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*"We can't row the canoe fast with one paddle"  
(African proverb)*

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## Coords-Link, January-February, 2011

Dear Fellow Coordinators,

**The Winds of Change.** As the Year 2011 began, the world's attention was once again focused on Africa. Unexpected turns of events are taking place. A young Tunisian, jobless professional, burned himself to protest against his hopeless situation and that of his country. This incident ignited the *Jasmine revolution*. Facilitated by the Internet and Mobile Phones, using the programs like Face book and Twitter thousands of youth mobilized the population to oust the regime deeply rooted by 27 years of autocratic rule. Even the best political analysts were taken aback by the swiftness of Ben Ali's departure. The wind of change is blowing in the Arab world particularly in North Africa. The Algerian youth followed suit though the government responded quickly to appease the discontentment. On the 25<sup>th</sup> of January, feast of Saint Paul, it was Egypt's turn. Throngs of people gathered in the centers of the big cities like Alexandria, Suez and Cairo, to manifest against Hosni Mubarak. You must have seen the ocean of people occupying the *Tharir square* until the fall of Hosni Mubarak on February 11. Egypt's Pharaoh's 30 years reign which seemed impregnable has crumbled only in 18 days through people's will. In the meantime there were demonstrations too in Yemen, in Jordan and in Syria. On February 15 the revolt in Libya broke out. Who could really imagine that? Unfortunately Muammar al-Gaddafi, already in power for more than 40 years, has no intention to let go. The violent repressions are developing into a civil war. Another important happening in Africa is the referendum held in Southern Sudan last January 15. The commission published the final results in February with 98.83% voting in favor of independence. God willing Southern Sudan will be Africa's 54th state in 9 July 2011.

The turns of events teach us that the world is not always predictable. We remember the "People's Power" that toppled Marcos' regime 25 years ago. The winds of change would certainly have a great impact on the Arab World which is predominantly Muslim. We only hope that changes bear positive results. The events show us the power of the youth and the importance of the Internet and mobile phone in our modern time. How familiar are we with Face Book and the You Tube? One of our AFRAM Vision-Mission Statement is "to educate and impart Christian values to our youth". How do we accompany them in the use of the latest communications tools? Are we with them or behind them?

**Elections in the AFRAM Zone.** We remember that in the last AFRAM Zonal Assembly Fr. Superior General put aside the usual statistical report in his address and reflected rather on Leadership. He pointed out that it was one of the main concerns of the Synod Fathers for Africa who believe that "one crucial need of Africa today is good governance or true servant leadership". In June 1<sup>st</sup> this year there will be turn-over of new administrations. Some provinces have already started the election process near the end of 2010.

**GHA.** We are happy to know that Ghana Province has already finished the election of Provincial. We congratulate *Fr. Thomas D'Mello* for his second term of office!

**BOT.** Congratulations too to *Fr. Paul Shiju* for his reelection as provincial. May the Lord give him more grace and blessing as he continues his leadership role in the province.

**MOZ.** The Mission has a new Superior. Congratulations to *Fr. Paul Nadolny*! He was with us in the Assembly as one of the Treasurers. His Vice is *Fr. Johnson Furtado* our future formator.

**TOG.** The provincial assembly began last January 25, Feast of the Conversion of Saint Paul culminating with the Festive celebration of Saint Joseph Freinademetz. The first round of elections for the next provincial administration was held and came out with four candidates for provincial and eight more for the Counselors. In the March Update we will have the complete list of the new provincial council.

**KEN.** The first phase of the elections has been achieved. Using Method III-A ballots has been forwarded to all confreres. The second phase will start on the 3rd week of March. Fr. Provincial Eusebio Manangbao is the new Chairman of the BOT of Tangaza College which is celebrating its Silver Jubilee this year. Hopefully this Institution where our CFC students study will be raised to University Status and be aggregated to Urbaniana University. The process of a merger to Consolata Philosophicum is also moving on well.

**CNG.** Last January the Generalate has published the three candidates for Provincial and six for councilors. Using Method II B the confreres are convoked for a Provincial Assembly which will be held in April 4-9 and elect directly the Provincial and the members of his council.

**ANG.** After the Execom Meeting the Provincial Council of Angola held a meeting to count the votes for the first phase. The names of the candidates have been sent to Rome. The confreres concerned have 15 days to refuse in case of serious reasons.

**MAD.** Last January confreres were asked to send their votes to the Generalate. We hope that in March we will know more about the progress of the election process.

As to our Missions **TCD** and **ZIM** we are still waiting for some news.

**Execom.** Last February 14-15 we held our meeting in Luanda, Angola with our President as our host. Br. Guy Mazola, the Area Coordinator for Formation was invited to join the Committee since we are studying more in details the prospect of opening a Fourth CFC in AFRAM in Angola. It was one of the dreams of yesterday to have CFCs for the three major languages in the Zone, i.e., English, French and Portuguese. In the March Update I will give you a more extensive report on the meeting.

**Workshop preparations.** I had the chance to meet personally Bro. João Facatino, the Area Coordinator for Justice and Peace. We took the opportunity to draft the agenda of the Workshop to be held in Nairobi. We will have important guests! Fr. Zeferino Zeca Martins, our Execom President will talk about the JPIC and Mission in the Second African Synod since he was there as active participant. Our Generalate JPIC Coordinator Milan Bubak got us into contact with Fr. Herman Wijtten the First Generalate JPIC Coordinator and one of the founding fathers of the Africa-Europe Faith and Justice Network (AEFJN). He will join us in the Workshop and talk about AEFJN. For your appreciation am sending you a copy the 2<sup>nd</sup> Draft of the Agenda of the JPIC Workshop. Fr. Denis Pereira, the ANG Mission Secretary, also helped me collating and preparing the Draft for the Mission Animation Workshop. I will send you a copy of it in the March Update.

**VIVAT Workshop in Congo.** Last January 15, on the Feast of our Founder a celebration was held to mark the 10th Anniversary of VIVAT International. The Board of Directors, whose president is our Fr. General Superior Antonio Pernia, decided to hold a Workshop for Francophone Africa in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Fr. Gervase Taratara, CSSp was appointed as the contact person for the preparations and organization of the Workshop. He is in communication with the SVD AFRAM Zonal Coordinator to begin the process. He seemed to suggest, to my surprise, that only members working in the DRC will participate in the Workshop. I still have to clarify this matter.

**Our condolences.** Fr. Mirek Wolodko, our Area Coordinator for Communications has gone to Poland to say goodbye to his dear mother Eleonora who died last February 26 at the age of 79. The Funeral Mass was celebrated in his Parish Church in Lidzbark Warminski, North of Poland last March 1. Fr. Mirek thanks you for joining him and his family during those deep and touching moments.

Fraternally yours in the Divine Word,

P. Xene A. Sanchez, SVD  
AZC