

# MABIALA Justin-Robert KENZO :

## Qui suis-je ?

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### *My vision/prayer*

For a long time, I have had that dream which consists in seeing the Evangelical Church in Quebec playing a leadership role in the life and mission of the Evangelical Church, especially within the francophony. This dream is fuelled by, on the one hand, the obvious need of leadership within the francophonie; and, on the other hand, the potential resources available within Quebec.

It goes without saying that when it comes to programs and resources, the Church in the francophone world offers the image of a poor child. No nation within the francophonie plays a role similar to the one played by the United States (and to a lesser degree the United Kingdom) within the English speaking world in supporting evangelical initiatives. France, with the exception of immigrants in France, is largely post-Christian. In Africa, the Evangelical Church is certainly burgeoning. Unfortunately, for the foreseeable future, the continent will remain economically poor and could, therefore, hardly serve as the driving force behind a universal evangelical movement.

Yet, it seems to us that Quebec has all it takes to play such a key role. **First**, from a geo-political perspective, Quebec finds itself within North America, that largest expanse of established liberal democracy, vibrant economy driven by innovative science and technology. We believe that this strategic position of Quebec is providential, intended by God. Hence the question: Could the Evangelical Church in Quebec leverage this position to play within the francophone world a role similar to the one the United States plays within the anglophone world? It is hard not to dream of Quebec serving as a source of all sorts of innovative initiatives that would energize and strengthen francophone evangelical churches worldwide. With its past not shackled in colonialism and the Canadian passport widely respected around the world, Quebec could easily serve as the host country for any kind of collaborative efforts between francophone evangelical churches in the areas of mission, literature, or leadership training. **Second**, Quebec is known worldwide for the vivacity of its avant-garde culture, characterized by creativity, tolerance, openness, conviction, etc. So we ask ourselves: Could these values be leveraged for the cause of the Kingdom of God? We believe the answer is yes. However, in order to do so requires investing strategically for the emergence of solid and dynamic local congregations that will serve as light houses all over Quebec. It is within these local congregations that believers will be disciplined and equipped for the work of ministry worldwide. **Third**, the strong presence of the diaspora in Quebec is another asset. Montreal, in particular, is truly metropolitan. From the whole world, all nations have come to Quebec. Now it is time that from Quebec, the Word would go to all nations throughout the whole world. I do believe that given the cosmopolitanism of its

society, Quebec can serve as a laboratory for tomorrow's Christianity. A Christianity that is postmodern and postcolonial; most specially, a cosmopolitan, dynamic and non-dogmatic Christianity.

It is at this point that we need to call to mind the history of Quebec. History teaches us that Quebec played a major in the expansion of Roman Catholic Christianity in the 19th century and the beginning of 20th century. Our prayer is simply that the Lord would do it again :

We have heard it with our ears, O God  
Our ancestors have told us what you did in their days,  
In days long ago  
Lord, we have heard of your fame;  
We stand in awe of your deeds  
O Lord, **renew them in our day,**  
**In our time make them known.**

In a nut shell, our dream/prayer for Quebec consists in being satisfied « what is », but to long for « what could be » in all humility. It consists in taking all the assets that are found in Quebec as the work of the God of providence who is preparing His Church for a universal impact. Our dream/prayer invites the Church in Quebec to dare—dare to do Church otherwise, dare to live and express our faith in Christ otherwise—as the Holy Spirit would guide and Scripture would permit.

### *My leadership style*

My style of leadership is best described as empowering servant leadership. As a leader, I seek to listen to others in order to get a sense of their passion and discern whatever gifts they may have received from the Lord. My role then is to encourage the exercise of the said gifts by creating adequate spaces within the structures of ministry. With my chosen style of leadership, I never feel threatened by individuals who are more gifted than myself. In fact, I have been most effective in ministry wherever I have been able to surround myself with people more talented than myself. Another aspect of my leadership style is that it celebrates instead of stifles differences. Some of the people who have ministered with me those who most differ from me. The difference can be in terms of gifting, temperament, culture, age, etc. I strongly believe that that unity in difference is a trinitarian virtue that needs to be celebrated.

Once on the ground, I see myself more like a team captain than than a coach. My role is not to seat on the sideline and then yell injunctions at players on the field. Instead, my role is to be on the field, getting wet, huddling with the players, and cheering them on, while at the same time modelling the right attitude and better practices. Members of the District Executive Committee as well as local Church leaders will be considered as the prime members of my team. I will see to it that the District Office continues to be a service provider to local Church and not the other way around. At the national level, I will see myself both as a team member and a representative (and spokesperson) of the Saint Lawrence District.

### *My strategy*

My personal strategy will consists in doing an inventory of available resources within the Alliance Church in Quebec. I will then challenge each local Church and ministry (i.e., youth, women, children, theological education—ETEQ,

etc.) to move from good to great; for, as it is said, even in the spiritual realm, good is the enemy of great. The most urgent question that each of us will have to answer is, What, by the grace of God, can we do better than what we are doing now? Furthermore, we will seek to create a coalition of men and women seeking to do better, in their own lives and their own sphere of influence. These are people who will individually and collectively covenant to live their faith otherwise and do the Church otherwise, all for the sake of the kingdom of God.

Finally, in keeping with the strategic vision of the Saint Lawrence District of the Christian and Missionary Alliance Church in Canada, we will seek to “enlarge the space of our tent” to allow new initiatives at the grassroots level as well as the district level. However, we will make sure that innovation is encouraged in respect with regards to particularity of each individual context. Hence, Quebec being a particular context, we will focus our attention on “small victories”, which will be celebrated in their own right, and will be leveraged to serve as small increments toward greater change and progress.

Of course, our strategy will only succeed if we succeed in creating spaces where each individual member and each individual community will exercise its God given gift in liberty and grace.

## *My aspiration*

Our main aspiration is bring each ministry and each local congregation into full alignment with the vision of the Saint Lawrence District of the Christian and Missionary Alliance in Canada, which consists in being “

**« Des communautés de foi (églises) transformées par Jésus-Christ, transformant par la puissance du Saint-Esprit, leur communauté, le Québec, le Canada et le monde à la gloire du Dieu Trinitaire ».**

Hence, for example, concerning:

### **1) *Local Churches***

My aspiration is to see that each local church becomes vibrant local Church community where:

- the Holy Spirit is manifestly at work
- the Word of God is faithfully proclaimed
- lives are transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit
- the people of God are disciplined and equipped for the work of ministry
- missionary engagement constitutes the foundation of faith and praxis

### **2) *Youth ministry***

My aspiration is that young people are considered not as the Church of tomorrow, but as the Church of today. In fact, young people constitute the greatest asset for change and innovation in the Church. Does not John state: “I write to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God lives in you, and you have overcome the evil one” (1 John 2: 14). Their contribution to the Church is for present, of today.

However, for young people to play their role in the fullest sense, they need to be grounded in Scripture. Young people are strong when the Word of God lives in them. And knows how to overcome the evil one. Hence, time, energy, and resources have to be invested to make sure the youth in our local churches are grounded in Scripture and initiated into spiritual warfare. When we succeed in this area, the creative energy of our youth would be unleashed for the cause of the Kingdom of God.

### 3) *Women ministries*

Far from doctrinal debates on women in ministries, our aspiration is to see women in our local churches reclaim their rightful place as daughter of Abraham, who will also inherit the Kingdom of God. In this way, in full respect of local differences, women will be encouraged to put to the service of the Kingdom of God their God given gifts and talents.

### 4) *Discipleship*

My aspiration is to see discipleship and the cornerstone of all pastoral ministry. Based on Ephesian 4: 12-13, we believe that the pastor-doctor (teacher) has the particular mandate to “prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ”

### 5) *Prayer and intercession*

We long to see the Church of Christ every recognize and affirm the central role of prayer in the life and ministry of each believer. One lesson that we have learned the hard way in our life and ministry is that christian life and christian ministry are in fact a spiritual battle. “For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world, and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms” (Eph. 6: 12).

### 6) *Implantation of new churches*

Comme le plan stratégique du District Saint-Laurent l’indique, une communauté ecclésiale vivante est celle qui croit et se multiplie. Le défi dans l’implantation de nouvelles églises locales consiste à savoir si les églises locales existantes sont prêtes à faire l’église autrement.

Dans notre effort d’implantation de nouvelles églises locales (paroisses), notre aspiration est que le District Saint-Laurent de l’Alliance Chrétienne et Missionnaire privilégie le modèle de Jésus. En effet, si pendant longtemps, nous avons évolué avec le modèle Believe→Behave→Belong (Croire→Se Conduire→Appartenir) ou Behave→Believe→Belong (Se Conduire→Croire→Appartenir), il nous semble que le modèle de Jésus était plutôt Belong→Believe→Behave (Appartenir→Croire→Se Conduire). En d’autres termes, nos églises devaient être intentionnellement ouvertes et accueillantes aux personnes en quête d’une relation avec le Transcendant.

### 7) *Mission*

It is our desire that Church would rediscover its missional calling. I am one of those who believe that the Church exists for one and only reason: mission. The Church in its local incarnation as well as its universal existence is missional. It exists as the body of Christ, that is, it is the visible manifestation of the presence of Christ in the world. As such it is a sacrament, the physical sign of a spiritual reality. It is also a means of grace, which God uses to impart His grace to the world.

Hence the Church in Quebec, while being contextual, need not be auto-centered. The Church exists for others. We believe that the Church in Quebec has a particular role to play in the world and within the francophone world in particular. It has to play this role here and now. The missional spirit has to inhabit every Church plant from the beginning.

## *My experience*

We believe that we have sufficient pastoral and leadership experience to play within Quebec whatever role the Lord may have for us. :

### **Ordination and Accreditation**

Licensed worker, Communauté Évangélique de l'Alliance au Congo, June 28, 1980.

Ordained Pastor, Communauté Évangélique de l'Alliance au Congo, July 31, 1983.

### **Teaching Experience**

**Professor of Theology**, Faculté de Théologie Évangélique de Boma , 2005-present.

My responsibilities include :

- Teaching courses in the area of Theology and New Testament. Most recent courses taught include: *Christianity and Culture, Modern Theology, Postmodern and Postcolonial Theology, Trinitarian Theology, Advanced Greek Grammar, Advanced Greek Exegesis*
- Directing Master Degree Theses in the area of Theology and New Testament
- Mentoring students in research methodology.

**Chargé de cours en théologie**, ETEQ/Université Laval, 2015-present

- My responsibility consists in teaching a course in Theology and Contemporary Society.

**Professor of Theology**, Ambrose Seminary, 2004-2013

My responsibilities included:

- Teaching courses in the area of Theology. The courses I taught included, among others: *Introduction to Christian Faith; Trinitarian Theology, Theology in Context; Narrative Theology; Postcolonial Theologies.*
- Supervising MA Theses
- Mentoring students.

**Associate Professor of Theology**, Canadian Theological Seminary, 2001-2004

My responsibilities included:

- Teaching both onsite and online courses in the area of Theology. Most recent courses taught include: *Introduction to Christian Faith; Creation, Fall, and Redemption; The Church and its Future; Trinitarian Theology; Advanced Theological Prolegomena; Christianity and Culture; Narrative Theology; Christian Ethics; Christian Apologetics.*
- Supervising MA Theses
- Mentoring Students

**Assistant Professor of Theology**, Canadian Theological Seminary, 1998-2001

My responsibilities included:

- Teaching both onsite and online courses in the area of Theology. Most recent courses taught include: *Introduction to Christian Faith; Creation, Fall, and Redemption; The Church and its Future; Trinitarian Theology; Christianity and Culture; Narrative Theology; Christian Ethics; Christian Apologetics.*
- Serving as international students faculty advisor
- Mentoring students in various aspects.

**Visiting Professor of Theology**, Faculté de Théologie Bethel, Libreville, République du Gabon, 2014-présent

My responsibilities include :

- Teaching a course in Contemporary Theology

**Visiting Professor of Theology**, Faculté de Théologie Evangélique de l'Alliance Chrétienne (FATEAC), Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, 1998-2003

My responsibilities included::

- Teaching one or two courses a year in the area of theology

**Visiting Professor of Theology**, Faculté de Théologie Evangélique de Boma (FACTEB), Boma, République Démocratique du Congo, 1991-94; 2001-2005

My responsibilities included :

- Teaching advanced courses in the area of theology, African Theology and Philosophy, and New Testament.
- Providing oversight to the process of curriculum review .

**Adjunct Professor Biblical and Systematic Theology**, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, 1996-98

My responsibilities included:

- Teaching MA and MDIV courses in systematic theology
- Occasionally substituting for Drs. H. O. J. Brown and Tite Tiéno.

**Assistant Professor of Theology and New Testament**, Faculté de Théologie Évangélique de Boma, 1986-1991.

My responsibilities included:

- Teaching courses in the area of Theology and New Testament. Some of the courses I taught included: *Greek Grammar, Greek Exegesis, African Theology, and Intro to Philosophy.*
- Mentor students in various aspects.

**National Coordinator of Theological Education by Extension (TEE)** for the Evangelical Community of the Alliance in Congo, 1980-83.

My responsibilities included:

- Providing oversight for the implementation of the TEE program
- Teach TEE classes
- Train national teachers
- Translate TEE material into Kikongo

**Instructor in French Literature** in public schools (part-time), Boma, 1980-83.

My responsibilities included:

- Teaching a course in French literature in Public High Schools in Boma

### **Pastoral and Church Leadership Experience**

**National Church President** of the Evangelical Community of the Alliance in Congo, 2011-present.

- My responsibility consists in vision casting and giving oversight of the the ministry of the “Communauté Évangélique de l’Alliance au Congo, which is the Christian and Missionary Alliance Church in the Democratic Republic of Congo and which has an inclusive membership of over 1,600,000; 650 organized churches; 350 unorganized churches; 467 active ordained pastors.

**Rector**, Faculté de Théologie Évangélique de Boma (FACTEB), 2005-11.

- My responsibilities included providing oversight to the overall running of the school of theology.
- During my tenure, I oversaw the transformation of the school of theology into a university

**General Secretary** of the Evangelical Community of the Alliance in Congo, 1991-94.

- During my tenure, I led the Church through the process of Constitution and Bylaw change

**Senior Pastor** of *Eglise du Rocher*, Kinshasa, République Démocratique du Congo, 1991-94.

- I helped plant and provided pastoral oversight to a Church among middle and upper class people in Kinshasa, which

grew from a nucleus of 40 people to over 1,000 people in one year.

**Executive Pastor**, *Paroisse CEAC, Mont Sinaï*, Boma, République Démocratique du Congo, 1988-91.

- With an average attendance of 3,000 on Sunday morning, Boma 2 is the largest Alliance church in Congo. Serving under the leadership of the National Church president, my role was to give oversight to all aspects of pastoral ministries.
- During my time of service, the Church increased its staff from 2 to 5 pastors and gave autonomy to the French service.

**Senior Pastor**, *Paroisses CEAC, Seka Mbote et Kidima*, Boma, République Démocratique du Congo, 1987-88.

- These were two small churches with different needs. In Seka-Mbote, our mission was to bring healing to a once dynamic church of 300 that has shrunk to about 70. With the Lord's help, in a year the Church bounced back to 500.
- Kidima was a small rural church of about 5 baptized members with an inclusive membership of about 30. Our greatest achievement was to baptize the first 3 new members several years.

**Assistant Pastor**, *Paroisse CEAC, Boma I*, Boma, République Démocratique du Congo, 1986-87.

- In this 2,000 member Church, my responsibility consisted in preaching, especially in the French service, and giving oversight to different adult ministry programs.

**Soli Deo Gloria**

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