

NEWSLETTER VOL. 2 No. 3
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TSSF GRADUATE STUDENTS IN THE U.S.



Sister Alexine (Mary) Munteh TSSF
B.A., M.A., PsyD. Candidate

Sister Alexine (Mary Munteh) TSSF received her B.A. degree in Individualized Learning with concentrations in Religious Studies and Psychology from Viterbo University in 2007 and her Masters degree in Counseling Psychology from Adler School of Professional Psychology in Chicago in 2011.

Having successfully passed her qualifying exams for the Doctor of Psychology degree, she is now writing her dissertation with hopes for its completion in May 2013. Her work examines the stigma of mental health issues in Cameroonian families. Sister Theodosia Baki TSSF was instrumental in assisting with the collection of data in Cameroon's private schools.

A Pre-doctoral internship consists of one year of focused training in clinical work and related services. Sister Alexine describes the process she recently experienced for the internship/residency application. It will start on August 1, 2013 and is planned to cover

2000 hours, working five days a week and putting in between 40 and 50 hours per week.

Students completing final years in psychology programs across the United States and Canada go through application, interview, and match processes. Fortunately, I matched with an outstanding student counseling services at the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, NC. This training program provides services to the entire school population of over 29,000. Its special strengths include suicide prevention, assisting students on academic probation, and working with diverse populations and clinical issues.

Come with me through the journey that led to my successful match. The internship preparation meetings started in April of 2012 with information meetings. After my first meeting I remembered coming home with a headache from information overload and thinking to myself: "if I can get through this process successfully, nothing will ever be too difficult for me to do." And then I proceeded as I do with many of my big projects, do a little bit of the work every day, every week, every month, etc.

The most growth-filled part of the process came with writing four 500-word essays that are part of the application package. The first essay was like an **autobiographical** note: It demanded that I go deep into my inner resources to find foundations for my studies. In brief, I found out that my mother's impact on my life is the reason I have made this journey into clinical psychology. The second essay was a **technical** one where I was required to write about my theoretical orientation. This one plunged into the key psychological tenets that inform my work with clients. Writing this one, I felt the call to embrace my profession as a clinical psychologist. The third was about how I work with **diversity**. I had to choose an issue related to individual differences like race, ethnicity (tribe), gender, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, religion etc. to

write about. The final one was about my experience as a researcher. The writing process went through many revisions and I was blessed with several word-smiths including Sister Marlene Weisenbeck.

I submitted all my 19 applications well ahead of the dateline and received my first invitation for an interview on November 15th. My next offers came in January 2013 and were fewer than I had expected -- 7 out of 19. The silver lining for me was that the places that offered me interviews were coveted training opportunities. So I kept my hopes high.

Five of the seven interviews were done over the phone and I only had to travel to two of them. My interview at Michigan State University was the most remarkable. I felt most relaxed and affirmed at that interview and looked forward to matching with them. That would have meant being closer to the Franciscan Sisters of the Eucharist. Sometimes I even had vivid imaginations about spending the weekends with them.

After interviews are completed, students rank the sites that they have interviewed with. So I ranked Michigan State University as my number one choice and placed all the places I interviewed with from the most preferred to the least. Training programs also ranked the students that they interviewed beginning with their most preferred to the last. This year both students and training programs submitted their lists on or before the 6th of February to a common website. Many students reported stories of insomnia during the waiting period. I did not experience insomnia but anxiety got to me on the week leading up to the 22nd. On the Monday of the week of the 22nd I realized that my hopes to match with my first choice might not come true. So, I mourned the loss as best as I could.

During the rest of the week, I postponed all emotionally difficult conversations, used spare minutes of my day to take brief walks, breathe deeply, and talk to God from my heart. Thursday, I showered in the evening, did a stretching routine after meditation and went to sleep early. At 7:20 a.m. the much anticipated email arrived and when I read the

first words: **Congratulations**, tears of relief flowed before I screamed with joy.



To conclude, I like to sum up my experience with these words: "There is no greater grace in the world than to be doing the work that feels like the thing you were born to do." No words can capture the depth of that feeling and I am deeply honored and humbled to express my gratitude with these most familiar words: "Thank You."

SISTER MARIE THERESE DIANG NEARING GRADUATION

Sister Marie Therese Diang TSSF received her B.A. degree in Religious Studies from Cardinal Stritch University in 2011. She is currently a candidate for the Masters degree in Social and Cultural Foundations in Education from De Paul University in Chicago, IL.



Sister Marie Therese Diang TSSF
B.A., M.A. Candidate

I write this report from Clare Hall in Milwaukee. I have been here since the end of September 2012.



OSF Laverna Community at Clare Hall
Back row: Sisters Regine Ehm, Marie Therese TSSF,
Leo Marie Schiltgen, Cor Marie Lowrie, Mary Peter,
Front row: Sisters Frances Miller and Ancille Horgan

It feels like I have been on a marathon determined to get to the end point in spite of all the odds. Now I am at the quiet ending stage, taking time to slow down before I come to a stop.

When I look back at these last years, I am just amazed at the fact that I ran the marathon. I had a full load of courses with all the assignments and readings required, put in about 15 hours of work a week and managed my health. Did I really do it?

I can only give praise to the Great Mover who saw me through all this. And for the sisterly support I received from you all, thank you! Ayongniakia! (as it is said in my language).

My quiet ending days are still full and keep me busy all day till about midnight but they are different. My typical day still remains, except for the fact that I am not jumping on the train at 5:00 p.m. to go further away from home to attend a class till 8:30p.m. and to reach home at about 10:30p.m., hungry and tired. No, this time I do it at home. It is still demanding in its own way, but it so much different from the hustle and bustle of life in Chicago.

It is indeed a quiet ending. It is principally occupied by two very important activities: attending diligently to my health and writing my thesis. Before I know it, a day is gone.

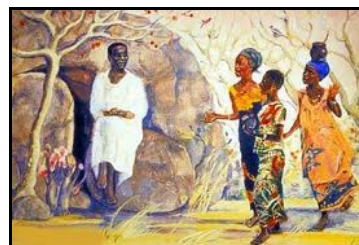
Indeed, days fly as well as weeks. I can only compare "their flying" to the experience I made the first day I entered a car. I hardly saw a tree or people on the road side and they were gone past in terrific speed. It was scary! That is exactly how the weeks go by now. I hardly know a week has begun and it is another Sunday.

Writing a thesis at home has its challenges. At Clare Hall in Milwaukee "I home school" in my room. My computer and the books are my teachers. Amazon.com assists when necessary and so does the Salzmann Library, which connects a few others in the Milwaukee area.

At Clare Hall, the Sisters are all concerned and they express this by their desire to know if I am making progress in my work. The common question I am asked is "How is your thesis coming?" And I say "little by little". Some people want to know a little more and they ask "What are you writing about?" "International Monetary Fund and World Bank Policies on the Educational and Cultural Policies in Cameroon," I respond. "Oh! What a job! I do not envy you. I will pray for you," they would say. Some go a little further requesting more explanation and I take time to explain. Those who have written a thesis before tell me, "I understand what you are going through. Take courage." Little by little I make progress and I hope to arrive soon at the end.

I sent in my thesis proposal at the beginning of February. At the moment I am working on my fourth chapter. In the meantime I have applied to graduate in the spring. You are all invited. The exact date will be communicated later and I look forward to seeing you all.

Please continue to keep me in your prayers. As always, I am deeply grateful to you all for your constant support and encouragement. God bless you all.



Holy Women at the Tomb