

Claude, Colongondat Clément

(1932–2000)

NDOMBETH EMERYC ABIB

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Early Life, Education, and Marriage

Colongondat Clément Claude was born around 1932 in Alindao, Basse-Kotto, Central African Republic. He was the firstborn son of Koliaka Joseph, who had three wives. Claude's mother was Kouatiourou Lucienne.

Claude attended primary and secondary school at the Mobaye School and spent his childhood in Alindao.¹ He married Elise on March 13, 1957. Ten children, six girls and four boys, were born to them. Two daughters and one son preceded him death. After his secondary studies, Claude trained to be an agricultural instructor.

Ministry

Claude was among the first native people to be recruited as an evangelist in the Central African Republic. After a long and fascinating search for the truth, which led him to Israel, he returned to his country where he learned that there was a group of people who kept the Sabbath. He received Bible studies from the Seventh-day Adventist church, accepted the doctrines, and was baptized by French Adventist missionary and pastor Jean Kempf on May 12, 1960. Following his baptism, Claude undertook two years of evangelism training. He was passionate about spreading the everlasting gospel. Recruited as an evangelist on April 1, 1962, he was sent to Alindao, his hometown, the first Adventist evangelist to be sent there. By the end of 1964, he had baptized 220 people.² Claude established the first Adventist church in the inner part of the country. He also worked in Bangui, the capital city, and led many people to be baptized.

A former supervisor of agricultural work, Claude was an early pioneer of the Adventist Church in the Central African Republic. He was instrumental in establishing the Adventist movement in the prefecture of Basse-Kotto.³

Claude retired in 1998. He spent his later life in Bangui, the capital of the Central African Republic, where he died on August 8, 2000.

NOTES

1. Cephace Colongodat, school master and Bouar church member, interview by author, Bangui, Central African Republic, December 24, 2017.
2. Dolet Jeanne, housekeeper and Castors church member, interview by author, Bangui, Central African Republic, October 22, 2017.
3. Jean Pierre Dalikouba, retired Adventist pastor and Bangui church member, interview by author, November 26, 2017.

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