

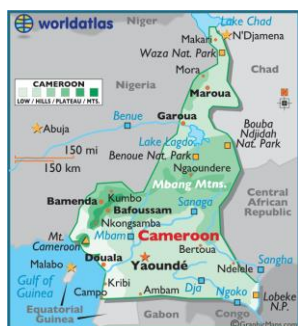
Dear Sisters and Associates/Companions -- Today, on this sixth week (February 19) of our 2024 Global Coordinating Group calendar, we are invited *to listen to the heart of the world* and hold in prayer our Sisters and Associates serving in **Cameroon** as well as all the people in that Central African nation.

The Sisters of St. Joseph of Cuneo have served in Cameroon since 1985 and today run two missions – Salak and Mora. Both are located in the north of the country and include ministries in education and schools,



parishes, and prisons where the Sisters help to empower women, persons with physical challenges, and people living with AIDS. The Cuneo Congregation's website offers several updates about their work, including this joyous [article](#) by Sr. Justine Souké

(see image) about the blessing of their new house in Mora last November at which many community members, Sisters, Associates and friends were present. You can also read about the recent [online Pan-African training meeting](#) for the young professed Sisters from throughout the African continent about which Sr. Ruth Ikoromboro wrote: "What unites us, our charism of communion, is stronger and inseparable than what distinguishes us".



Country Background: Cameroon is located on the Gulf of Guinea in Central Africa. Early inhabitants included the Sao civilization near Lake Chad and the Baka hunter-gatherers in the southeastern rainforest. From the 15<sup>th</sup> until the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, the region was colonized by the Portuguese, Germans, French, and British. The nation of Cameroon was created in 1961 through the unification of two former colonies (British and French) and renamed the United Republic of Cameroon in 1972. With a growing

population of just under 29million (2024) - almost evenly divided between urban and rural dwellers – the number of distinct ethnic and linguistic groups are estimated to be between 230 and 282. Cameroon is a country rich in wildlife and resources, including: petroleum, bauxite, iron ore, timber, hydropower, and agriculture. However, approximately 38percent of the population live below the poverty line – with that figure increasing to above 70percent in some regions. Adding to economic challenges, in its [2022 report](#) Amnesty International raised several concerns about restrictions to the freedoms of expression, association and assembly, the arbitrary detention of opposition supporters and anglophone leaders as well as crimes committed by separatist groups in the northwest and southwest. Similarly, the United Nations' Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs issued a [situation report](#) last December that expressed concern about “acute food insecurity and malnutrition with 2.9million people affected between October and December 2023...”. (Sources: Amnesty International, Cuneo Congregation website, CSJ International Centre website, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Wikipedia, Worldometer)



United in prayer, the Global Joseph Family, 7850 Sisters, 5700 Associates, 34 Agrégées in 45 countries, listening to the heart of the world.