

Father Joseph Dufe survives shooting



By Grace Ongey

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A Capuchin priest resident in the Bambui Friary of the Bamenda Archdiocese, Rev. Fr. Joseph Dufe, is responding to treatment at the Shisong General Hospital, after robbers shot him recently between Bambili and Bambui. Father Dufe, known for his inspiring sermons, narrowly missed death after robbers

shot him on the head and thigh.

He had gone to celebrate the Feast of the Ramadan with his muslim friends in Bambui. When he was returning to his parish, he decided to stop just at the entrance to the Tubah D.O's Office and inform his friends that he had already passed the danger spot at Mile 4.

Just as he was about to call, someone opened the door of his car, pulled him out and started molesting him. Father had two cell phones and a wallet containing about FCFA 25.000. Not knowing who his assailants were, he decided to fight back. The area was not lighted as a result of the blackout that had paralysed Bamenda recently. This only made a sufficiently bad situation worse.

The three bandits engaged him in a serious fight and succeeded to overpower him. One of the bandits gave a command to a certain commando to shoot. The order was respected and the bullet caught Fr Dufe on the thigh. Father continued to put up resistance and that is when he received the second bullet on the back of his head. It was at this point that Father Dufe surrendered and the thieves disappeared with his phones and wallet.

He drove down to the Bambui 4 junction with the intention of seeking help. Suspicious of those who wanted to help him, he sped off to the friary where he received first aid. His friary brothers rushed him to the St Mary Soledad Hospital, Ntarikon where he spent the night. On the morning of October 1, the Shisong Hospital Ambulance came down to Bambui and whisked him off for treatment at the Shisong Catholic Hospital. Father Dufe, who is now able to talk, says he owes his life to the Almighty God who has given him a second chance on earth.

Some of the bullets are still lodged in his thigh. Hospital sources say he will not be operated as his system will eventually reject the bullets. In spite of his predicament, Fr Dufe attended Mass on Sunday, October 5 though on a wheel chair. The biblical allusion "Touch not my anointed and do my prophet no harm," applies here. This incident came barely days after armed robbers attacked four banks in Limbe carting away huge sums of money. One person was killed from the cross fire between the robbers and the forces of law and order.

Fr Dufe's assailants are still at large. Meanwhile Christians are anxiously looking to Fr Dufe's return to continue his mission of shepherding the flock placed in his care.