

Building from Centers of Strength 2 — Wagenya
The Church in the DR Congo: A Personal Perspective, Part 6



In a presentation at the 2018 *FairMormon Conference*,¹ I shared stories of some of the faithful Saints in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Kinshasa). In this new series of presentations, I would like to speak from a more personal perspective, reflecting on the meaning of that experience for Kathleen and me, and pondering some of the dynamics of numerical and spiritual growth of the Church in that country.

The series is organized into ten parts:

1. Prologue: What brought us to Africa?
2. Snapshot of the Church in the DR Congo
3. The missionaries
4. What attracts people to the Church?
5. Building from centers of strength 1 — Kisangani
- 6. *Building from centers of strength 2 — Wagenya***
7. Taking the Gospel to the “ends of the earth”
8. The temple 1: Turning the hearts of the children
9. The temple 2: A light to the world
10. “The labourers are few”

In this episode, the theme of “building from centers of strength” is concluded. Among other things, I will discuss the creation of a second branch in Kisangani, near the traditional home of the famous Wagenya fishermen. As was the case with Jesus’ disciples, fishermen were among the

first members of the Church in Kisangani. Through photos and videos, their unique lifestyle, their challenges, and their faith will be highlighted.

We will also introduce the story of Brother Wilfrid MALEO, the current president of the Wagenya branch. After his baptism, he resigned his position as a teacher and later refused a post at the university of his former church, one of many sacrifices that he and his family have made in behalf of his fellow branch members.

¹ The video version of the entire FairMormon presentation is available on the FairMormon YouTube channel at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nJl9FvLkmjw>. The seven segments of this presentation, in an edited and somewhat expanded form, are available for reading at *Meridian Magazine* (www.ldsMag.com) and the website of *The Interpreter Foundation* (<https://interpreterfoundation.org>). For more articles and videos by Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, see www.templethemes.org.