

THE HISTORY OF MORIJO CATHOLIC PARISH

A Journey of Faith, Missionary Service and Community Development

Introduction

Every parish has a story shaped by faith, sacrifice, service and the people who sustain it. The story of Morijo Catholic Parish forms part of the wider history of Catholic evangelisation in northern Kenya. It is a story of missionaries who brought the Gospel, local Christians who embraced and nurtured the faith, and a Church whose mission has reached beyond worship to respond to community needs.

As the Catholic Diocese of Maralal celebrates its Silver Jubilee, Jua Jimbo Lako – Parish Histories looks back at the development of the Morijo mission, the priests associated with its pastoral journey, and the continuing service of the parish under its current parish priest, Fr. Ambrose Leparting'at.

The early missionary years

A published account in the Consolata Missionaries' magazine, *Missioni Consolata*, provides an important glimpse into Morijo's early mission history. In a report published in February 1999, the writer describes meeting Fr. Aldo Vettori in Morijo and says that he had begun the mission eleven years earlier, placing its beginnings at approximately 1988. The report describes Fr. Vettori as having started the mission from the ground up after helping establish the mission at Barsaloi.

The account portrays Morijo as a developing mission where evangelisation went hand in hand with practical service. It describes work with catechists and catechumens, the organisation of the Christian community, and projects linked to education, health, skills development and water. Facilities mentioned include a dispensary, a school, a nursery school, a tailoring and dressmaking workshop, and water collection and storage projects.

This account offers a valuable historical snapshot of the mission's early years. It does not provide a complete official register of all the priests who later served Morijo.

Priests who continued the mission

A parish's history is not carried by one person alone. Each priest builds on the pastoral work of those who came before, while local catechists, religious communities, families and parishioners help keep the faith alive.

Following the early missionary period associated with Fr. Aldo Vettori, the names identified in the parish history for this feature include Fr. Dominic Lesayon and Fr. Lesit. Their service forms part of the continuing story of pastoral care and the development of the Christian community in Morijo. The exact years of their service have not been established for this article, so no dates have been assigned.

Today, the parish is served by Fr. Ambrose Leparting'at, who was named Parish Priest of Christ the Risen Lord, Morijo, in an announcement published by the Catholic Diocese of Maralal. His leadership represents the current chapter in the parish's ongoing mission.

A Church serving the community

The early missionary account shows that the Morijo mission's work extended beyond the celebration of Mass and other religious services. Education, health care, practical skills and access to water were among the concerns addressed by the mission.

Local testimony also highlights the Church's contribution to education and health services, including support that helped children access schooling. These recollections add community members' perspectives to the written historical record and show why the parish is remembered not only as a place of worship, but also as part of community life.

For a full and accurate record, the parish should confirm the dates and current status of the schools, health facilities and other initiatives associated with the mission.

Faith, culture and security

The story of Morijo also reflects the relationship between the Catholic faith and local culture. In interviews recorded for this feature, the parish priest describes cultural interaction as having a role in the life of prayer and the Church.

Pastoral work has also faced security challenges. Travelling to serve Christians in different locations can be difficult, particularly when a priest has to travel alone. The priest has described the importance of security support, while local Christian Lentumunai speaks of continuing in faith and supporting the Church despite insecurity.

These experiences form part of the community's continuing story: a faith sustained through worship, service, local participation and perseverance in difficult circumstances.

Morijo Parish today

Today, Fr. Ambrose Leparting'at serves as Parish Priest of Christ the Risen Lord, Morijo. The parish continues its pastoral mission within the Catholic Diocese of Maralal, whose parishes serve both the spiritual and wider human-development needs of their communities.

From the early mission associated with Fr. Aldo Vettori, through the service of Fr. Dominic Lesayon and Fr. Lesit, to the current leadership of Fr. Ambrose Leparting'at, Morijo's history is a continuing story of evangelisation and community life. The contribution of priests is only one part of that story; generations of local Christians, catechists, religious and families have also helped sustain the parish.

A living legacy

As the Catholic Diocese of Maralal marks twenty-five years, the history of Morijo invites the faithful to honour those who laid the foundations, recognise the service that has grown from the mission, and continue building a community rooted in faith and hope.

Morijo's history is more than a record of names. It is a story of faith taking root, service responding to human needs, and a community continuing its journey with hope.

This has been Jua Jimbo Lako – Parish Histories, prepared by Titus Letaare for Radio Mchung'aji.

Twenty-five years of faith. Twenty-five years of journey. Twenty-five years of grace.

Catholic Diocese of Maralal — we remember where we came from, celebrate how far we have come, and continue forward in faith.

References

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Catholic Diocese of Maralal, official website and appointments: <https://maralalcatholicdiocese.org/>

Catholic Diocese of Maralal, "About Us": <https://maralalcatholicdiocese.org/about-us/>