

# Handling the Word of Truth

Supporting Theological Education in Togo and West Africa

Missionary Rev. Jacob W. Gaugert

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## The Republic of the Congo



Capital city =  
Brazzaville

Population =  
5.1 million

More than 85% of  
the population  
claims to be  
Christian

4 official  
languages =  
French  
Lingala  
Kituba  
Kikongo

Current baptized  
membership of the  
EELC = 3,700



A group picture taken at the opening service of the CLETCO seminary in 2017. President MAVOUNGO (left w. chasuble) Rev. Arnel OUADIKI (right w. alb and stole). Part-time faculty and students in between.

## Entrusting the Teaching: the Establishment of another Seminary in Francophone Africa

*You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. - 2 Timothy 2:1*

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

By God's grace, for almost two decades, our CLET seminary in Dapaong, Togo has been training men for the ordained Ministry to serve Jesus' flock with Word and Sacrament. In that time the institution has gone from serving the Lutheran Church of Togo and the Lutheran Church of the Ivory Coast, to training men for eleven different Lutheran church bodies in eight francophone African countries. The CLET in its rural setting has been protected from political upheaval and pillaging – while neighboring countries went through troubled times. Our seminary has been able to serve as the main axis of our work in francophone Africa for these past years. We certainly pray that in the coming years she can continue to serve as the first step of residential theological training for burgeoning Lutheran church bodies on the continent. However, the cost of bringing men and their families to Togo from all over Africa is costly. We know that it would be more cost-efficient to train men closer to home. Keeping them closer to their region of origin reduces the

**Pray:**

**Thanksgiving for the safe return of Rev. Albert KOUTIA and his family to Congo-Brazzaville.**

**Thanksgiving for the financial commitment of the members of EELC congregations to begin the CLETCO seminary.**

**That the parishes of the EELC would send capable students to prepare for the Ministry at CLETCO.**

**That more francophone churches in Africa would soon be able to also establish their own institutes for local theological training.**

**That the students and families in the CLET and CLETCO communities would celebrate our Lord's birth this Christmas holiday with sincere piety and hope in the Lord's gifts.**



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**MEET**

**Armel Ouadika**



**Armel currently serves as the executive secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Congo-Brazzaville and as the Administrator of the CLETCO. He is very responsible and motivated to help the EELC advance. Please pray that he would be given the wisdom and strength to serve in these positions while being able to juggle work and family life with joy.**

complexity of tribal makeup and cultural background of the student body – thus reducing the frequency of misunderstandings, rivalries and cultural conflict. We give thanks to God that now, after some of our francophone Lutheran church bodies have several CLET graduates serving in their ministeriums, we can encourage the planting of sister institutions of the CLET in the various countries.

We are pleased to share that the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Congo-Brazzaville (EELC) is one of the church bodies that has recently made the step to begin training men for the ministry in their own country. The EELC is led by Rev. President Joseph MAVOUNGOU, who from the beginning of his presidency over a decade ago made the conscious decision to quickly increase the number of pastors from three ordained Ministers to over twelve. This church body is also blessed by a good pool of educated and dedicated lay men and women who are contributing their talents and financial gifts to the support of their pastors and their national church body

One of the fruits of this healthy base of leadership and collaboration is



CLETCO students attend classes in the provisional facilities in Pointe Noire.

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Or

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**B.P. 53**  
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**TOGO**

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the founding of the CLETCO (CLET -Congo) seminary in Pointe Noire in the fall of 2017. The fall of 2018 marks the second year of operation. The institute plans on graduating its first class in the summer of 2020. Three full-time teachers serve during the entirety of the academic year and other ordained pastors of the EELC come in periodically to offer intensive classes. The three full-time professors are: Rev. President MAVOUNGOU, Rev. Albert KOUTIA, who just returned from serving at the CLET in Dapaong for the last 6 years, and Rev. Armel OUADIKI, a very bright young man who serves as the executive secretary of the EELC and as the chief administrator of the institute. The LCMS-OIM will be sending missionaries periodically to CLETCO to offer intensive courses. Additionally, consideration is being given to calling missionaries to move to Brazzaville to serve full-time alongside the current faculty members.

The LCMS-OIM along with the EELC and her members and leaders have taken this step to establish the CLETCO institute, knowing that this is - and will continue to be - the institute/seminary of the EELC. This means that from the foundation of this seminary into the future, the EELC will take increasing financial responsibility of the operations and budget of the institute. For the year 2018, the EELC is covering 20% of the operating budget. This covers everything from salaries, utilities, supplies, to student scholarships. This percentage of local support is to increase by 5% each year so that ten years into the future the EELC will be covering at least 70% of the CLETCO operating budget. As a gesture of goodwill in response to this local support of the institute, the LCMS-OIM is also contributing toward the building of the institute's facilities each year and there is openness toward considering subsidizing the pursuit of accredited, higher education degrees of the faculty in the coming years.

We pray that the establishment of the CLETCO will serve as a model for the expansion of theological education francophone Africa that will train faithful leaders and undershepherds of our Lord Jesus for the future.

In Christ,



## AT HOME



Please remember to keep the seminaries of the church and their students in your prayers. Just as there are many challenges to serving in the Ministry, so also there are obstacles and challenges that hinder the preparation for that Ministry – even at the seminary.

*God of the prophets, bless the prophets' sons; Elijah's mantle o'er Elisha cast, each age is solemn task may claim but once; make each one nobler, stronger, than the last. - LSB 682:1*



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