

MR. EVARISTE DIGNOTO

Report #C02

SURVEY

In our survey, many Central Africans identified Mr. Evariste DIGNOTO, a Christian businessman as one of the most influential non-clergy persons in CAR. He was tied for number 5 as the most frequently listed. His business is a great testimony of Christian to create and sustain a very successful business. In a country where historically Muslims own about 90% of businesses, Evariste is making a great difference.

ABSTRACT

Mr. Evariste DIGNOTO is a civil engineer trained in Bamako, Mali. After his training, he worked with a private company and then as a consultant to the World Bank. Later he created his own business in building and public works. His company is doing well and is among those selected by international organizations for public works in the country.

BACKGROUND

Childhood Home

Mr. Evariste DIGNOTO was born in a Catholic family of many children. His parents were Christian but in a nominal sense of the word. He did his primary and secondary school in Bangui. He was among the best students and was sent to Bamako for further training in engineering. He received a scholarship from the CAR government. Although Christian and member of IFES group, his life was not according to the Scriptures. But his life changed when he became sick in Bamako. He was sent back to Bangui for treatment. He faced Jesus and gave his life to Him.

Curent Family

Evariste DIGNOTO is grateful to the Lord for his wife who is a woman of prayers. She has been of great help during the Egypt time. The success of the business is due to the prayer and advice of his wife. For each project, Evariste prays with his wife and children. He loves his children because they are asking many questions as they are growing. His life has influenced the extended family because many of his relatives are taking charge of their life instead of leaning on him as the case in many African families where one of the members is successful in business.

Personal testimony & Calling

Evariste DIGNOTO came to business by force. In fact, after his training in Bamako, he was recruited as a civil engineer in a French company in Bangui, SOREAC. He dedicated his life for the wellbeing of the company. But unfortunately after ten years of devoted work, the economic situation obliged SOREAC to lay off part of the staff. Evariste DIGNITO was among them. It was a shock for someone who put his confidence and his life in the company for ten years. Evariste was among those who contributed to the success of the enterprise SOREAC but by the end, he was sent out. To the outsiders, Evariste was trying to minimize his situation but at home, he was not happy. During that time, they had a second boy. According to some friends, “this boy

was a curse to us. But I told them the boy will bring happiness and prosperity to our family. When I was working with SOREAC, I gave the tithe to the church regularly. I said to the people that I had an investment with the Lord. He will not abandon me.” One of the pastors in the church advised him to look a job with the public administration, the government. He told him that he could not because the salary is about four times less than what he received from SOREAC. Evariste considered this time as the time of bondage in Egypt. In prayer, he asked God to help him to leave Egypt. Thus, the idea of creating his own business came to his mind. He refused in his life to work any longer for others. He was a big disappointment with SOREAC. During that difficult time, Evariste was reading Scripture and was comforted by the message of Psalm 1:1-3: “Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law, he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does he prospers.”

God is alive. One month later, the World Bank was looking for a consultant in civil engineering for CEMAC (a regional and economic organization for six French-speaking countries in Central African region.). He sent his application to Washington with faith and prayer. God answered his prayer. He was appointed as a consultant with the World Bank for four months. The salary he received from World Bank was four times higher than at SOREAC. He said that in four months God gave him 16 months of salary from SOREAC.

He was almost crying during his first trip as a consultant in CEMAC region. Even his former employer was surprised and came to realize that he had in the business someone who could work with the World Bank. Thus is God's way. He decided to use his job as a means to spread Gospel. After four months, his contract with World Bank was renewed, and his salary increased. With this money, Evariste DIGNOTO decided to create his own business called "La Semence" (The Seed).

Influences

Mr. Evariste DIGNOTO did not remember any human influence. He recognized that his life was mainly influenced by many figures of the Old Testament, especially the stories of Israelite kings from the biblical books of Kings and Chronicles. Kings who were obedient to God were successful and prosperous. They won battles and led their peoples to peace and prosperity. The reading of these books helped me to obey God in everything.

CURRENT MINISTRY OR VOCATION

Work/Ministry

"La Semence" was created in 2003, but only in 2005 that he began to work properly. It is a building company and now specialized in draining for the city of Bangui and road construction. Little by little, La Semence became of the best company in draining and road construction because of the quality of its realizations. World Bank and the European Union appreciated what La Semence is doing. This is why they are working with La Semence in many projects in Bangui and the rest of the country.

Evariste DIGNOTO is the manager of La Semence. In this position, he oversees the project from their conception to their realization on the ground. Because the business environment in the country is very polluted, Evariste DIGNOTO did not stay only in the office, but he goes to the ground to see what workers are doing in conformity with the terms of the contract.

In spite of his responsibilities as a businessman, Evariste DIGNOTO is very present in the life of the church. He is a member of the Apostolic Church in Bangui. He is the coordinator of cell groups in the church and vice president of an orphanage called Abel Foundation. He is still a friend of IFES.

Mission/Vision

Evariste DIGNOTO thinks that his mission is to do good work to glorify God. In everything he is doing with the business, he is trying to hear the voice of God through Scriptures, prayers and directions from some men of God in the church.

Training/Leadership Development

Because of his success in life, Evariste DIGNOTO is called by youth organization like IFES (GBU) to speak to young people using his own example. His favorite verse in the message is Hebrew 1:6: " And without faith it is impossible to please God because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him."

Faith, obedience, hard work is the message that he conveyed to the young generation. As a Christian, Evariste DIGNOTO supports students at FATEB or the local university.

Impact/Success/Assessment

La Semence has a great impact on the population. First of all, as a business, it offers employment to hundreds of people. The work of La Semence also has a direct impact on the well-being of people. Works like roads building, draining water, etc., call the attention of people in the community.

Professional Relationship

La Semence has a close professional relationship with the World Bank and the European Union. As a businessman, Evariste also has a relationship with local banks. Unfortunately, there is no Christian organization that may bring all Christian business together.

SWOT: Strengths Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

For Evariste DIGNOTO, his strength is first of all his faith to God. Then comes prayer. The third one is the quest to apply the Word of God in all areas of life.

The economic situation in CAR is not propitious for business, but it also offers an opportunity for those who are trying to manage well and to comply with the requirements of partners such as World Bank and the European Union. La Semence is committed to doing so. The political situation is not favorable for investments. Evariste DIGNOTO desire is to see all Christians in CAR living their faith plainly in their workplace for the glory of the Lord.

Reading & Writing

Evariste DIGNOTO read mainly Bible and other books in the area of civil engineering. His preference is in the historical books of Kings and Chronicles. He did not write at this stage but wanted to put his testimony in writing.

Electronic Media

He uses a computer for Internet and research in the area of engineering.

Political Arena

Evariste is of the opinion that Christian may play a role in the political arena, but a positive role. Those who are called in the politics must serve as a reference, as a model for the rest of the political body. The aim here is to be a promoter of Christian values in this area.

Future

The insecurity in the country has led to the destruction and looting of the business. However, Evariste has faith that his business will continue to the glory of the Lord. Humbly he wants to help others to realize their objectives in their life.

Report Information Preparation

Names: MUTEBA Elie and Dr. NUPANGA Weanzana

Date of interview: Tuesday, September 17th, 2013

POST-CONFLICT INTERVIEW REPORT

Mr. Evariste Dignito reports that during the height of the 2013 conflict the country was practically paralyzed, and his company was unable to work. While his employees were without work for three months, he notes that in accordance with the law he did not lay them off, but took them back as soon as possible. While there are difficulties, his business of draining, building, and of road construction continues.

His funds ultimately come from a variety of primarily external sources (the World Bank, the European Union, local banks, governments) – but he does not work directly for these. It is the CAR government that seeks and secures funding for specific projects, and calls for bids. He works then for the CAR government on projects they contract for.

Mr. Dignito reports that apart from his business relations, and unlike some other sorts of leaders, he did not have any unique opportunities to minister during this political conflict situation.