

Patrick Kongawi was born April 14th, 1984 in Binga, Democratic Republic of Congo, on a palm plantation in the heart of the Dark Continent, to Regine and Jacques Kongawi. He is a younger brother to Ernest (35 years old) and the eldest brother to Christian (24), Bruno (19) and Joelle and Arlette (17).

Growing up in the darkest part of Africa had its challenges and its joys. From playing hide and seek in the tree tops and eating fresh fruit to being savagely attacked by rebel vandals. The most memorable period in his childhood, was between the ages of three and six. At the time his father was the chief medical officer at a hospital in Binga. It was a palm plantation owned by a Belgium company. The town was a tropical paradise, comparable to the Garden of Eden in his mind. But there was a storm coming and the events that followed marked him for the rest of his life.

Patrick's father was secretly treating Mr. Tongo, a prominent figure of the Ngobe tribe, who later died due to AIDS. The Ngobe people blamed Dr. Kongawi, who was Mgbaka, for the death of their loved one. The angry Ngobe stormed Patrick's little piece of heaven and brutally attacked the Kongawi residence. If it was not for the Catholic sister, Geno, sheltering the children from the machetes and stones with her body, Patrick and his younger brother would have surely been killed. After the attack, Patrick's family fled to Gemena, left with nothing but memories of their former carefree days. Patrick was then sent to a series of Catholic boarding schools in which he was ridiculed by his peers and teachers due to his lighter complexion and Belgian / Portuguese heritage. Patrick was chased, beaten and harassed on a daily basis. His own people, the Mgbaka rejected him for being of mixed blood.

In 1994 Patrick was presented with the opportunity to get a proper education in Canada. Former missionaries to the Congo, Leo and Linea Lanoie, opened their home and their hearts to Patrick. Shortly after his arrival to Prince Albert, the Congo plunged into a civil war and again his African family had to flee their home to Kinshasa. Patrick felt helpless; there was nothing he could do for his parents and siblings in Africa except pray. Despite these circumstances, God protected his family. Throughout this hardship Patrick's relationship with God grew and his faith in the Lord's goodness and mercy sustained him.

Ten years later, while attending the University of Saskatchewan, studying International Development, Patrick met the girl of his dreams, Amanda. At this time Patrick was struggling with depression, anxiety and stress. Amanda was there to help him deal with the memories that haunted him, she brought life into his heart and he was once again reminded of Gods goodness.

On July 7th, 2008, Patrick took his fiancé to the Congo. He wanted her to meet his family and to be able to understand his culture. On the tenth night of their African adventure, a group of armed rebels came to their residence and began firing. They surrounded the premises and shot for 45 minutes. Fortunately, the police and army arrived just in time to deter the intruders. They were both gripped with fear, however; this life altering experience only drew the two closer together.

On December 20th, 2009, Patrick married Amanda and moved back to Prince Albert, where he took a job at the Bank of Montreal. Despite the trials and tribulations of his life, Patrick Kongawi has become a man of great faith, love and hope. He is kept busy by his job and the Bank of Montreal, helping clients with their financial needs. He enjoys the simple things in life such as reading a good book, going for a jog or spending time with friends and family.