



Father Martial RAMAMONJISOA

(1973 – 2013)

*Died 23 July 2013, in Toamasina (Madagascar)
aged 40, with 14 years of Religious Profession.*

“It is no longer I who live, but Christ living in me” (Gal 2:20). This was the motto of Father Martial. In baptism, he was united with Christ, dead and risen (cf. Rom 6:3-4), but he wanted to live out even more this consecration, and so he committed himself to the religious life in the Company of Mary, in order to follow Christ, Wisdom Incarnate, and to proclaim the Good News, especially to the poor for the glory of God.

Who was Father Martial Ramamonjisoa? Born on 19 January 1973 in Fandriana, into a family of seven children, of whom he was the fourth, he had his primary and secondary education from the Daughters of Wisdom and his college education from the Brothers of the Sacred Heart in Fandriana. It was in frequenting the services of the parish of Fandriana that his priestly vocation began. Afterwards he entered the diocesan minor seminary in Fianarantsoa (1990-1992). It was there that he asked to join the Company of Mary.

Father Martial was part of the group of five pre-postulants of 1993-1994 in the Foyer Nazareth Salamazay Toamasina. After this first experience he was admitted to the postulancy in the Foyer Montfort Andrasoro in Antananarivo to study philosophy for three years at the Major Seminary of St Peter and Paul in Ambatoroka (1994-1997). At the end of his philosophy studies, he made his novitiate in Antampon'Ankatso Antananarivo. He made his first vows on 8 September 1998. He continued his theological formation for three years in the Major Seminary of St. Theresa of the Infant Jesus in Faliarivo in the capital. After his perpetual profession, he was ordained deacon on 2 February 2003 in the parish of Andrasoro and was ordained priest on 2 August 2003. Two of his friends became priests and two Montfortian Brothers in the Company of Mary.

After his ordination he was sent to work in the bush in the district of Antsiramandroso for nine years (2003-2012). In October 2012 he was appointed curate of the Sacred Heart parish in the town of Tamatave and chaplain to the Children of Mary of the diocese of Toamasina. He hesitated, but in the end he obeyed the request of the Bishop. But on 23 July 2013, he died suddenly at the age of 40, with 15 years of religious profession and ten years of priesthood.

Father Martial was a smiling, humble and sociable man, but very timid; he did not like to make himself noticed. He was a sensitive man but capable of serving other people and of animating the group life, especially of the young and the children. He did not like giving long homilies, for, in his opinion, they should be short, attractive and expressing what was essential. His hobbies were playing the guitar and listening to music. He was a fervent Montfortian, and was part of the spirituality commission working at a deepening of Montfortian spirituality. He played a part in the translation of the writings of Montfort into Malagasy. A responsible priest who was close to the people, he chose a simple lifestyle like the people of his district when he was working in Antsiramandroso, and preferred to go

about on foot or on a bicycle. He did not ask for a car, and it was only towards the end of his mission that he accepted a motor-cycle. He was able to animate the Christians to support their priests, with the consequence that he had rice stocks sufficient for the whole year. A man of faith and prayer, he was never without his Rosary, his breviary and his crucifix. "Where is my crucifix?" he asked before his departure for the Father's house.