Word Aflame

Botswana Province Newsletter December 2009

Word from the Provincial

DREAM IT LIVE IT CELEBRATE IT - it is an advert I see often at meals. Coca cola bottles marketed in Botswana bear them alongside FIFA soccer cup, wooing more and more new consumers. During my recent visit to LUMKO I witnessed the rainbow nation dreaming, living and celebrating the forthcoming 2010 FIFA Soccer World Cup in all aspects of life with vuvuzelas fast becoming an iconic symbol of celebration. Vuvuzela is a meter long, brightly colored plastic horn that sounds like an elephant up-close, and when blown frantically it sounds a massive swarm of very angry bees. The ancestor of the vuvuzela is said to be the kudu horn - *ixilongo* in isiXhosa, *mhalamhala* in Tshivenda - blown to summon African villagers to meetings. Some say it comes from the isiZulu for - wait for it - "making noise". Others say it's from township slang related to the word "shower", because it "showers people with music". Adding to the appeal is the African folklore that "A baboon is killed by a lot of noise." During the last quarter of a match, supporters blow vuvuzelas frantically in an attempt to "kill off" their opponents. The Official World Cup Ball is named "JABULANI" which means "to celebrate" in isiZulu. The "JABULANI" ball sports an impressive 11 different colours to represent the 11 players who take the field for every team during the tournament and the 11 official languages of South Africa, and the 11 South African tribes that make the country extremely diverse as a rainbow nation.

Season of Advent and Christmas is a paradoxical combination of waiting, hastening and celebrating life in its diversities and rainbow colors. Various infancy narratives in the gospels manifest it. It summons us *to wait for*, and to *pitch* the ultimate dream of God- God becoming human in every child, and every child nursing the earth as the body of God. The multitude of heavenly host with the angel summoned the shepherds- *Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.* In Christmas we celebrate *the Human face of Divine Compassion*. It is our dream too, to become *Human Face of Divine Compassion* in *respect, solidarity and love*. But there are dreams that cannot be, and storms we cannot weather in time gone by and time to come. *What came to be through him was life, and this life was the light of the human race; the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.* Christmas calls us to hasten in embracing a missionary spirituality of weakness. Sin resides not in weakness but in strength. Divine Compassion is often experienced in the whirlpools of pain and loss. Christmas challenges us to look at the ways that we wait, the ways that we hasten, and the ways that we celebrate to become *the Human Face of Divine Compassion*.

Becoming *the Human Face of Divine Compassion* is an ongoing process of maturation through integrated and harmonious personal growth. A compassionate religious is also a contemplative critic. In the harmonious integration of all dimensions of my personhood I begin to dream the dream of God! After all a *baboon is killed by a lot of noise!* Therefore, with a compassionate thrust for a prophetic presence let us **DREAM IT LIVE IT CELEBRATE IT**. Merry Christmas and Happy New year!

Shiju Paul

Provincial Superior

Braam was fascinated and happy to hear about our envisaged Lefoko Centre. We shared with him our dream. He was hoping to cooperate one day on several levels – especially related to culture of the San and other people, to their religion, Biblical work and various development projects.

Looking at his life and work we felt very humble and a bit ashamed that so little has been done on our part. We envied also his freedom of doing what was right. We knew however that he had gone through tremendous trials and periods of disappointment, lack of understanding, appreciation and gratitude. Only now, after his death, the people realise the vast contribution of this man. We learned a lot from him and from his wife Willemien, who continues his work.

Braam was also a man of integrity. He openly challenged the famous and powerful international organisation Survival International for misreporting on the situation of the San People in Botswana, for spreading false information and exaggerating facts (story reported on the BBC). One of the custodians of Kuru testified that Braam indeed opened up the minds of the San people. "He made us realise that it is ok to be a San, which we now appreciate". He truly became the voice of voiceless. He was buried in Samochima near Shakawe.

Celebrating Braam's life we ponder about our own missionary life and commitment, especially among the poorest and most marginalised, about our option for the poor, about our characteristic dimensions and freedom to do what is right and what has to be done.

Ajit and Mareko

MOGODITSHANE PARISH FELICITATES – H.E. MS. DORCAS KGOSIETSILE

The Indian Catholic community in Mogoditshane, friends and well wishers at Holy Cross Catholic Parish in Mogoditshane felicitated the High Commissioner of Botswana to India H.E. Ms. Dorcas Kgosietsile. Over 150people turned up for the event. She is a committed catholic who comes from Tlokweng. In her inspiring speech she said "She is both the ambassador of Botswana and of Christ." She introduced e-learning facilities and online class rooms on selected subjects for students attending classes at the University of Botswana with professors in India. She carries out a number of charitable projects for the less privileged in India, outside her hectic schedule as a diplomat.

Holy Cross Sings to Glory

Holy Cross Catholic Church, Mogoditshane won three first prizes in inter-parish choir competition held in Gaborone. They will represent Botswana in the inter-diocesan choir competition to be held in Swaziland. We wish them all the best, and kudos to Frs. Kuriakose and Ariel

WORLD AIDS DAY–'UNIVERSAL ACCESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS'

World AIDS Day was celebrated in Livingstone with a candle lit procession around the town. It is an inter-church initiative held every year to join the rest of the world to relate to the friends, parents, brothers, sisters, sons and daughters we have lost to the HIV/AIDS epidemic. This year the theme is -'Universal Access and Human Rights'. It clearly manifests a paradigm shift in seeing AIDS merely as a sexual issue to approaching it as a justice issue. Prayers and Holy Masses were celebrated in many of our parishes to mark the occasion. Strength of the active resurrectional hope from Eucharist is the key word for working in this ministry.

A JOURNEY TO AFRICA FROM THE SOUTH PACIFIC

The news from the African continent played a part in how I view the world in general when I was growing up on the island of Taveuni, to the north of the Fiji Islands in the South Pacific. Fiji has about 300 islands with only 10% habited. Suva is the capital city. It has 26 provinces, chiefs, and dialects. English and Fijian are the two major languages. Christianity, Hinduism, Islam are the major religions represented. Sugar, Tourism, and Textiles are the big income earners. Currently Fiji is run by an interim military government awaiting democratic election in 2011. As a result, there are bans on certain aspects on its relationship to the outside world.

I was baffled when I watched a movie about *Idi Amin* of how people could be so controlling and abusive, I prayed for and mourned the devastating hunger that swept Somalia in the '80s, I celebrated and rejoiced in the breaking of the Apartheid, I smiled and sang when I watched a movie shot in Soweto called *Sarafina*, and I admire the greatness in the man of *Nelson Mandela*. I jumped and cheered with excitement when South Africa won the Rugby World Cup while hosting it in 2005. I sang along when South African reggae star, *Lucky Dube*, toured Fiji in the '90s, and shed tears when South Africa buried him in 2007.

Yes, the power of television has made the world share its challenges and triumphs. But never in my wildest dream had I thought that I will travel to and walk this holy continent. I joined the SVD in the Australian Province back in 2000 after collecting taxes for the Fiji government for four years. In 2006 I spent 9 months in Thailand teaching at a local High School and assisting at the SVD AIDS Hospital in Nong Bua Lampu. I was ordained a Deacon in March 2008 and had my priestly ordination on the 20th December 2008. I arrived in South Africa on the 15th of September 2009.

I have arrived to this land. While missing home and family, I am excited about finding my place in the beautiful people and land of South Africa. I have often been asked where Fiji is. In reflection, I am asking myself where South Africa is. I am beginning the journey of finding my answers…

Fr. Ioane Filimone Racumu SVD

PRE-PHILOSOPHY KABWE

After a long dry and hot season, the rainy season has begun in Zambia. The heat waves have given way to cool weather. There are new shoots on trees. The fields are a green carpet now. The signs of new life are evident all over. SVD Pre philosophy community in Kabwe shares in this same new life too. This year there are four young men who have joined us in discerning and deepening their vocation. Daniel Bwalya and Kangwa Bwalya are from St Charles Lwanga Chindwin. Victor Ngoma is from Holy Rosary parish Mukabeko. George Mphande is from Lusaka. He used to stay in Sichili Mission. All these young men have been associated with SVDs prior to their coming here. Kudos, confreres, you are all good vocation promoters. "Explore" and "Prepare" is the objective of this year for the candidates. Like the other years, we have combined classes with the SMA congregation. It is wonderful to see that there is lots of energy and enthusiasm in these young men.

SVD PHILOSOPHY HOUSE-LUSAKA

The SVD Botswana province set another leap in her contextualized initial formation program when Fr. Marek Marciniak, the vice provincial blessed the new SVD Philosophy House and Chapel in Lusaka, the capital of Zambia. The simple, but colorful ceremony took place on 12, November amidst a solemn Eucharistic celebration presided over by Provincial Fr. Shiju Paul. All confreres from Zambia District, the Provincial council, staff members from St. Bonaventure College where our seminarians pursue their degree in philosophy, and representatives from neighboring religious houses were present for the occasion. The envisioned formation house is to be completed in three stages of construction of which two phases have been completed so far. Bro. Albetus Babu, Frs. Al and Wojciech Szypula have walked extra miles in spite of their teaching assignments at the college to complete those two phases.

WOMEN GOSSIP THE GOSPEL…..FOR MEN

In Dambwa Parish, the Church buildings and activities always had a touch and aroma of womenfolk. Every morning the church wakes up not with the bells, but the whispering of women. They are in the forefront in many areas such as opening the doors, sweeping the church, polishing the church, leading all the processions in traditional attire like front line soldiers, sponsoring children and adults for baptism, cooking, watering…, and the list goes on. It seems they have monopolized the church activities. But certainly they have challenged the men folk to commit themselves to the activities of the church. As the saying goes, behind every successful man there is a woman, the women have inspired men to pull up the socks and do something for the church. They have risen to the occasion and formed an organization called Men's League, the first of its kind in the Diocese. Their motto is Charity, Work and Loyalty. A year of spiritual and organizational preparations was done before 28 men were commissioned on 28th November 2009. As part of their on going formation, they have organized annual retreats only for men. The newly commissioned men have brought life and inspiration to many parishioners especially the youths. Now there is a vibrant presence of men in the church especially during the weekends.

CONGRATULATIONS: Frt. Peter Chibale was ordained to diaconate in Tamale, Ghana, on December 5, 2009.We congratulate Chibale, and at the same time accompany him through our prayers as he prepares for ordination to priesthood.

Reminder from the Treasurer's Office

The Provincial Treasurer requests all the confreres who have taken money for various projects, social fund etc, to submit the accounts for the same by December 31, 2009. This is very essential as the treasurer needs it for keeping the books ready for auditing.

Change of Generalate Postal Address

The official postal address is:
Curia Generalizia SVD
Via dei Verbiti, 1
00154 Roma
ITALIA

Confreres in Language Course - English

Philippines: Bro. Doan Thao Minh Paul, Fr. John Baptist Le Sang Quang (Vie)
Expected for Language Course: Fr. Kaja Samon Marselinus and Fr. Haman Paulus (IDE)
Zambia: Sylvio, OTP from Brazil

Learning Local Languages:

S.Africa : Joseph Vadakkan, Wojciech Zolty and Ioane
Zambia : Bro. Himang Pai, Pawel Smaglijenko
Botswana : Bro. Jan Potyka, Hilarius

2009 Appointments to the Province

Frt. Augustinus Boro IDE

Bro. Silas leaves for the Philippines

Bro. Silas has been forced to leave Botswana temporarily due to the new immigration requirements. New policies require certified copies of various academic certificates along with an advert of the applied post in a local newspaper even for the renewal of permits. Confreres whose Residence Permits are about to expire kindly submit them for the newly required work permits at least six months in advance together with all immigration requirements such as duly filled up form, copy of residence permit, two passport size photos, covering letter, registration copy of the church, copy of contract, copy of passport, certified copies of certificates, original advert of the applied post, P600 for new work permits and P300 for renewals, and an affidavit in case if a permit is lost.

WORTH REMEMBERING – BIRTHDAYS

DECEMBER

Ioane	2
Frederic Lauricio	14
Wojciech Szypula	14
Klemens Amaunut	26
Lawrence Likulano	29

JANUARY

Justina	**1**
Nirmala Tigga	**1**
Luciana Yoshida	**2**
Brian Mbulabaya	6
Pawel	7
Albertus Babu	9
Benedicta	**16**
Carolina Giay	**23**
Ajit Tirkey	27
Maria Prokesch	**29**

FEBRUARY

George Niravath	2
Bernadeta G.	**10**
Kelvin Banda	13
Tomasz Trojan	15
Gabriel Afagbegee	27
Romek Janowski	28

Hearty Welcome

Martin Kawana BRC-Zambia (Home Leave)
Bro.Jospeh Pai—Zambia
Hilarius – Botswana
Simon - Lumko

Departures

Chrysostome- DR Congo (Home Leave)
Ariel- The Philippines (Home leave)
Marcus- Paraguay, OTP Return
Marek Grzech- Poland (Sick Leave)

TRANSFERS

Fr. Jacek Gniadek POL to BOT
Fr. Peter Madden IBP to BOT

Appointments

Bro. Jan Potyka : Farm in Charge, Vicariate of Francistown
Fr. Romek Janowski: Prison Chaplaincy, Vocation Promoter for Livingstone and Praeses of District House, Livingstone, District Councilor
Fr. Peter Sledz : Chaplain for Institutes of Higher Learning in Livingstone
Fr. Francis Allah : Vocation Promoter, Zambia

Dates to Remember

December 28, 2009 - Blessing of New SSpS Convent in Kazungula, Zambia
December 29, 2009 Provincial Council Meeting in Mwandi, Zambia

Family Feast & Jubilee Celebrations

The Province Family Feast and Jubilee Celebrations will be on 15 January 2010 during which we will felicitate our Golden Jubilarian Fr. Thomas Nelluvely and Silver Jubilarian Fr. Kuriakose Kozhikkadan. It will be held at MATER DEI PASTORAL CENTER, MOKOPANE South Africa after our Provincial Chapter.

Ongoing Formation for Under Six will take place on 16-17 JANUARY 2010 at Mater Dei Pastoral Center. Resource person- Fr. Jerome Nyathi from Bulawayo Archdiocese, Zimbabwe

PROVINCIAL CHAPTER

VENUE : MATER DEI PASTORAL CENTER, Mokopane
DATE : 12-14, 2010
ARRIVAL : Tuesday, 12 January
CLOSING : Thursday, 14 January

Chapter Participants

A. Ex-Officio Members:
a. Provincial Superior
b. Provincial Councilors
c. Provincial Treasurer
d. The Provincial Mission Secretary
e. The District Superiors
f. Prefect of Philosophers
g. Province Formation Board Chairperson

B. Elected Delegates
S.Africa - Fr. Gabriel Afagbegee, Fr. John Kennedy
Botswana - Fr. Kuriakose Kozhikaddan. Fr. Ajit Kumar Tirkey
Zambia - Fr. Louis Mathew, Fr. Alberto Saco

C. Representatives
Coordinators of Four Characteristic Dimensions
Director of Lumko

D. Invitees / Observers
Former Provincial/Regional

Soccer World Cup Prayer
(www.sacbc.org.za)
Almighty God,
creator of all, as people from
every nation gather with excitement
and enthusiasm for the 2010 World Soccer
Cup may South Africans be good hosts, our
visitors welcomed guests and the players from
every team be blessed with good sportsmanship
and health. May your Spirit of fairness, justice and
peace prevail amongst players and all involved. May
each contribute in his own positive ways to prevent,
control and fight crime and corruption, hooliganism of
any kind and exploitation and abuse, especially of
those most vulnerable. May those far away from
home and those in their families find much joy
in this occasion to celebrate the beautiful
game of soccer and the beautiful
game of life according to Your
plan for the common good
of all. Amen