



A PROPOSAL TO DEVELOP
MZUZU DIOCESE 'LAUDATO SI'
CENTRE

OCTOBER 2023

THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF MZUZU

VISION

To be a family of God's Kingdom transformed by the Gospel of Christ.

MISSION

To proclaim the gospel through pastoral care and social economic development so that people's lives are transformed to be good disciples of Jesus Christ and stewards of God's creation.

- (i) Dignity of the human person
- (ii) Equity and inclusiveness
- (iii) Transparency and accountability
- (iv) Love and compassion with preferential option for the poor
- (v) Stewardship of and for God's creation
- (vi) Dignity of work and rights of workers

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he City of Mzuzu now surrounds the 192 acres which were left to Mzuzu Diocese by the early missionaries. The 192 acres is leased land on a term of 99 years. And this is also the centre of Mzuzu Diocese where the Bishop resides and where all the Diocesan Offices are housed. This large 192 acre green space/zone is surrounded on one side by an impoverished high density area of Mzuzu City and on another side by a more well to do lower density area. And so on one side there is encroachment and on the other side there is the dumping of waste. This „green area“ is strategically placed to serve both the rich and the poor alike.

I feel the 2015 Laudato Si document by Pope Francis has opened up huge vistas for our understanding of salvation by Jesus Christ. Salvation touches not only people but also the environment. We people and the environment are one. This is a new teaching. This changes everything. In Mzuzu Diocese we are trying to bring this „new understanding“ to the fore in all our teaching and preaching and action. This gift of 192 green acres by the early missionaries presents us with a unique opportunity of putting flesh on the message of Laudato Si. Putting this flesh on means bringing about a mindset change. It entails leaving old habits and old ways of doing things behind. It means embracing new methods of smart climate change agriculture departing from chemical fertilizers and chemical pesticides and taking on new methods of natural composting and natural manure making. It means making more economical use of fossil fuels, planting a variety of trees and promoting natural forests. It means bringing a new awareness and appreciation of the natural environment and teaching school children the inherent value contained in nature.

In 2018 we instituted an „Environment and Ecology Committee“ (EEC) in Mzuzu Diocese to explore ways we could put flesh on the message of Laudato Si. In the beginning, with the help of a small charity in Ireland called LIFE (Light into Farming Enterprise), a „Model Farming Training Centre“ was established which (through the services of CADECOM and funded by Misesan Cara and LIFE) has trained Trainer of Trainers (TOTs) in all parishes of Mzuzu Diocese to care for the environment and promote integral ecology. We soon realised that the 192 acres where this Model Farming Training Centre is situated has far greater potential to promote environmental issues and integral ecology. The following pages take up this task of making the most of the 192 acres to flesh out Laudato Si for the benefit of all peoples of all persuasions within the borders of Mzuzu Diocese and even beyond.

With Prayers and Best Wishes

Rt. Reverend John A. Ryan

(Servant and Bishop of the Diocese of Mzuzu)

ABSTRACT

The Diocese intends to implement a

Laudato Si project that will equip the young generation with knowledge of the environment and also encourage them to become active in its care and preservation. This is in line with Pope Francis released environmental encyclical, „Laudato Si“, or “Praised Be” from the words of St. Francis of Assisi’s Canticle to Brother Sun and Sister Moon.”

In order to further this dream, we need to protect the green zone we have and preserve it for the future. We want to utilise this blessing for the good of the community in various ways.

(1) Protecting the Green zone - **287,861**

Euro (82,000 Euros Received & Used)

(2) Ecology Education Facility - **112,000 Euro** (30,000 available) and Furnishing the Ecology Education Facility - **7,000 Euro**

(3) Hostel to accommodate trainees and visitors to the Facility – **120,000 Euro** (80,000 Euros received & Used)

(4) Recruitment and training of an educator for the Ecology Education Centre- **3,500 Euro**

(5) Development of Organic Garden and Orchard - **11,000 Euro** (Covered)

(6) Development of a mini sports ground for the children - **51,000 Euro, (2000 Euros available).**

(7) Development of a Recreation Area -**10,000 Euro** (committed to by St John Brothers)

So we are appealing for help from all of you who are reading this document. Please choose to help us so that we can protect the area and get the Ecology education facility built.

Should you be able to help you can contact us through our Bishop Rt. Rev. John Ryan.

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INTRODUCTION

Overview of Malawi

Malawi, officially known as the Republic of Malawi, is a landlocked country in south-eastern Africa. It is bordered by Mozambique on the east and southwest, by Tanzania on the north and northeast, and by Zambia on the west and northwest. Three regions make up Malawi – Northern, Central and Southern. Lilongwe City in central Malawi is the national and administrative capital. Blantyre City is the capital of the Southern Region and the country's commercial and manufacturing hub. Mzuzu City is the capital of the Northern Region.

Overview of Mzuzu City

Mzuzu is the largest urban centre in the Northern Region and the third largest City in Malawi after Lilongwe and Blantyre respectively. It is the Main Center of Government Administration, Industry, Commerce, and Services distribution for the whole Northern Region comprising the six districts of Mzimba, Nkhata Bay, Rumphi, Karonga, Likoma and Chitipa.

Mzuzu developed first around the Commonwealth Development Corporation's Tung oil estate in 1947. At this stage it was composed largely of workers' housing and associated services for the estate. The City was developed since the 1950s as an Administrative and Service Center. With the transfer of Regional Administration from Mzimba between the late 1950s and early 1960s, the settlement developed rapidly. It was designated a Township in 1964, a Municipality in 1980 and finally elevated to City status in 1985.

Mzuzu is the fastest growing City in Malawi with a population of 221,272 in 2018 and an annual growth rate of 5.4 %, which is way higher than the national growth rate of 2.9 % (NSO, Population Census 2018 Report). Population projections predict a figure of 405,000 by 2025. In addition, over 50,000 commuters use commercial and social services and the public infrastructure. The population for the near hinterland is around 363,000. Continuing at the current growth rate,

Mzuzu could expect a population of up to 522,000 in 2030. With the rapid growth, it is estimated that more than 60% of the population are squatters due to the inadequate supply of low-cost houses and serviced plots.

The City has been extended to its current size of 143.81 sq.km based on the USP revision of 1995 and the boundaries for the Planning Area were Gazetted only in 2010. In addition to that, housing is the largest land use covering approx. 38.6 sq.km.

Historical Background

The Diocese of Mzuzu has come a long way since the time it began as the Prefecture Apostolic of Northern Malawi which was erected on 18th May 1947. The Diocese of Mzuzu was created on 17th January 1961, covering the whole of the Northern Region and part of the Central Region. In 2010 Karonga Diocese was created and took the northern districts of Karonga and Chitipa. The Catholic Diocese of Mzuzu now is one of the eight Catholic Dioceses in Malawi covering the districts of Mzimba, Nkhatabay, parts of Rumphi, Likoma, parts of Kasungu North and Nkhotakota North.

The diocese shares borders with the Archdiocese of Lilongwe to the south and Karonga Diocese to the north. It covers an area of 21,000 square kilometres with a population of over 700,000 Catholics. Fr Jean Louis Jobidon became the first Bishop elect of the Catholic Diocese of Diocese. He was consecrated on 22nd May 1961 and on the same day, he took canonical possession of the Episcopal See of the Diocese. Together with Mgr. St Denis they had the foresight to begin planting trees in the land that was bought for the Diocese adjacent to the Bishop's residence.

After the term of Bishop Jobidon, Monsignor, John Vincent Roche of St Patricks Missionary Society was appointed the Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese by the Holy See. He became the head of the Diocese on 10th November, 1987. He enthusiastically continued encouraging concern



Msgr St Denis (Left) and Bishop Jobidon(Right) who began the planting of the forest

for the environment and promoted the use of the Dam area for retreats and recreational days. So, in the area of concern for the earth, both of these administrators were ahead of their time.

On 6th May 1995, Bishop Joseph Mukasa Zuza took canonical possession of the Episcopal See of the Diocese until his untimely death on 15th January, 2015. During the time that he served the diocese the trees that had been planted continued to flourish and grow into a wonderful forest area. Poaching began around that time and he instituted various measures to protect the forest including engaging the police at times of theft of trees. His visitors used to comment on the blessing he was enjoying from the beautiful forest and the shade that it offered. The earlier construction of the dams also proved a great resource providing water to the locality.

On 26th April, 2016, Pope Francis named Fr. John Alphonsus Ryan, also a member of the St Patrick's Society, as Bishop elect of the Diocese of Mzuzu. On 27th August, 2016, he was consecrated 3rd Bishop of the Diocese. On the same day he took the canonical possession of the Vacant Episcopal See of the Diocese. After he settled into his leadership role, he passionately embraced the vision and teaching of Laudato Si and in 2018 he set up an ecology and environment committee. This committee was tasked with getting the message of Laudato Si out into the diocese so as to be embraced by local communities and followed up by practical actions such as the planting of trees and the promotion of climate smart agriculture. This led to the establishment of the Model Farming Training Centre which was funded by an Irish charity called Light into Farming Enterprise (LIFE).



Bishop John in some of communities encouraging planting of trees

The Legacy Left by the Early Missionaries

As has already been mentioned, our Bishop's house and curia offices sit on 192 acres of land (77.46 Hectares) with a perimeter of 3,919.44 meters. The founders of Mzuzu Diocese bought this land and trees were planted. Some years later they dug two dams in this forest to supply the area with water. Ducks and fish were introduced into the dams.

These efforts of the early Missionaries turned the plot into a good source of natural water and an attractive environment where a lot of natural wild life thrived. The refreshing breeze and attractive surroundings became a beauty to behold – a legacy left behind by the first missionaries from the 1940's through to the 80's, mainly the Missionaries of Africa.



Overview of some forest area and dams

BUILDING ON OUR HERITAGE

From 1953, Mzuzu began to grow as a center of population and more government offices were established. As the city started to develop, the Diocese responded to the need for education and health care for the increasing population, leading to the establishment of Marymount Girls Secondary School, Mzuzu Technical College, St. Johns Hospital and the secretariate of Mzuzu Diocese. In this locality, on the southern side of the city, the present green zone began to be formed. Many trees were planted, two dams were dug, the Bishop's house (Later named Marcel House), and some staff houses were built and more recently a new parish called St. Albert the Great was established. The forest area has also for many years been a source of herbs, berries and fruits for the local community.

Recent developments

When the pine and blue gum trees that were planted by the missionaries came to maturity, the Diocese began a timber project which was aimed at milling the trees. This was a source of revenue for the diocese (e.g. Enabling it to procure vehicles for use in pastoral work). In order to maintain the valuable legacy, a reforestation project was also embarked upon. The aim of this was to replace the harvested blue gum and pine trees with indigenous trees. The Diocese has also been implementing other forest-related management activities such as the establishment of fire breaks, pruning of trees, weeding and inspecting the growth rate of the planted trees.



A worker pruning the new trees

The Diocese has also worked to improve the water system. In the past, Marcel House -the Bishop's residence - was supplied with water from the dam. In order to promote renewable energy, The Diocese has drilled a borehole and installed a water pump which is powered by solar energy. This venture has guaranteed a supply of fresh, clean and potable water for the Bishop's residence and the Diocesan Offices.

The idea of drilling a borehole arose due to the high rate of pollution caused by trespassers at the dam site in recent years. In order to reduce reliance on the official Electricity Supply of Malawi (ESCOM) and to promote renewable energy, the Diocese has also installed a solar powered back-up system at the Bishop's house and the Secretariate.

In 2019, the Diocese with support from Ireland through a group called Light into Farming Enterprise (LIFE), built within the Forest a Model Farming Training Centre aimed at education in sustainable farming. To date, a total of 180 people have graduated from this Centre. They are made up of 10 people from each parish of the Diocese who have now become Trainers of Trainers (TOTs) and have gone on to share their knowledge within



Solar Panels used for pumping water



Top - Solar Powered Batteries, inverters and solar pannels (bottom) at the Diocese Secretariate

their local communities. The areas in which they trained (and are now engaged in passing to others) are - forest management, manure making, organic farming, tree nursery establishment, village savings and loans, energy cooking stoves, vertical garden, bee keeping and modern methods of sustainable farming. Given the success of these present trainings, the plan is to bring in more people from the parishes and repeat the training cycle.



Model Farming Training Centre

Model Farming Training Centre

The Model Farming Training Centre (built by LIFE - Light into Farming Enterprise, Ireland) has also received support from Misesan Cara (Ireland), Electric Aid (Ireland), and the Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Mzuzu. Through Misesan Cara the Diocese, in conjunction with the Catholic Development Commission in Malawi (CADECOM), has been able to train TOTs under the Sustainable Management of Land and Forest Resource Project.

Twice, CADECOM has won the Innovation Award by Misesan Cara. The names of the projects include - Alternative Growing Techniques for 150 Smallholder farmers through a solar powered irrigation system (2020). This project was implemented in conjunction with the Ungweru Organisation. The second Innovation project was

Energy Saving through Production of Smokeless Briquettes in Northern Malawi (December 2021 to November 2022). With Support from Electric Aid, CADECOM implemented the Installation of a solar powered Pump and Overhead tank at the Model Farm Training Centre. Through this project the Model Farming Training Centre now has access to potable water for household consumption and also for watering crops.

LIFE (Ireland) continues to support the Model Farming Training Centre as it plans to build a hostel to accommodate the trainees while they are at the Model Farming Training Centre. The same hostel will be used to accommodate visitors or groups who wish to spend time at the Laudato Si Centre (The Green Zone).



Pine nursery seedlings at Model Farming Training Centre

THE CHALLENGES

The Catholic Diocese of Mzuzu has been making efforts to preserve this green zone in the city of Mzuzu. While we have been developing Laudato Si projects within it, there are a number of factors that are frustrating our efforts. Some of our current challenges are:

Dumping of waste

Mzuzu City Council, in collaboration with some individuals, is responsible for solid waste management. Presently, the Council, with just 2 refuse trucks and a labour force of 86 manages to collect about ten percent (10%) of the refuse generated in the City and this is mainly in the industrial and commercial areas. The service is affected by the frequent break-down of its vehicles.

Garbage collection in residential sites is done intermittently and in most areas the service is non-existent except for some private waste management operators limited to a few areas. Throughout the city, piles of refuse are a common sight and are not only an eyesore, but also sources of pollution as well as being breeding grounds for all sorts of dirt and vermin. This leads to a constant search by people for places to dump their waste and unfortunately one of the areas they have become accustomed to use is the locality that we are trying to preserve. Because this forest area is exposed and unprotected, many people have easy access to it and a lot of dumping takes place at night.

The result is that our forest is rapidly becoming a dumping ground where garbage like plastics and glass that do not decompose are thrown away and become a threat to health and hygiene. Other patches of forest area have been affected by bush fires which sadly destroy the natural biodiversity of the forest. Over the years we have been lobbying with the city council to get involved

in proper waste management but unfortunately the political will is not there to address the problem.

Theft of Trees.

The Catholic Diocese of Mzuzu has registered a lot of stealing of trees within the forest, especially pine and blue gum, but also indigenous varieties in public woodlots within the city.

This activity usually takes place at night. People have been observed collecting big loads of pine logs, heavy loads of firewood and pit sawing as evidenced by the Mzuzu City Council Urban Profile that was presented to stakeholders on 26 November, 2021.

Increased population has led to a high rate of deforestation, especially in the area that we are trying to preserve. 85 % of city residents use solid fuel in the form of charcoal and firewood as their main source of energy. The main use of wood in Mzuzu is firewood for cooking and burning bricks, as most of the people cannot afford other sources of energy. In addition, an ever-increasing population puts pressure on land and forest resources.

The infrastructure development as a result of timber demand is also a challenge in Mzuzu city. Deforestation has caused land degradation resulting in soil erosion. This has led to an



One of the dumping sites within this green zone - Such dumping is prevalent throughout the city

increase in soil infertility with the consequent drying up of streams and decrease in water levels in the two dams that are within the forest.

The Diocese has registered an increase in the theft of newly planted trees especially during the rainy season. The thieves usually target the soldier trees, umbrella trees and the pine trees due to their high value.

Other forms of theft suffered by the diocese have been those of electric cables, water pipes and flood lights at the Model Farming Training Centre. Due to its location, the Centre has experienced very high losses of materials which have affected the level of security and the proper running of the facility.

Damage to Property

Due to increased levels of investment in its infrastructure, the Diocese has become an even more lucrative target for those who wish to steal or just cause harm.

Over the past number of years, the diocese has registered an increase in property damage. Some examples are - Removal of supporting poles around Marcel house garden; vandalism of Model Farming Training Centre fence and the pump house; digging across the property by communities in search of roots for firewood.



Vandalism at Model Farming Training Centre

Trespassing people and vehicles

To ease accessibility to various locations, the

residents of Mzuzu have developed foot paths and road networks to move from one side of the city to the other through the private property of the Catholic Diocese of Mzuzu. These have led to a huge increase in noise pollution and disturbance of privacy. The trespassing has also contributed to an increase in the level of theft as diocesan property is very exposed.

Pollution around the dam

Because of its scenic beauty and the attraction of fresh air, many communities surrounding the city have begun turning the area surrounding the dam into a recreation park. Thus, many events such as parties take place with increasing frequency without any permission from the diocese.

Consequences of such events have been – the proliferation of waste due to the unnecessary disposal of paper, plastic, left overs and bottles with no thought for the environment nor for the safety of either residents or other users of the amenities; severe upset and discomfort of the Bishop, his staff and other residents due to noise pollution.

Alcohol Abuse/Violence

An increasing number of sites within the property are being used by young people to gather for the purposes of drinking alcohol and taking drugs.

These activities have led to an increase in the level of violence within the green zone, with the result that recently the police authorities have become involved leading to the arrest of some offenders.

Encroachment of land and overnight dwellings

Since the Diocese has been engaged in the harvesting of trees, there has been an increase in the amount of encroachment on diocesan property over the past decades.

Another development has been the increase in overnight dwelling through the construction of toilets and temporary structures across the boundaries.



The overview of the original boundary of the green zone and the encroachment that has happened

FACING THE CHALLENGES

Way forward / Responding to the challenges

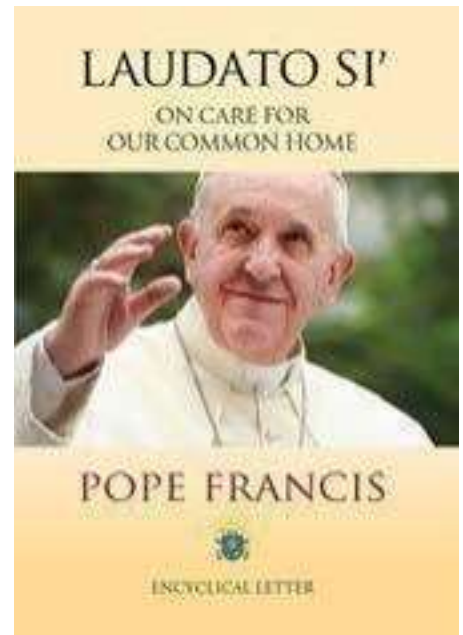
The Diocesan ecology and environmental committee were given the task of evaluating the situation and coming up with proposals as to how this large forested area can be protected for the benefit of the communities of Mzuzu. The committee set about its work and very quickly saw that the vision of developing the green zone as an area for environmental awareness and education was threatened by the activities that were happening within the zone. These threats have been outlined in the previous chapter. It is the conclusion of the committee that the following priority areas need to be addressed so that the green zone is protected and is used for the benefit of all.

Build a wall to secure and protect the green zone as an ecology environment centre

For many years now, we have been engaging the local community in effort for them to gain something from the green zone area and sought their cooperation to protect the perimeter of the green zone. Meetings were held with the community; small pieces of land along the boundary were rented to them in exchange they were paying a small amount of money as a token of appreciation. The hope was this farmed area would act as a fire breaker and we would be engaging the local community in a positive way. Sadly, as time went by people started to claim these plots and some encroached and started to build on them. We realized that unless we take some action the green zone would be eroded and we could lose it to township dwellings. This would have meant to lose the Mzuzu south forest which is located within the city. So, the bishop set up a group, to explore what can be done to protect the forest the last green zone on this side of the city. Their conclusion was that we have no option left but to build a wall. Our only motive to build a wall is to protect the forest and establish within it the Ecology Education Centre for future generations.

Establishment of an Ecology Education Facility to run a programme designed to promote awareness on environmental concerns for future generations.

The Diocese intends to implement an ecology project that will equip the young generation with knowledge of the environment and also encourage them to become active in its care and preservation.



In the year 2015, Pope Francis released his environmental encyclical, *Laudato Si'*, or "Praised Be" from the words of St. Francis of Assisi's Canticle to Brother Sun and Sister Moon." In his encyclical, the Holy Father stated that: "If the simple fact of being human moves people

to care for the environment of which they are a part, Christians in their turn realize that their



responsibility within creation, and their duty towards nature and the Creator, are an essential part of their faith.” Pope Francis urges that “all of us can cooperate as instruments of God for the care of creation, each according to his or her own culture, experience, involvements and talents.

This recent call from Pope Francis in *Laudato Si* has made many pastoral workers think about what needs to be done to care for our earth. His encyclical has inspired our Diocese to look at what we can do. Along with other groupings in the world we decided to dedicate the land that we have in the city of Mzuzu for ecological and environmental purposes. The first project was sustainable management of land and resources supported by the Model Farming Training Centre and *Misean Cara*. This project set about restoring the ecosystem within the forested area by an education program to stop the cutting of trees and introducing the people to the efficient use of energy cooking stoves etc. To combat deforestation a major replanting initiative was undertaken within the threatened area and to date 97,756 trees have been planted. All efforts are being made to plant indigenous trees.

Our Education Ecology program within the *Laudato Si* Centre will work with schools and parishes to further the education of their students, staff and our parishioners on the most important environmental issues. The educators will be trained to educate others on environmental and ecological issues. They will take the students from various schools from Mzuzu township

and surrounding areas into our forest area for a practical informative experience. This will begin with a walk through the forested area, where along the route there will be standing stones which outline the Universe Story. This is also known as The Cosmic Walk. While on this walk the educator accompanying, as well as explaining the universe story, will inform them about the species of the vegetation and the wild life that is all around them in the forest. The walk will conclude with an audio-visual input and conversations at the Education Ecology Facility. It is hoped that these discussions with the young people will awaken in them the desire to form Green Teams/Clubs from which they will raise awareness in their local communities on care of the earth. In doing this they will be supported by the Catholic Diocese of Mzuzu’s pastoral workers. After this input they will continue to the dam site where again there will be an explanation of the diversity of life within the waters. Following this, they will conclude the education experience on the environment with a visit to our organic garden and orchard (This is being developed at the moment). The facility will also in its programmes bring in expert speakers and invite the local communities to come and hear from them on the concerns that face us in our present times on climate change etc. Some of these speakers will be drawn from academic institutions that are within the city such as Mzuzu University and Livingstonia University. This centre will also work with priests, brothers, catechists and sisters providing them with material to support their preaching so that they can constantly give input to the people they encounter.



Education Ecology Facility to be constructed

Development of Organic Garden and Orchard



Graders at work at the organic garden

As part of our commitment to getting rid of pesticides and chemicals fertilisers that have been in use for so many years, we have set aside a piece of land for organic gardening only. The Bishop has encouraged us to also set aside another piece of land for an organic orchard. This initiative is being funded and supported by the community that lives with the Bishop at Marcel House. As mentioned earlier, those taking the education tour will pass through this garden in order to be made aware of the importance of organic gardening.

This garden and orchard will be initially a part of the education tour and will slowly be built up to a commercial level giving the local community the opportunity to purchase organically grown fruits and vegetables. Any income from this will be used towards the salary of the gardeners.

Responding to the recreation needs of the community



Proposed min sports ground with football, volley ball, netball and basket ball courts

The Diocese has designated land to develop a mini sports ground and a recreation area. The mini sports ground will address the needs of the children from the community by providing a football pitch, netball court and basketball court, all of which will be constructed on land gifted by the diocese.

The recreation area will be located just off Mzuzu/ Lilongwe M1 road and will be easily accessible to the people who wish to enjoy it. Within the recreation area there will also be a Cosmic Walk. This will be developed as an educational walk that will build the capacity of the communities to understand the story of creation, human development and the ever-growing need for all of us to tread lightly on the earth.

A proposed Recreation Park in front of Jobidon House on next page

Introducing recycling ideas that help people to use waste

Due to the increase in population the demand for settlement space in the urban Mzuzu area has increased hugely. This has led to overcrowded communities with no room for the dumping of such common waste as sawdust, kitchen waste, maize husk, pampers, broken bottles and glass. Because of the increase in dumping of waste, the diocese intends to set up programmes to train communities in the recycling of waste. Currently CADECOM, with support from Miseen Cara (Ireland) is pioneering a project entitled Energy Saving through Production of Smokeless Briquettes in Northern Malawi.



A proposed Recreation Park in front of Jobidon House

Other recycling ideas will be researched with a view to further training and community involvement.

Through the project, the Diocese believes we can change the mindset of the targeted marginalised communities in Northern Malawi and create an awareness of alternative sources of energy. The project will improve the livelihoods of participating communities by improving access to cheap and environmentally friendly smokeless briquettes. This in the short and long run will address the causes of land and forest degradation and help

to restore an ecosystem in Mzuzu Diocese. By engaging in this activity, community members will be able to clean up their surroundings as the

production of the briquettes will use most of sawdust, maize cobs, rice husks, wood waste and other dry waste material. Overall, the project will also reduce the pressure that is currently being put on the forest resources such as firewood and charcoal burning. This will also help us contribute to the reduction of the effects of climate change that Malawi is experiencing at this time.



Maria Mpata from Choma community learning the skill of producing smokeless briquettes from local materials

RAISING THE FUNDS – A DAUNTING TASK

The goal and vision that the Catholic Diocese of Mzuzu has for the Ecology Education Centre can only be developed with your support. As you can see we are committed to future generations being able to understand the importance of caring for the earth and protecting the environment. In order to further this dream, we need to protect the green zone we have and preserve it for the future. As outlined already, we want to utilise this blessing for the good of the community in various ways.

1. Protecting the Green zone

Due to the huge growth in population, the demand for fuel wood, timber and space to dispose of garbage has resulted in a massive increase in the misuse of the green zone. To counteract this, the Project intends to protect this green zone for the community. So, we need to construct a perimeter fence to protect our boundary.

The Perimeter wall is estimated to cost **287,861 Euro**, 82,000 Euro has been received. From Rev John Ryan, CRS and Diocese of Cologne has contributed this. The raised funds have enabled the project to commence the following activities; Designing and building of the perimeter wall, Designing of the Ecology Education facility, Designing of recreation Centre, Design of public park.

Development of the project video, Development of project graphics which include but not limited to existing structures and proposed structures and Procurement of Cement Block Making machine.

2. Ecology Education Facility

The designated green zone that we seek to protect, will include an Ecology Education Facility which will focus on educating our young people on environmental issues. The Ecology Education Facility shall consist of a hall capable of sitting 196 persons, room, kitchen and washrooms. This building is estimated approximately **€112,000**. an additional **€7,000** will be needed for furnishing.

During recent visit from our partner from Spain they indicated an interest in supporting the building of this facility. Currently St Patrick's Missionaries has contributed **€30,000**.

3. Recruitment and training of an educator for the Ecology Education Centre

The Diocese will employ a graduate who has studied in

the area of Biodiversity and Ecological issues. The Person will be sensitized on the vision and goals of the Laudato Si Centre and will have a specific job description. The annual salary for this person will be **3,500 Euro**.

4. Hostel to accommodate trainees for Model Farming Training Centre and visitors to the Facility

The total cost of this hostel is estimated at **Euro120,000** (unfurnished). LIFE already have **80,000 Euro** available and continue to raise funds for this essential facility which will enable trainees to the Model Farming Training Centre to be comfortably accommodated for extended periods as well as accommodating groups who wish to spend time at the Ecology Education Centre (Green Zone).

5. Development of Organic Garden and Orchard

Reclaiming the land so that the soil is of organic standard, setting up the fence to secure the garden and purchasing of inputs such as seeds, seedlings, poly tunnels etc. This activity has been undertaken by the diocese and it is costed at **11,000 Euro**.

6. Development of a mini sports ground for the children

The Catholic Diocese of Mzuzu,

as a way of giving back to the community, intends to develop an area suitable for sports that will accommodate the following activities for the disadvantaged children nearby - Football Pitch, Basketball and Volley Ball Courts. The playing ground will be constructed close to the community for ease of access and usage. This facility will also promote interaction with the youth and children in the surrounding community in which we serve. This mini sports ground is estimated at 51,000 Euro this will include, football pitch, basketball cot, netball cot, tennis cot, and a volleyball cot plus a space of stands for the youth to be sitting on. Currently **(€2,000)** is available from Fr. Tommy Conroy & his school in Ireland.

7. Development of a Recreation Area

Due to the limited availability of public parks in Mzuzu City, young people in the community have resorted to gathering at the dam site. The Diocese would like to develop the public park as a way of giving them a safe place for recreation. This public park will have a Cosmic Walk, Summer Huts and Landscape Gardens.

This public facility is estimated at **10,000 Euro**. the St John Brothers have committed to this.

CONCLUSION

As the ecology and environment committee of Mzuzu Diocese, we have looked at our needs and in conversation with our Bishop, have decided that it is a priority to educate young people about the need to take care of the earth, our common home. Given the recent COP 2021 gathering in Glasgow, UK and all the information that flowed from it, coupled with our Churches call to care for the earth, inspired by the great encyclical Laudato Si, we are committing ourselves to building this Ecology Education Centre.

To protect what we have and bring about our vision of an Laudato Si Centre in our forested green zone area, we are appealing to the leaders of all the religious groups working in our diocese and to our parish communities and to any other partners who will see fit to support us.

We are appealing for help from all of you who are reading this document. Please choose to help so that we protect the area by building the Perimeter Fence, the Ecology Education Facility, the Hostel, the Recreation Area etc. Should you be able to help you can contact us through the Bishop.

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Signed by The Ecology Environment Committee of Mzuzu Diocese.

Approved and Supported by The Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Mzuzu, Rt Rev John A Ryan.