

MISSION ANIMATION IN THE GHANA SVD PROVINCE

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Fellow participants of Mission Secretaries at the workshop in Luanda, Angola, I would once again like to draw your attention to the following comments I made in our first workshop meeting of Mission Secretaries held in Lome, Togo, 2004, that “ Mission Animation which is fostering mission awareness has its foundation in the missionary nature of the church. Based on this, mission animation is therefore a means of seeking to help keep alive the church’s awareness of the world wide missionary responsibility. The details of what I said at that meeting are now distributed to you for your guided reflections and actions thereon.

Now that I have submitted the long form report to you in my presentation at this meeting, the following will only highlight the executive summary of what I think can be relevant to the immediate stakeholders within our organizational framework.

The starting point of these highlights will be:

1. Situation of Mission Animation in the past
2. Present Mission Animation in the situation that we find ourselves in the Ghana Province

1. SITUATION IN THE PAST

The following highlights give us an indication on how the Divine Word Missionaries came to the Gold –Coast now called Ghana.

1. The Divine Word Missionaries arrived in the Gold Coast on the 13th of October 1938.
2. After their arrival, on the 1st of January 1941 Bishop Porter of the then Cape-Coast Vicariate handed over the Eastern province of the Mission to the care of the SVD’s with Fr. Adolf Noser in charge.
3. The decree elevating the Accra Mission of the SVD to the status of Prefecture arrived on the 19th of December 1943 and on the 11th of January 1944 Bishop Porter of Cape-Coast in the central Region of Gold-Coast- Ghana installed Msg Adolf Noser SVD as Apostolic Prefect with residence at the Sacred Heart Church in Accra (Derby –Avenue).

During these early years, the Divine Word Missionaries came in and made their in roads into the eastern region and other related areas and eventually gained popularity by establishing schools in some parts of the country.

The strategy used by our early SVD Missionaries at that time to gain popularity among the people was to make sure that they provide quality education to the people entrusted to their care. Some of these people were well trained by them and they turned out to be

catechists and teachers in the various schools established in order to carry on with the gospel messages they want to convey to the people. Based on this, some of the SVD's in these parishes also turned out to be local managers of these schools established by them.

To add to these educational institutions, they also went ahead to establish senior secondary schools in some parts of the country.

The involvement of Divine Word Missionaries in the education of the youth from 1938 is still going on up to this present time. Along the line, the Ghana province during those early years in the past has been re-focusing their attention on the stated goals outlined in their vision and mission statements that they out-lined for themselves at their various provincial Chapters and Assemblies. This has helped them in putting in place the sort of Action Plans that will help them implement the visions and mission statements that they formulated for themselves during a particular period of their religious missionary work in the various places they have been assigned to.

2. PRESENT MISSIONARY SITUATION IN THE GHANA PROVINCE

For any organizational structure to work properly, and have an enduring presence for the future usage, its foundation must be properly laid and have a strong foot hold for the end users.

As already pointed out, the early SVD missionaries laid down proper religious missionary life foundation in the Gold-Coast and for that matter Ghana. After 63 years now and that is in year 2007, the Catholic Church as a whole again has officially recognized our SVD achievements in the filed of primary evangelization and went ahead to erect a new Prefecture carved from Koforidua Diocese in the Eastern Region of Ghana for the SVD's to take care of its growth.

Based on this, the former SVD Provincial Superior in our Ghana Province, Gabriel Edoe Kumordje, and SVD was chosen to be the Apostolic Prefect for that area. The details of that area is in the long form report I submitted to you for your perusal.

From this period up to date, the Ghana province in a way is trying to do what is expected out of these situations to re-activate the various characteristic dimensions. For example:

- The Bible Apostolate
- Justice and Peace (JPIC)
- Communication
- Mission Animation

Apart from these areas, some of our members are also actively engaged in the pastoral work in some of the dioceses.

- Publication and sales of books to the general public is an area we are involved.

- Formation of the local leaders – Lay Associates and the training of the local people into the priesthood and religious life also forms part of our field work.
- The health ministry which is now becoming an area of concern for us is also being catered for by putting one of our experts to help in the Teaching Hospital in Accra. (Korlebu-Teaching Hospital)

It is also very important to note that, our Ghana province from the year 2007 was in a position to send 26 Ghanaian SVD's to other Missions outside Africa. We also have 10 of our Ghanaian SVD's working in various Provinces in Africa. Thus, there are 36 Ghanaian SVD's working outside Ghana up to this time of our workshop. Added to that, we also have 16 Ghanaian SVD Seminarians studying outside Ghana and two Ghanaian Priests also studying outside Ghana up to this time.

For further information kindly read the long form report I presented at the workshop in Angola from 8-13th March 2009.

I would like to end by saying “May the darkness of sin and the night of unbelief vanish before the light of the world and the spirit of Grace and may the heart of Jesus live in the hearts of all people.” Amen.

Luanda-Angola

Dated: 9 March 2009