice

Mr. BULA had taken our file to the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State said it had some shortcomings. It was his position that we could not register the foreign Corporation of the Presiding Bishop. We should set up a new Zaïre corporation. ...

BULA made a strong argument in our behalf. He is a mover. He doesn't care if we have to file some new papers.

The Secretary of State said we could have missionaries come to Zaïre before we were registered. He invited us to send them in. Technically, the law does not allow this, but he suggested we should send them. BULA, "You just get me the names. I'll get them the visas."

BULA is coming to the United States for a conference at Georgetown University from the 13th to the 18th of October, 1985. He is staying at the Hotel Madison in Washington, D.C. He wants me to contact him there and talk about our registration. He says he wants Mormons in Zaïre.

I liked BULA. I told him I thought he was a fit candidate for salvation. He is not a Christian. He belongs to an African Pagan faith. He says he believes in God and that God is in everything.

We all went back to BULA's office. BULA was interested in the political power of the LDS Church in the United States. He wanted to see Senator Garn while he was in Washington, D.C. Garn is Chairman of the Senate Banking and Finance Committee. He wanted to know how many Mormon Senators and members of the House of Representatives we had.

He seemed to have an exaggerated view of the Church's political clout. He asked me if President MOBUTU could come to Salt Lake City while in Washington, D.C. late in October. I told him that I thought that the Church would be pleased to fly President [M]OBUTU from Washington, D.C. to Salt Lake City and put him up at the Hotel Utah for a couple of days and let him meet one of the First Presidency and members of the Twelve Apostles of God. I said I thought the Church would do the same for Mr. BULA. I told him I thought that BYU would be pleased to have them visit its campus. He said he was going to talk to the president about it.

After we left his office and were driving our attorney back to his office, I asked him about [BULA's] unusual interest in the Church. Mr. Gittleman said his law office represents Zaïre and BULA in some matters. BULA is concerned that the United State Government has placed Zaïre on a bad debtor's list which means that Zaïre cannot borrow from U.S. banks. He thinks this is unfair. I presume that Mr. BULA wants to talk to Senator Garn about this.

28. One description of the photo said that Mr. Minani was part of the presidency of Zaïre in 1978 (Zaïre Kinshasa Mission photographs, prepared by Connie Peterson, 26 November 2002, Church History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah, USA [PH 6210]). NKITABUNGI MBUYI Dieudonné gave additional particulars (email message sent to Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, 20 January 2019):

Mr. Minani ... worked for the intelligence service for the MOBUTU presidency at the time. He had been sent to verify the place where we were holding the early meetings of the Church. Also to listen to the types of messages we promulgated, and especially to see whether in our teachings we criticized the MOBUTU regime. That was his mission. I think he made a favorable report concerning the Church. Since he invited us personally to meet their church leader from the Bima sect.

29. O. W. McConkie, *And the Oscar*, pp. 140-143.

30. MOBUTU, who (according to McConkie) "had just refused to see the U.S. undersecretary of State," opened his conversation with Kennedy with the following subjects (O. W. McConkie, Jr., *And the Oscar*, pp. 141-142):

- MOBUTU had spoken up in favor of the U.S. in an all-Africa conference when many other countries wanted to condemn the U.S. and others for shipping arms to South Africa. This cost him. He was successful in our case. The result? The African states opposed to the U.S. got \$300 million in aid. Zaïre got \$50 million.
- President Carter sent Mohammed Ali to several African states to ask them not to participate in the Moscow games. No emissary came to him. He was insulted.
- The U.S. sponsored a convention to help get investments to Zaïre. It was signed in the White House. Vice President Bush promised economic aid. At the same time, unknown to Zaïre, the U.S. Department of Treasury put Zaïre on a bad debtor's list that effectively stopped banks from loaning to Zaïre. The president found out about it from the second man at City Bank. He is very unhappy about this treatment.

Kennedy is a professional. He has experience and knows all the top people. He started the type of list objected to at Treasury. It was not to be used as it was against Zaïre. He would talk to George Schultz [then serving as U.S. Secretary of State under President Ronald Reagan] and [James] Baker [then serving as the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury] about it. He would talk to "Cap" [Caspar] Wein[b]erger [then serving as U.S. Secretary of Defense] on security matters. (The U.S. had not

paid Zaïre for sending troops to stop the Chad invasion.) It was a delight to watch David Kennedy at work.

The timing of the visit of church representatives to MOBUTU was auspicious — the Lord seems to have made use of his political ambitions to accomplish His purposes for the Church. Following a period where MOBUTU had given an “impression of an easing of political restrictions, between October 1985 and January 1986,” he had begun a new “clampdown on opposition movements” to reinforce his position (David Renton, David Seddon, and Leo Zillig, *The Congo: Plunder and Resistance*, London: Zed Books, 2007, pp. 144-145, <https://books.google.cd/books?id=IuPjmBB-gmsC> [accessed October 8, 2017]).

Since opposition to MOBUTU’s rule had come not only from political parties but also from the Catholic Church, he wanted to weaken their influence. He would further reduce their historic monopoly on Christian faith by throwing open the doors of Congo to other churches. Speaking of his attitude of welcome for evangelical preachers in 1992, David Van Reybrouck wrote: “MOBUTU was so incensed over the power of the Catholics ... that he allowed other clerics to come and spread God’s word. Divide and conquer; that went for souls, too” (David Van Reybrouck. *Congo: The Epic History of a People*. Translated from the Dutch into English by Sam Garrett. New York City: Ecco/HarperCollins, 2014, Kindle Edition, p. 489).

31. Here is a brief summary of the story of the seagulls (*Our Heritage: A Brief History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*. Salt Lake City, Utah: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1996, p. 82):

By June 1848, the [Latter-day Saint] settlers [of Salt Lake City, Utah, USA] had planted between five and six thousand acres of land, and the valley began to look green and productive. But to the Saints’ dismay, huge hordes of black crickets descended upon the crops. The settlers did everything they could. They dug trenches and turned streams of water on the crickets. They clubbed the insects with sticks and brooms and tried to burn them, but their efforts were useless. The crickets continued to come in seemingly endless numbers. Patriarch John Smith, president of the Salt Lake Stake, called for a day of fasting and prayer. Soon large flocks of seagulls appeared in the sky and descended on the crickets. Susan Noble Grant said of the experience: “To our astonishment, the gulls seemed almost ravenous while gobbling down the scrambling, hopping crickets.” The Saints watched in joy and wonderment.

Jane Manning James (an African American member of the Church and an intimate of the prophet Joseph Smith’s family who was later present for the 1848 crop failures in Utah) related as follows (James Goldberg, *The Autobiography of Jane Manning James: Seven Decades of Faith and Devotion*, 11 December 2013, <https://history.lds.org/article/jane-manning-james-life-sketch?lang=eng> [accessed January 15, 2019]):

We were in a prosperous condition — until the grasshoppers and crickets came along, carrying destruction wherever they went, laying our crops to the ground, stripping the trees of all their leaves and fruit, bringing poverty and desolation throughout this beautiful valley. It was not then as it is now. There were no trains running bringing fruits and vegetables from California or any other place. All our importing and exporting was done by the slow process of ox teams.

Oh how I suffered of cold and hunger, and the keenest of all was to hear my little ones crying for bread and I had none to give them. But in all, the Lord was with us and gave us grace and faith to stand it all.

Despite the great destruction by the crickets “many of the crops were preserved. Today the seagull is Utah’s state bird, and a monument to the seagulls stands on Temple Square” (*Church History in the Fulness of Times: (Student Manual, Religion 341-434)*. 1989. Salt Lake City, Utah: Church Educational System, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2003, p. 340). For a more comprehensive analysis of this historical incident, see William G. Hartley, “Mormons, Crickets and Gulls: A New Look at an Old Story.” *Utah Historical Quarterly* 38 (summer 1970), pp. 224-239, <http://digitallibrary.utah.gov/awweb/awarchive?type=file&item=34706> (accessed January 15, 2019).

According to Michael Bowcutt, BULA had a chance to visit Utah more than once during his political travels to the United States. BULA kept a statuette of a seagull that he had been given prominently on his desk at work (Michael Clifford Bowcutt, et al., Interview [AV 1212], about 10:00).

32. It is not known whether the reference to “Kasogi” by MOBUTU was meant to refer to BULA, to BUENO, or to some other person — or whether it was merely a typographical error on the part of McConkie.
33. Oscar McConkie described Richard Gittleman as a “young lawyer” who took over the legal affairs of the Church in the DR Congo “when his predecessor [at Duncan, Allen, and Mitchell] was transferred to the New York office.” Note that Gittleman’s name is sometimes misspelled as “Gittlemen” in histories of the Church in the DR Congo.

Early in his legal career, Gittleman spent several years early in Kinshasa (Rick Gittleman, LinkedIn Profile, <https://www.linkedin.com/in/rick-gittleman-71985349> [accessed October 8, 2017]):

Rick Gittleman’s 40-year career has cultivated a unique perspective on Africa stemming from a diverse range of experiences on the continent. He first developed an interest in international affairs when he was a student at Brown University and when he served with the Peace Corps from 1977 to 1979 in the Bas Zaïre province of Zaïre.

After graduating from law school, he joined a Washington, D.C.-based law firm and was transferred to their Kinshasa, Zaïre office in 1984, where he lived and worked for seven years.

34. This approval was received after the mission sent a letter to the Minister of Health and Social Affairs dated 6 September 1987 where President Hutchings agreed that a report of the non-profit Church-related entity would be filed each January from henceforth (Documents for Annual General Meetings (AGM) for 1986-1991, Africa Southeast Area Church History Center, Johannesburg, South Africa (ZA-01-00235), Document 87.1).

Just before his meeting with MOBUTU, McConkie of a new legal requirement for establishing the Church in the DR Congo. He attributed the answer to the problem that came to him to divine inspiration (Interview with Oscar W. and Judith Stoddard McConkie, Matthew

Heiss and Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, Salt Lake City, Utah, USA, January 8, 2019). He wrote of his experience as follows (O. W. McConkie, *And the Oscar*, p. 140):

I met with our lawyer Richard Gittleman this morning at 6:30 a.m. He told me that the Justice Department was adding another requirement. They claimed it was an applicable law that had been left off the original list of requirements. They required that the Church statutes must be amended to allow all effective members of the association to vote for the chairman. I explained that we were an authoritarian church and preferred the statutes as written. He said we must comply with the added requirement of the Justice Department. I then explained that we could comply with that requirement because the law of common consent in the Church requires that a presiding officer may not preside over a congregation without the consent of the congregation [see Exodus 24:3; Numbers 27:18-19; Acts 15:25; D&C 20:65-66; 26:2; 28:13; 104:21]. I asked Attorney Gittleman to draft a separate simple instrument to be attached to the already filed documents to show that we complied with the law. I then told him I would have the officers of the association at his office at 8:00 a.m. the following morning for signing.

David M. Kennedy articulated the following minimal requirements for the Church to operate in a given nation (quoted in M. B. Hickman, *David Matthew Kennedy*, pp. 340-341):

So long as the government permits me to attend church, so long as it permits me to get on my knees in prayer, so long as it permits me to baptize for the remission of sins, so long as it permits me to partake of the Lord's Supper, and to obey the commandments of the Lord, so long as the government does not force me to commit crime, so long as I am not required to live separately from my wife and children, I can live as a Latter-day Saint within that political system.

35. Interview with MUTOMBO KASUANGI Thierry conducted by Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, Kinshasa, DR Congo, 8 February 2018.
36. L. C. SHAMBUYI BIAYA KATEMBWE, *Brève Histoire & Événements Importants, É.J.C.S.D.J. — 30 ans en RD Congo*, 2016, pp. 2-3. Manuscript prepared for the Thirtieth Anniversary Celebration of the Church in the DR Congo, June 2016.
37. Photographs and baptismal certificate are included as part of Histoire de conversion de TAMBA-TAMBA Jean Jacques (senior), manuscript and typescript prepared by NKITABUNGI MBUYI Dieudonné, 17 February 2019.
38. Included as part of Histoire de conversion de TAMBA-TAMBA Jean Jacques (senior), manuscript and typescript prepared by NKITABUNGI MBUYI Dieudonné, 17 February 2019. A letter to the International Mission from Jean Jacques' good friend and good shepherd Joseph Tricot in January was apparently the catalyst for the February letter sent to TAMBA-TAMBA. See Joseph Tricot, 4 January 1984, International Mission Files, box 2, fdr 12, Church History Library, Salt Lake City, (CR 74 8). Speaking fondly of Brother Tricot more than forty years later, TAMBA-TAMBA wrote:

Today he is over 80 years old. We still communicate ... on the phone. He remains a great friend. He's the one who baptized me.

According to NKITABUNGI MBUYI Dieudonné, TAMBA-TAMBA was not available at the time the documents for recognition of the Church were signed. He wrote (email message to Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, 19 February 2019):

He came once attending Church meeting in the begining at my parents home. After that he disappeared. The Hutchings contacted him a few weeks after the association documents were signed by President Hutchings, the BANZAs and myself.

39. Contradictory reports have been given about whether the first official Church meeting was held in the living room or the carport of the MBUYI home. NKITABUNGI MBUYI Dieudonné affirms (email message from NKITABUNGI MBUYI Dieudonné sent to Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, 12 February 2019):

The first meeting of the Church was held in the living room. There were 25 people [who attended]. It was with the second meeting that we began to hold Sunday meetings outside in the interior parking area of the property.

40. *Young Men*. Left to right: unknown, BANZA Junior (currently living in Salt Lake City, Utah, USA), MUHEMEDY Tommy, MUHEMEDY Sam (currently living in Paris, France), MBUYI NKITABUNGI Dieudonné, NKITABUNGI Tonton (now deceased), BANZA Philippe.

*Primary*. Left to right, front row: MUYUMBA Gege, unknown girl, MUHEMEDY Mireille (face partly hidden, deceased), unknown girl, unknown boy, unknown boy, unknown boy (face mostly hidden), unknown boy, MUHEMEDY David, MUHEMEDY Grace. Left to right, back row: unknown, KALUWA Nephi, BASENGA MUTOMBO Miche, unknown girl, MUHEMEDY Patience (wife of TSHIMANGA), MAWANGI daughter, NKITABUNGI Nadine, MUHEMEDY Mamie, MAWANGI daughter.

*Young Women*. MWAMBAKANA daughter, NKITABUNGI Nadine, unknown, MUHEMEDY Mamie (living in Goma), MBUYI NKITABUNGI Dieudonné, unknown, KABANGA Chantale, MWAMBAKANA daughter, unknown.

41. With respect to translation at early Church meetings, Elder Morrison wrote (A. B. Morrison, *Dawning*, p. 128):

The official language of Zaire is French, spoken by most men but by only a minority of women, who, as in other [sub-Saharan] African countries, are in general less educated than their male counterparts. More than two hundred local languages are spoken. At a recent sacrament meeting in Kinshasa, the capital, for example, I spoke in French, which the brethren present could understand, and was simulataneously translated into [Lingala], a local tongue, for the benefit of the sisters. In the south of Zaire, a variation of Swahili (Shaba-swahili) is widely used. It differs somewhat from the Swahili spoken in eastern Africa (Morrison, *Dawning*, Deseret Book ebook edition, p. 142).

Since the time of Elder Morrison's visit, French literacy has increased among both men and women, and simultaneous translation during meetings is less common. The Book of Mormon has been translated into the three other national languages of the DR Congo: Lingala, Swahili, and Tshiluba:

42. A. B. Morrison, *Dawning*, p. 130.
43. A. B. Morrison, *Dawning*, pp. 69-70.
44. Joseph Smith, Jr. "Church History," *Times and Seasons*, 3:9 (45), 1 March 1842, p. 709; Joseph Smith, Jr. 1902-1932. *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Documentary*

*History*). 7 vols. Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book, 1978, Wentworth Letter, March 1842, 4:540; Joseph Smith, Jr., Karen Lynn Davidson, David J. Whittaker, Mark Ashurst-McGee, and Richard L. Jensen. *Joseph Smith Histories, 1832-1844. The Joseph Smith Papers, Histories 1*, eds. Dean C. Jessee, Ronald K. Esplin and Richard Lyman Bushman. Salt Lake City, UT: The Church Historian's Press, 2012, "Church History," 1 March 1842, p. 500, <https://josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/church-history-1-march-1842/4> (accessed January 14, 2019).

45. *Hymns of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*. Salt Lake City, UT: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1985, #21.

46. A. B. Morrison, *Dawning*, pp. 70-71.

Michael Bowcutt said that Elder Ashton did not read the prayer — that it was given spontaneously (Michael Clifford Bowcutt, et al., Interview [AV 1212], about 13:00). Katie Bowcutt said that the senior missionary couples Eagan and Forsgren were present for the prayer (Michael Clifford Bowcutt, et al., Interview [AV 1212], about 14:35).

47. A. B. Morrison, *Dawning*, p. 70.

48. K. Elieson, *Kinshasa Zaïre Mission History*, chapter 2, p. 6.

49. A. B. Morrison, *Dawning*, pp. 68, 73-74.

50. <https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/Zaire93D.pdf>, p. 83 (accessed December 27, 2018).

51. L'Église de Jésus-Christ des Saints des Derniers Jours sur la télévision National Congolaise RTNC, 4 July 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SbIVF-2S2gI> (accessed 25 March 2019).

52. See DR Congo Celebrates 30th Anniversary of the Church.



*The construction of a Holy Temple cannot take place until the Lord reveals to his prophet that there is a righteous people prepared and ready for these sacred places.*

— Elder Neil L. Andersen  
Groundbreaking Ceremonies  
12 February 2016

# PREPARING THE GROUND

*When he hath made plain the face [of his ground, may the plowman]  
... cast in the ... wheat and the ... barley and the rye in their place. ...  
His God doth instruct him to discretion, and doth teach him.  
(Isaiah 28:25-26)*

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# First Trip of the Congolese Saints to the Johannesburg Temple

KOLA TUSEY KAPUMBA Daniel

As I investigated the Church, I felt the strong desire to become a member. When I would enter the church building, I would usually go to the Relief Society room where there were photographs of the temples of the Church attached to the walls. I started to think about these buildings frequently. I pondered their relationship to temples in ancient times. I was very interested in the fact that the Lord Himself visited His House and that His Spirit truly could be found in the temple.

After my baptism, it was the desire of my heart to go to the temple and be sealed to my wife. One evening, I said to her: “We will go to the temple. I have vowed in my heart that before I leave this world every saving ordinance will be accomplished.”

I did not hide my feelings on the subject and shared them with some of my brothers and sisters. One day I expressed my desire to go to the temple in a letter to Carol B. Kmetzsch, an American sister who had written her testimony in a copy of the Book of Mormon that I had received from Elder and Sister Shepherd as an investigator in 1988. She replied: “Brother Kola, the Lord will arrange things for you. He will help you to go to the nearest temple with your wife. I know that this will happen.” After I read this, I felt an assurance that my desire would come to pass. Although I did not know how it would happen, I knew the Lord would help us.

Another time, I wrote to Brother KAZADI Big MUSUNGAYI, hoping he could strengthen and encourage me, and help me to keep the Spirit because of his own experience. I hoped that he could give me counsel about finding some way I could go to the temple. For me, the temple had become a symbol of my membership in the Church.

In a letter dated September 5, 1990 written from Provo, Utah, he sent me a reply that brought me great joy. He wrote: “You shouldn’t worry too much about it,



Church leaders in DR Congo gather at the Masina District center on Avenue Luka prior to their departure for South Africa, 30 July 1996. *Left to right:* President and Sister KOLA TUSEY K. Daniel (Masina District President); President and Sister TSHIMWANGA Mutatshi (Kinshasa District President); President BOKOLO Mathieu (1st Counselor, mission presidency); President and Sister SHAMBUYI Biaya (former counselor, mission presidency); President and Sister MUKADI (Kolwezi District President); President and Sister MULIELE WA MUSHITI Jacques (Ngaliema District President); President and Sister NGOY Eyasu (former counselor, mission presidency); President and Sister Roberto Mario Tavella (Zaire Mission President) with baby MUKADI; President and Sister KAVUALA Mubalamate Clément (Lubumbashi District President); President and Sister IYOMI Bolembo Joseph (former counselor, mission presidency); BAENDE Essengongola (executive secretary, mission)

for our Heavenly Father has a plan for you. If you exercise faith and keep the commandments, He will bless you with the desires of your heart. Rather than trying to rush to the temple right now, it is better for you to focus on living the Gospel fully. The covenants that you will make with the Lord there must be kept throughout your life or else you will be under condemnation. I know that you are sufficiently mature in the Gospel. Everything will happen when the time is right.”

Five years later, in 1996, Elder F. David Stanley, first counselor in the Africa Area Presidency, presided at our district conference. During our interview, he asked: “Why don’t you think about going to the temple?” His question was a great comfort — to hear him speak about the promise for which I’d waited so long.

## First Temple Trip



Members gather after having received their patriarchal blessings, endowments, and sealings. *Front:* SHAMBUYI couple; TSHIMWANGA couple. *Second row:* BOKOLO couple; MUKADI couple; MULIELE couple; KOLA couple. *Rear:* temple worker; KAVUALA couple; BAENDE couple; temple worker; IYOMI couple.

Enthusiastically, I told him I'd love to go, but that finding the means to pay for the trip was a problem. "You will go to the temple," he said, "if you have the desire to go. The means have now been given to you. All the district presidents and all those who have served as counselors in the mission presidency can go, too." This wonderful news filled me with unspeakable emotion.

On 30 July 1996, ten couples (and a little girl belonging to President MUKADI of the Kolwezi district) were ready to go. My wife, Thérèse, was expecting a baby. It was an impressive and spiritually strong group. Before leaving, we assembled at the chapel that served as a district center for Masina. All of us were converts. We were grateful for the time our mission president, Roberto M. Tavella, took to prepare us, to counsel us, and to help us update our pedigree charts and family group sheets. I have precious memories of him having taken his time to train those of us in this new district for which the Lord had given me the keys. He was humble and kind.

I knew that God had answered the prayers of me and my wife. We looked at one another without speaking, our hearts full of joy. Here we were, soon to leave

directly for the temple. Yes! After six years of hoping, and wondering how we could travel to this holy place — to enter within and perform ordinances in the House of the Lord. We knew that we had tried to be faithful and we were sure that we had made the right choice. Here, at last, the happiness of knowing the path that leads to salvation!

The evening we arrived in the city of Johannesburg, where the first temple of Africa had been built, our thoughts were centered on Christ. We thought about how we would be received in His Holy House, the place where “Holiness to the Lord” is written on the façade. What joy we felt in having this marvelous event suddenly



President and Sister KOLA arrive at the Vistaero Hotel in Johannesburg

take place in our lives, in having felt His acceptance of our presence in this sacred edifice.

We were not worried about being in the city itself. We were fortunate to stay near the temple that night, at the Vistaero Hotel. We could easily see the angel Moroni attached to temple steeple from the room of Brother BOKOLO Mathieu. I had so much wanted to see the temple and its grounds with my own eyes, built before we had the privilege of entering within. It was impressive to see it directly in front of me and I felt the love of God touch my my heart and my whole self. The reality of the temple was before me, for which I had had to wait so long in absolute humility.

When we arrived at the temple in the afternoon, all was calm. We entered an underground parking lot and no one said a word about the fact that everything we had been waiting for would soon be accomplished. The air was cool and filled with reverence as we were welcomed by the temple missionaries. The unique welcome I received for the first time made me feel as if we were in the presence of angels in the celestial world. The temple is truly a piece of heaven on earth. The Spirit testified with such an influence and I knew that the Lord lived and visited here.

## First Temple Trip

After the session, we felt a peace that entirely filled our bodies, and our spirits rejoiced. We were grateful to know that the Gospel is true. The memories we have of the temple are the most remarkable of our entire life. We carried them in our hearts. We will never forget them and will live each day of our life in accordance with the patriarchal blessings given by C. Malcolm Young and the ordinances we received. As I prayed, I had this phrase in my mind: “My [heart] hath [not] turned out of the way’ [see Job 31:7]. All this has been brought to pass, while not forgetting for a single second that I was blessed according to His will.”

We realized we were leaving a spiritual schoolhouse. We had the impression that one day the Lord would build His Holy House closer to us. There we would go to worship Him and to continue to help our family who had not yet known the saving truths of the Gospel.

Upon our return, we kept the spirit of the temple with us. I pondered about the situation of my wife, who was about to give birth. A secret prayer was answered in behalf of the child, and she was given a name that corresponded to that blessing: “Victorine.” [It may be that she was the first child “born in the covenant” in the DR Congo.]

I know that the temple is the House of God. Each time I think about it, I close my eyes to relive the spirit of the temple and I am overwhelmed with its magnificence. As I do so, my regard passes from this finite world to the world of the infinite. Peace cradles my soul with every word, song, or prayer and my spirit is lifted. I am filled with joy to think that through the restoration of the fulness of the true Gospel accomplished by Joseph Smith we are allowed to cross the threshold of this Most Holy House.

### Note

Adapted from KOLA TUSEY KAPUMBA Daniel “The First DR Congo Temple Trip,” 2018. Manuscript in possession of Jeffrey M. Bradshaw.



Johannesburg Temple



## Temple Announcement by President Thomas S. Monson

The building of temples continues uninterrupted, brothers and sisters. Today it is my privilege to announce several new temples.

First, may I mention that no Church-built facility is more important than a temple. Temples are places where relationships are sealed together to last through the eternities. We are grateful for all the many temples across the world and for the blessing they are in the lives of our members.

I am ... pleased to announce new temples in the following locations: Barranquilla, Columbia; Durban, South Africa; Kinshasa in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; and Star Valley, Wyoming. In addition, we are moving forward on our plans for a temple to be built in Paris, France.

Details of these temples will be provided in the future as site and other necessary approvals are obtained.

— General Conference, 1 October 2011



## Groundbreaking Talk and Prayer of Elder Neil L. Andersen

**Groundbreaking Ceremony of the DR Congo Kinshasa Temple.  
Held on 12 February 2016, exactly thirty years after the verbal accord of the  
President of the Republic that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints could  
begin operating throughout the DR Congo.**

*Transcription based on the video recording of the groundbreaking ceremony.  
Translated from the French and used with the permission of Elder Andersen.*

My dear brothers and sisters and friends of the Church, I thank you very much for being with us today, this important day. For a long time my wife and I have wanted to come here to Kinshasa to get to know you. We arrived last night and today. For us and for you, our dream will be fulfilled. We hope to shake hands with your families and to get to know you better after this meeting.

I bring you the love of President Thomas S. Monson, the First Presidency, and the Quorum of the Twelve. I'm very grateful to President Monson for having asked my wife Kathy and me to be here for this important day.



Today is a sacred day. A holy day, a day that will be long remembered in the annals of the heavens and by the Saints of God here in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

We know that angels often have the chance to rejoice with us on earth during important events. Sometimes they join with us in singing praises to God, and surely we had a celestial choir today. Thank you. I believe that angels rejoice with us when we begin construction of a House of the Lord.

The construction of a Holy Temple cannot take place until the Lord reveals to His prophet that there is a righteous people prepared and ready for these sacred places. The construction of this temple means that the restored Kingdom of God will be established in Kinshasa and throughout the Democratic Republic of the Congo until the Lord returns to the earth with a covenant people here to welcome Him when He comes.

I believe that even though the first temple is a sacred occasion, it will not be the last temple in this country. And there will be many — not only in this country, but there will even be additional temples here in Kinshasa.



This Holy House will also be a blessing for the country and the surrounding people, whether they be members or non-members of the Church. It will be a light on your hills and the glory of God will be upon it.

The peoples of Africa and of the Democratic Republic of the Congo are spiritual. They trust in God and pray to Him. Our Heavenly Father loves his sons and daughters here and He will answer their prayers.

The restored Church has been established for a relatively short time in this beautiful country. The missionaries have only been here thirty years, but the hand of the Lord is at work and we now have more than forty thousand members.

We are here today and early tomorrow morning we leave for a visit to Kananga and Mbuji-Mayi and other places where the Church is moving forward.

I loved hearing the expressions of faith given by some of the Saints today. May I share with you in my talk today the witness of three generations?

The first is that of Antoine KASUANGI MUTOMBO. I will read his testimony:

I was baptized on June 22, 1986. In 1988, I had a dream and in this dream I saw a house whose cleanliness and brightness was beyond all description, for I had never seen such a house in all my life — neither in my country, nor elsewhere.



Elder Neil L. Andersen with Jason KALOMBO MUTOMBO

The next day I went to see the missionary couple to talk to them about my dream and the couple confirmed that such a house existed and that it is the temple, a holy place.

The announcement of the construction of the Kinshasa temple filled my heart with joy and gratitude because it was the fulfillment and the answer of my prayers.

Next, the testimony of Thiéry KASUANGI MUTOMBO, the son of Antoine and Marie:

I had heard about the temple since I was a child, during Family Home Evenings at home, and since that time. I have done everything in my power to never lose sight of the true meaning of that Holy House and to be worthy of it.

I know that it's the only place where generations that have lived, that live, and that will live receive the blessings of being sealed together for eternity. I love the temple and I know that having it close by will help me and my family continue forward with joy toward eternity.

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And that is going to be the testimony of many families here.

And finally, those of Jason and Blessing, the grandchildren of Antoine and Marie.  
Jason first:

I love the temple, for I know that it is the House of the Lord.

I am sealed to my parents.

I testify that for me the temple is a commitment to stay worthy so I can live with my family forever.

I am happy to know that I am a child of the covenant and my prayer is that I can endure to the end in Christ.

And, last, from Blessing MUTOMBO MUAMBA, the granddaughter of Antoine and Marie:

I know that the temple is the House of God. The best place in the world, where we can feel the love of God for His children. A place where He blesses us and teaches us from on high.

I love the temple. I will go to the temple when I am bigger.

I love the Lord and I love the temple. It's His House.

Thank you very much for these testimonies. I want to thank the MUTOMBO family and all of you for your beautiful commitment to the Gospel.

The construction of a temple is a witness of the eternity of the soul. God, our Heavenly Father, lives and He has a plan to bless His sons and daughters throughout all generations. His beloved son Jesus Christ makes this plan possible, thanks to His life, His atoning sacrifice, His crucifixion on the cross, and His resurrection the third day. Life after death is as certain as the sun that rises each day in Kinshasa. If we believe in Him and are faithful to His teachings, we will live eternally in the Celestial Kingdom.

There are good people, husbands and wives, devoted Christians in many religious denominations. We respect good and virtuous individuals in the world wherever they are and we recognize that there are many things we can learn from them. However, we humbly and unapologetically declare that the power of the priesthood and the keys of authority have been restored to the earth and that they are exercised in the Holy House of the Lord.

Jesus said to Peter: “I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven” (Matthew 16:19). Speaking with humility but also with truth and honesty we proclaim that the authority to bind on earth and in heaven, an authority that was taken away during the first centuries that followed the death of the apostles, has been restored to the earth. Jesus Christ Himself; Peter, James, and John; John the Baptist; Elijah; Elias; and Moses returned to the earth as resurrected beings and restored the sacred power that will be used in the House of the Lord.

For the next two years, we will be watching the construction of the temple. Only the best materials will be used: woods, metals, and fabrics will come from this country and from elsewhere in the world to adorn the House of the Lord. Those who work on the temple will not rush, for if they do not do their best, they will be asked to start over. We are looking for near perfection in materials and workmanship.

May this be an example in our lives. Let us consecrate ourselves during these months of construction to better pattern our personalities and our souls so that they will be ready to enter into the sacred temple.

Let us be better spouses, better children. Let us be more faithful in following the Savior.

Jesus said: “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me” (Matthew 16:24). Jesus said: “If ye love me, keep my commandments” (John 14:15). Let us be honest in the paying of tithes and offerings. Let us be kind and generous with those around us. Let us pray with humility and real intent. If we do our best and if those who build this beautiful temple do their best, we will see each other again some months from now, prepared and worthy in every way to enter into the House of the Lord.

My brothers and sisters, I would like to witness in the spirit of honesty, sincerity, but with certainty that Jesus is the Christ, the Savior of the World. He lives. He is resurrected. I witness that the priesthood has been restored, that we are members of the Church of Jesus Christ, and that when He comes all those who have ever lived on the earth will confess that Jesus is the Christ. This is certain. It's as certain as this very day.

Now, I invite you to bow your heads and close your eyes and I am going to pray for the construction of this House.

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Our beloved Heavenly Father—

We love Thee, Heavenly Father, and we love Thy Son.

We thank Thee for the marvelous blessing of Thy Holy House that will be built here in this place in Kinshasa.

We thank Thee for the restoration of thy Gospel on earth and that by the goodness of Thy sons and daughters here in the Democratic Republic of the Congo as well as through the blessing of Thy missionaries, Thy Kingdom has been restored in this beautiful country.

Please bless this country, Father, and its leaders and all the friends that are here with us that they might experience peace and prosperity.

Our Father, please bless this sacred soil. Protect it. Bless those who will work here that they may feel the importance of what they do and that they may have the additional help they need to do their best work.

Father, bless us as members so that we might prepare ourselves and our families. Help us to draw nearer to Thee. Help us to search out the members of our family, both living and dead, who need the blessings of the temple.

Help us to purify our lives.

Help us to share the Gospel with others.

Again, we express our love to Thee and we ask for Thy blessings.

In the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

## Groundbreaking



PREPARING

*Today is a sacred day. A holy day, a day that will be long remembered in the annals of the heavens and by the Saints of God here in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.*

— Elder Neil L. Andersen  
Groundbreaking Ceremonies  
12 February 2016





*For the next two years, we will be watching the construction of the temple. ... We are looking for near perfection in materials and workmanship.*

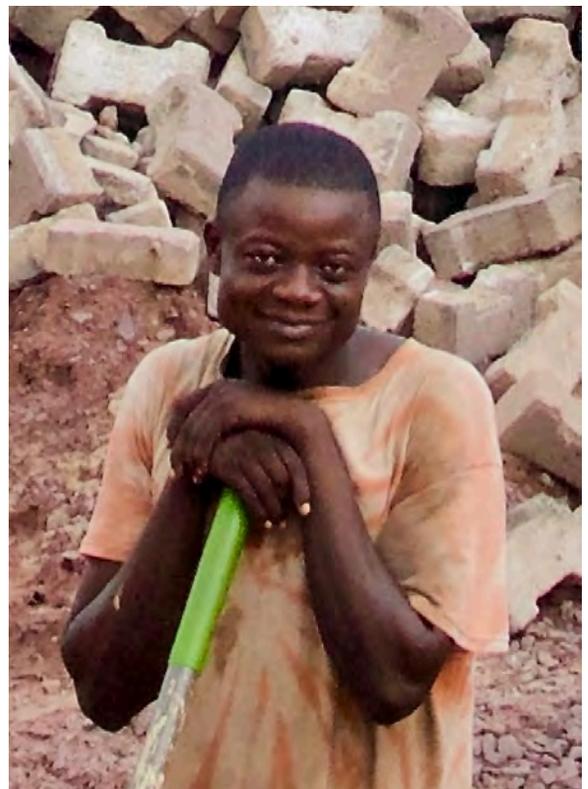
— Elder Neil L. Andersen  
Groundbreaking Ceremony  
12 February 2016

# CONSTRUCTION

*All the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord. (Ephesians 2:21)*

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# Building the Temple



CONSTRUCTION





# Building the Temple



# The Finished Temple



CONSTRUCTION

# The Finished Temple



CONSTRUCTION





CONSTRUCTION



# The Finished Temple

CONSTRUCTION





CONSTRUCTION







## Endnote

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- Aimé K. Ngoy
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Family of Delphin Matandu Nzita after a conference of the Kinshasa stake, 14 May 2017. Front, left to right: Myster Matundu Mukaya (son), Christophe Matundu Lukombo (son), and Shadary Matundu Moza (daughter). Second row, left to right: Divine Matundu Mbelu (daughter), Eugenio Matundu Nzita (son), Aline Suliya Matundu (niece), Divin Matundu Lutete (son), and Achille Kimvoluka Sivi (nephew who began serving a full-time mission in Lubumbashi, DR Congo a few months later). Third row, left to right: Orlina Odia (sister-in-law), Brother Delphin (father), Glodie Yala Matundu (daughter). Inset: Eugenie Ntumba Mukaya (mother).

*No Church-built facility is more important than a temple. Temples are places where relationships are sealed together to last through the eternities. We are grateful ... for the blessing [of temples] in the lives of our members.*

— Président Thomas S. Monson  
 General Conference  
 1 October 2011

# WHY BUILD TEMPLES?

*This is the beginning of the blessing which shall be poured out upon the heads of my people. (D&C 110:10)*

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Jean-Jacques Tissot (1836-1902): Reconstruction of Herod's Temple.

## Why Build Temples?

### A Commandment with Blessings

**F**ROM the days of the Old Testament, the Lord has commanded His people to build temples — sacred structures where He could teach, guide, and bless them. For example, the Lord told the Israelites to build a portable tabernacle that would be their temple while they traveled in the wilderness (see Exodus 26-27; 40:35). Additional Old Testament references to temples are found in 2 Chronicles 5:1-14; 7:1-2 (Temple of Solomon) and Ezra 3:1-13; 6:3 (Temple of Zerubbabel).

When Jesus Christ was on the earth, the Jerusalem temple was known as the Temple of Herod. Jesus was often found in this temple (e.g., Luke 2:40-49; Matthew 21:10-14). After the crucifixion, Jesus' apostles continued to worship and teach in the temple (e.g., Acts 2:46; 3:1-11; 5:20-25, 42; 21:26; 22:17).

Eventually, after the rejection and deaths of the apostles, there were no temples authorized by the Lord on the earth for many centuries. When the Church of Jesus Christ was restored in the early 1800s, the Lord again commanded His people to build temples (see D&C 88:119; see also D&C 95). The earliest temples of the restored Church were built in Ohio, Illinois, and eventually in Utah. Today, the Church has more than 200 temples operating or under construction around the world. Regardless of the place or time period, temples are the most sacred place on earth — a place where earth and heaven meet and where we feel close to our Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ.



Walter Rane (1949-): Construction of the Kirtland, Ohio temple.

## What Happens in the Temple?

Following the “great and last sacrifice” of Jesus Christ, the practice of animal sacrifice in temples by male priests and Levites came to an end (Hebrews 9:23-28; Alma 34:13). Instead, modern temple worshippers, both men and women, are commanded to come to Christ in humility and faith through the personal sacrifice of “a broken heart and a contrite spirit” (Psalms 34:18; 51:17; 3 Nephi 9:19-20; D&C 59:8). Within the temple we are taught, we make covenants, and we are promised blessings. We receive ordinances that enable us to live in the presence of God.

**Endowment.** One ordinance we receive in the temple is the endowment. The word “endowment” means “gift” or “bestowal.” As part of this ordinance, we are taught about the purpose of life, the mission and Atonement of Jesus Christ, and Heavenly Father’s plan for His children. We gain a glimpse of what it will be like to live in His presence as we feel the peaceful atmosphere of the temple.

**Sealing.** Another temple ordinance is “sealing,” in which husbands and wives are sealed to each other and children are sealed to their parents to create family ties that can last forever. This means that if we are faithful to our covenants, our family relationships will continue for eternity. People sometimes also refer to the sealing of husbands and wives as “temple marriage” or “eternal marriage.”



Walkway leading to the entrance of the DR Congo Kinshasa Temple.

**Ordinances for the deceased.** In addition to receiving these ordinances for ourselves, we can receive them for our deceased ancestors. In this way, every person who has died without receiving essential ordinances such as baptism, confirmation, the endowment, and sealing will have the opportunity to accept or reject these ordinances in the period between death and resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:29; 1 Peter 3:18-20; 4:6; D&C 138:30-34).

## Entering the Temple

**Open House and dedication.** After a temple is built or renovated, the public is invited to a temple open house. During the open house, visitors watch a short video about the purpose of temples and then are invited to walk through the temple.

When the open house period is over, the temple is closed to the public, and several meetings are held to dedicate the temple to the Lord. Only faithful Church members ages eight and older are allowed to attend the dedication meetings. In these meetings, prayers are offered, instructional addresses are given, and hymns are sung in celebration of the new temple.

**Regular temple operation.** After being dedicated, temples are open for use by Church members. The temples are not open on Sundays, allowing members to



Reception desk at the entry of the Kinshasa Temple.

attend their local Church meetings. To enter the temple, Church members (1) must have reached at least the year in which they will turn twelve years-old, and (2) must have a current temple recommend. In addition, adults who wish to participate in endowment and sealing ordinances must have been members of the Church for at least a year. To obtain a recommend, Church members schedule an interview with their bishop or branch president and their stake or district president. These Church leaders ask questions to learn if the member has a testimony, keeps the commandments, supports Church leaders, obeys the Word of Wisdom, pays tithing, and is honest.

**Dressed in white.** Church members who enter the temple go to dressing rooms to change from their everyday clothes into white clothing before participating in temple services — a simple white robe for women and a white shirt and pants for men. This change of clothing serves as a reminder that patrons are temporarily leaving the world behind and entering a holy place. White clothing symbolizes purity, while being dressed alike in the temple creates a sense of unity and equality. Once people are endowed, they have the blessing of wearing the temple garment throughout their lives. The temple garment, worn as underclothing, provides a constant reminder of the covenants made in the temple (see Exodus 28:1-3; Numbers 15:37-41). Wearing the garment is an outward expression of an inward commitment to follow the Savior, Jesus Christ.



Baptistry.

## Blessings of the Temple

In addition to the closeness we feel to the Lord when we are in the temple, we can continue to receive blessings even after we have returned to our everyday lives. Attending the temple illuminates our perspective and brings peace to the heart. President Thomas S. Monson described temple blessings as follows:

As we go to the holy house, as we remember the covenants we make therein, we will be able to bear every trial and overcome each temptation. The temple provides purpose for our lives. It brings peace to our souls—not the peace provided by men but the peace promised by the Son of God when He said, “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you” (John 14:27).

President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, explained additional blessings of attending the temple:

When members of the Church are troubled or when crucial decisions weigh heavily upon their minds, it is a common thing for them to go to the temple. It is a good place to take our cares. In the temple we can receive spiritual perspective. There, during the time of the temple service, we are “out of the world.”

Sometimes our minds are so beset with problems, and there are so many things clamoring for attention at once that we just cannot think clearly and see clearly. At the temple the dust of distraction seems to settle out, the fog and the haze seem



Instruction room.

to lift, and we can ‘see’ things that we were not able to see before and find a way through our troubles that we had not previously known.

## Inside the Temple

**Structure.** The temple is a peaceful, sacred place, set apart from the cares and turmoil of the world. All areas of the temple are beautifully and carefully maintained to preserve a spirit of order and reverence. The temple has many rooms to accomplish the ordinances performed there.

**Baptistry.** Jesus taught that no one can enter the kingdom of God without baptism (John 3:5). Because many people do not have the opportunity to be baptized in this life, the baptismal fonts in temples are used by the living to be baptized in behalf of those who have died (1 Corinthians 15:29). The baptismal font rests on the backs of twelve oxen, following a tradition dating back to the Temple of Solomon that is described in the Old Testament (1 Kings 7:25, 44). The oxen represent the twelve tribes of ancient Israel.

**Instruction room.** Within instruction rooms an overview is given of God’s plan for His children. Latter-day Saints learn of their premortal and mortal lives, the creation of the world and the Fall of man, the central role of Jesus Christ as the Redeemer of all God’s children, and the blessings they can receive in the next life.



Celestial room.



Sealing room.

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**Celestial room.** The celestial room symbolizes the exalted and peaceful state that all may achieve through living the gospel of Jesus Christ. This room represents the contentment, inner harmony, and peace available to eternal families in the presence of Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ.

**Sealing room.** In a sealing room, a bride and bridegroom are married not only for this life but also for eternity (1 Corinthians 11:11).

The temple lifts us, exalts us, stands as a beacon for all to see, and points us toward celestial glory.

### **Endnote**

The text in this chapter is adapted from these links:

- <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/temples/> (accessed 24 March 2019)
- <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/topics/garments?lang=eng> (accessed 24 March 2019).
- <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/ensign/2019/03/young-adults/shielded-by-covenants?lang=eng> (accessed 24 March 2019).

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