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

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**Coords-Link 0906, June 30, 2009**

Dear fellow coordinators,

Many things happened in the months of June. Here is a copy of the circular I sent to the Major Superiors..

**AFB Meeting.** Last June 8-12 the members of the Afram Formation Board (AFB) met in Nsawam, Ghana. We were joined by Fr. Provincial himself, two other members of his council and the Formators of the Province. We thank them for their interest and involvement in Formation for Africa and Madagascar. Other invited confreres were the rectors of the three Common Formation Centers and resource persons. One of the highlights of the meeting was the interpretation of the Survey of the CFC ten years after its creation. The appreciation was in general very positive though the areas of JPIC and Communications needed to be improved. There were sixteen issues discussed and fourteen recommendations were passed. It was also decided to organize a month long formation for Formators scheduled for June 2011 in Ghana. The next AFB meeting will be held on June 2010 in D. R. Congo. The hospitality of the Ghana province was highly appreciated as well as the organization. We thank the area coordinator, Bro. Guy Mazola for spearheading the preparations. Please note the following:

- The AFB plans to hold a Formators Formation course and the proposed date is June 2011 in Ghana. Since this entails the participation of all provinces the Execom would like to know your opinion. Are you in favor? Do you have confreres to send?
- The AFB will hold their workshop in 2010 to be able to discuss on the new directives for formation prepared by the Generalate.

**Execom Meeting.** The Executive Committee composed of the President Fr. Thomas D'Mello (GHA), the Provincial of the host of the next Zonal Assembly Fr. Joseph Kallanchira (TOG) and the Zonal Coordinator Fr. Xene Sanchez met in Accra, Ghana last June 13-14. As stipulated in the amended Afram Statute 1.2.2 it discussed and deliberated on the different recommendations passed by the AFRAM area and board meetings. The points in the Agenda were communicated to the Major Superiors inviting them to give their opinions to the Execom before the meeting. Approved were the 8 recommendations of the Formators Meeting in Lusaka, the 14 recommendations of the Afram Formation Board Meeting in Accra and the 4 recommendations of the Mission Secretaries' Meeting in Luanda. Other important decisions were:

- the postponement of the Biblical Pastoral Ministry Workshop and the Communications Workshop scheduled for October-November in Zimbabwe; the date will be decided on the coming Zonal Assembly.
- the fixing of the date of the next Zonal Assembly which will be on February 21-27 in Togo. Since there will be six area coordinators (BPM, Communications, JPIC, Mission Animation, Formation and Treasurers) the Zone could not shoulder their travel expenses. I request the Provinces who have an area Coordinator to include this in your budget for 2010.
- the proposals of some points for the next Zonal Assembly. So far there are eight and please read them in the Execom meeting report which I will send to you right after the UPDATE.

**Generalate Meeting with the Zonal Coordinators.** Last June 18 – 20 June the Generalate had a meeting with the Zonal Coordinators. Fr. General assured them that their presence is seen as an extension of the Generalate and he looks forward to these meetings. First, there was the reporting of the four Zones followed by questions and exchange of ideas.

- AFRAM. Topics raised were: the question on common Novitiates still to be followed up, the OTP policies, the evaluation of candidates for perpetual vows after two years of OTP, the evaluation of the CFC, and the meeting of Treasurers.
- ASPAC. The problems with the commitment of some Area Coordinators and the need to revitalize the meetings in the subzones. Zonal activities cost lots of money so it should be more productive. A concern was raised on the reluctance of missionaries going to places without modern conveniences.
- EUROPE. A survey was made on non-European missionaries working in Europe. Hopefully the results can be made available in the svdcuria.org. There is more and more collaboration with the laity. Some European Provinces ask AFRAM for candidates for formation. AFRAM had modified its policy of filling her own Common Formation Centres first and gave more room for the exchange of formandi outside Africa. The Generalate after the visitation sent a circular letter entitled: "*A New Face of the SVD in EUROPE*".
- PANAM. The current trend is to have Common Formation Centres for both clerical and Brother Formandi. There is a challenge to arrive at a balance between native-born and non-native-born confreres in Provinces. There were also issues on Vocation promotion.

**Other topics:** (1) The General Assembly on the Brother Vocation, (2) the 17<sup>th</sup> General Chapter (Venue and Initial preparations Reports, Theme, Methodology, Involvement of the Zones in the discussions, the elections), (3) Implementation of Resolutions and Recommendations of the 16th General Chapter (Migrant and Refugee Apostolate, Human Trafficking and Common Orientation and guidelines for SVD Education), (4) Nemi International Centre: Buildings, Programmes and Personnel.

**Other Information:**

- *Domitilla Catacomb*: since January 2009 the Vatican entrusted it to the administration of the SVD, it is the largest in Rome covering about 17km.
- *VIVAT International* – is now composed of eight congregations. In order to accommodate the participation of the other congregations, the Charter had to be revised. Other developments include Workshops. Two have been held already in Rome and Brazil. The next is planned for Cochabamba, Bolivia, and Nairobi, Kenya.
- *Database*: Some Provinces and Regions are yet to submit the data of confreres who have done higher studies.
- *SVD Publications*: The Generalate has published the Ordo, Catalogus, Vademecum (English and Spanish), SVD Ceremonial, SVD Mass and Liturgy of the Hours of the Proper of SVD Saints, Blessed and Martyrs.
- *AJSC*: The Workshop for 30-Day Retreat Directors is foreseen for 24 participants 12 of whom will be SVDs and the other 12 will be SSps. A questionnaire on the future direction of the AJSC Team has been sent out to a number of Provinces/Regions and responses are coming back.
- *AEFJ Network*: The SVD is a member and we pay quite an amount for dues. The Generalate asked the JPIC Coordinator to investigate if we should continue our membership.
- *Timing of Zonal Meetings*: the Generalate holds its CAUCUS during the months of January and June-July. It is better not to hold Zonal or Area meetings at these times.

**General Assembly on Brother Vocation:** it started last June 29 to last till July 12. I will talk about it in the next UPDATE.

Fraternally yours in the Divine Word,

P. Xene A. Sanchez, SVD  
AZC