

## **LEARNING from TRUE STORIES!**

An old Irish missionary priest who had served in the Congo in central Africa for many years when interviewed shared this revealing story upon his retirement.

He noticed that the village community had a power generator so he requested to his Provincial Superior if he could buy a television set for the native people. When his request was approved, and the television set connected it had access to television programs from America for 24 hours a day. He said that the native people watched it constantly and then one morning no one came to watch it anymore. The priest met the village elder and asked for an explanation and was told; *“That the people who put together these programs don’t know our culture and traditions. Over time we only come to appreciate stories after people have made an effort to know and then connect with our issues.”*

The enduring and valuable message here is that effective teaching by way of a story only comes to people after first getting to know some of their important life traditions and history.

Jesus of Nazareth was a master storyteller and behind his success is that he made the effort to know the history and the heritage of the people who he was teaching. He makes this point; *“why I choose to speak to them in stories is that they look without seeing and hear without understanding to what’s been said.”* (Matthew Chapter 13 verse 13) *Fr Martin R Maunsell*