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**SISTER JOYCE MEYER PVBM
HELPS WITH DEVELOPMENT
PROGRAM EDUCATION
MAY 26 – JULY 23, 2012**



Sister Joyce Meyer PVBM, former executive director of the Conrad Hilton Fund for Sisters, accepted the Common Venture's invitation to assist the TSSFs in Cameroon to establish a Development Office. Three sisters were appointed to become the development team that would work with Sr. Joyce over the two months of June and July: Sister Hedwig Vinyo, Sister Theodosia Baki and Sister Prescillia Yien. Sr. Joyce noted that *the three sisters are bright women with a variety of skills, hard workers and enjoyable to be with.* All three had some training in project writing, one was very skilled in project management and all had developed skills in English writing. They were all eager learners and helped Sr. Joyce translate American development principles into the Cameroonian context. *It was a wonderful learning experience for me as well as a very mutual relationship with the sisters. I also enjoyed the community life and prayer in a most gorgeous setting in the mountains,* Joyce remarked.

As the program progressed it was recognized that it would be important for the sisters of the province's institutions to meet with Sr. Joyce

to better understand what a development program entails and what it does not. This meeting was held in Bamenda, June 16, at the Laverna Spirituality Center, the most central meeting place. About 45 sisters attended, even though the meeting was arranged at short notice. The response was very positive and was helpful to their understanding of the program. Henri Nouwen's book, *Spirituality of Fund Raising*, was provided to all the TSSF communities to support their ongoing reflection about this important ministry.

The development team with Sr. Odette Ngong as provincial council liaison worked on the development of a case statement for the province according to the principles Sr. Joyce had been teaching. Also emphasized were learning the content and skills for making donor visits, education meetings with the sisters, assisting a sister in developing a project, and writing specific job descriptions, as well as a 20-year projection for the province which identified future needs for education.

A booklet highlighted the work done over the six weeks along with an evaluation that will serve as a template for the new Office of Development as the TSSF implement this ministry in the coming years.

Joyce's summarized her experience by stating, *I returned to the United States on July 23 filled with the joy of how much the sisters had accomplished and how much I had learned from them and the others I met. It was truly a story of Good News.*



Sister Joyce and Sister Theodosia

Hostel for young women in Buea

RAUENHORST GRANT ENABLES HOUSING PROJECT FOR TSSF SISTERS AND STUDENTS NEAR BUEA UNIVERSITY, CAMEROON

In 2010 the Franciscan Common Venture applied to the George and Henrietta Rauenhorst Foundation for grant monies which it was directing specifically to “sister support initiatives” in the U.S. and Africa. The grant request was to build and furnish a critically needed convent and youth hostel in a very poor area of the world, namely Buea, Cameroon, so that the TSSF and other women religious could continue to support their members and assist lay women who were pursuing higher education at the University of Buea.

Everyone was overwhelmingly grateful when we were informed of a \$250,000 grant award for this purpose. Construction of the convent was completed in July 2011 with a capacity to accommodate 22 sisters. The sisters are currently living in it and completing degree programs at the University of Buea.



Convent in Buea

Construction of the hostel was completed and ready for occupancy by October 2012. It can provide accommodation for about 46 young lay women studying in the University of Buea.

Because of this grant the TSSF will begin a new ministry of counseling as well as moral and spiritual guidance to young women studying at the university. As a future goal, the sisters will gradually develop a religious leadership center for women which would operate from the convent and hostel.



Some of the TSSF Hilton grant recipients

CONRAD HILTON FUND FOR SISTERS SUPPORTED SISTERS FROM ENGLISH-SPEAKING CAMEROON

From 2009-2012 the Tertiary Sisters of St. Francis in collaboration with other English-speaking congregations of Cameroon women religious benefited from a \$125,000 grant from the Conrad Hilton Fund for Sisters. It provided financial and educational support over a three-year period. It enabled the enrollment of approximately **25 women religious in post-secondary education** in a university and in schools of nursing or ancillary healthcare training programs in Cameroon and other African countries. Sisters achieved professional credentials as teachers in primary and secondary education and as nurses or other health care professionals.

These post-secondary education opportunities significantly assist in the development of individual women religious to become future religious and professional leaders in Cameroon.

Although the Hilton grant was not renewed as hoped for, TSSF who currently are completing their degree programs have been greatly assisted by the funds from the interest derived from the **TSSF Education Fund**, an endowment established in 2008 and administered through a designated and restricted custodial account of the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration.



**Christmas
Blessings!**