



# Word Aflame

Botswana Province Newsletter

February/March 2010

## Word from the Provincial

Dear Confreres,

*PETER: Hurrah! Jesus is our King, our liberator, the Messiah from on high! Alleluia.*

*JOSHUA: Peter, no need to get so hysterical.*

*PETER: Master, I have waited so long for this day, the fulfilling of prophets and the glory of our people Israel. Alleluia, he is King!*

*JOSHUA: Hey, John and Simon, go to the small farm at the eastern outskirts, just off Orchard St. and tell the farmer that Joshua wants a loan of a donkey; we'll return it as soon as we are finished.*

*THOMAS: What do want the donkey for?*

*JOSHUA: For the kingly procession.*

*JOHN: But, Joshua, kings always ride on horses.*

*JOSHUA: Yes, I know....but I want to ride on a donkey, so please go and fetch one.*

*THOMAS: This is ridiculous. Hey, Peter, he says he wants to ride on a donkey. When did you ever hear of a king riding on a donkey?*

*PETER: Hey, Master, don't be so damn stupid. This is your hour of glory, man. Our people have been waiting for this for ages, the liberation promised from on high!*

*JOSHUA: Peter, get out of my way, and stop perpetuating this man-made dominance and control. I have asked for a donkey and I am getting a donkey.*

*PETER: Isn't this outrageous! The one time when we can really prove to the people that this is the divine Savior, our Messiah, and he destroys the opportunity once again. **I don't know if I can continue following this guy anymore. He is such a let down when it comes to the crunch!** (Catching up with Jesus: A Gospel Story for Our Time by Diarmuid O' Murchu, p.156)*

Jesus, a let down when it comes to 'the crunch' went almost hysterical when overwhelmed by torture and loneliness, and finally a cruel death. It is hard to be weak in our life and ministry lived in a competitive world that values strength and power. The only time in Jewish scriptures a king rode on a donkey was when he was going to sign a treaty conceding defeat. It is in our deficiency and weakness the gospel discipleship unfolds. Sin doesn't reside in weakness. Rather it breeds on strength and power. According to C. Kiesling weakness is not the experience of sin; almost it's opposite. Weakness is the experience of a peculiar liability to suffering, a profound sense of inability both to do and protect: an inability, even after great effort, to author, to perform as we should want to affect what we had determined, to succeed with the completeness that we might have hoped. It is this openness to suffering which issues in the inability to secure our own future, to protect ourselves from any adversity, to live with easy clarity and assurance; or to ward off shame, pain, or even interior anguish. May this Easter Season grace us to grow **WEAK ENOUGH TO**



*Shiju Paul.*





## BOT PROVINCIAL CHAPTER



The BOT Provincial Chapter – 2010 was an important event of the Province and it was held on **13-14 Jan 2010** at Mater Dei Pastoral Center, South Africa. The confreres appreciated the hard work done by everyone especially our hosts Frs. Sunny and Maciej to make the Chapter very successful. I take this opportunity to thank each one of you for your active participation and whole-hearted support rendered during the District- Provincial Assemblies, and District- Provincial Chapters. After receiving the report and minutes of the BOT Provincial Chapter Fr. Antonio Pernia SVD, the Superior General has sent a letter dated 02 February, 2010 saying that he and his council have approved the Chap-

ter proceedings. He has articulated the following about the resolutions and recommendations of the BOT Chapter 2010:

### Resolutions:

1. Vision-Mission Statement: We have to rework it with the help of Generalate Mission Secretary Fr. Pio Estepa. I have forwarded the requirements to the District Superiors for suggestions and corrections before forwarding corrected draft to Fr. Estepa.
2. This chapter recommends Method IIIA as province's method of electing provincial superior and his councilors. The list of candidates for Provincial contains three names, the list for Councilors contains eight names, names are published alphabetically with the number of points allotted to each nominee and voting for the provincial takes place first, and after he has been appointed by the Superior General, councilors are elected.

### Recommendations:

Note by General Council: Prudence is called forth in considering any plans to expand the province and its activities taking in to consideration the real situation of our available personnel and finances. The practicality (how realistic) of networking between District coordinators of characteristic dimensions and Province coordinators was noted. The Generalate expects a copy of the revised formation manual to be presented to them.

1. This chapter mandates that every district in the province is to discuss and work on their action plan based on the approved Vision and Mission statement in their next respective District Meetings.
2. This chapter mandates the Provincial Council to gear the future expansion in Botswana towards the North and West.
3. This chapter recommends that if the Bishop requests the SVD to take up any parish due to unforeseen circumstances, we are open to assess the situation and decide whether to accept the request or not, with special attention given to having a proper contract drawn up with specific time frame.
4. This chapter recommends the Provincial Council to look for adequate number of confreres to join the school management of the St. Arnold Janssen Catholic Primary School in Tonota.
5. This chapter recommends that we recommit ourselves to our initial commitment in Shangan territory in the Tzaneen diocese. We are also open to the possibility of expansion in parish ministry in the Polokwane diocese.
6. This chapter recommends that expansion to Kokstad diocese near Durban is considered as a separate project. A feasibility study is made to help in the discernment process. If accepted, we are to start with a minimum of two communities.

7. This chapter recommends that due to the current need for expansion, the district of Zambia further discuss the lifting of the two language policy in the next district meeting, with the decision forwarded for approval by the Provincial Council.
8. The chapter recommends that further expansion in the Lusaka Archdiocese be considered provided that the two language policy is being lifted.
9. For effective and efficient working, this chapter recommends that every district elect or appoint District Coordinators for our Characteristic Dimensions. In the case of a province level coordinator for any characteristic dimension is present in a particular district, we do not elect another person for that particular position for the district level.
10. This chapter recommends that since we have decentralized the coordinators for the four characteristic dimensions in district level, that they come together to discuss and find a way forward for better functioning in the district and province level.
11. This chapter recommends that the district council create annual programs for the district meetings which should include a day of thematic and need-based talks by experts on relevant issues for at least two times a year.
12. This chapter recommends that in our SVD communities the superior/praeses organize monthly community meetings with an agenda and document the decisions.
13. We recommend that the three district coordinators collect information from grass root level (various parishes) and present a report annually on various dimensions to the province level coordinators who present a comprehensive report to the provincial council.
14. We recommend that the province level news letter "Word Aflame" be prepared by the province level communication coordinating team.
15. We recommend that in all our parishes, a day must be set apart to celebrate as SVD Day with the parishioners.
16. This chapter recommends formation of AJST at district level.
17. This chapter recommends that we use our Vademecum at least two times a week in our community prayers (those living in mixed communities of members from other congregations can follow their policies)
18. This chapter recommends that the formation manual for the province be revised and circulated to the confreres in the province.
19. This chapter mandates the Provincial and his council to create a health and medical aid account.
20. This chapter recommends that the holiday allowance for home leave be increased: for priests – US\$ 800, Brothers – US\$900, Annual leave for local confreres – US\$300.

## AFRAM ZONAL ASSEMBLY/ MEETING OF THE AFRAM TREASURERS

The 8<sup>th</sup> AFRAM Zonal Assembly and Meeting of the Afram Treasurers took place in Lome, Togo from 8-13 February, 2010. It began with a Bible procession, reading of Jn 1:1-5 in English, French, and Portuguese, and the presentation of symbols from respective provinces /regions/missions of participants along with their prayers. After the opening remarks by the Chairman of the Executive Committee, Fr. Thomas D'Mello, Provincial, GHA, Fr. Antonio M. Pernia our Superior General addressed the group. In the light of recently concluded Second Special Assembly for Africa of the Synod of Bishops, Fr. General shared an inspiring reflection on two general characteristics of Paul's leadership style, namely – collaborative leadership and empowering leadership. He challenged the confreres to live a leadership style that is always Christ-



centered, Spirit-led, and rooted in the Church. This was the 4<sup>th</sup> Afram Zonal Assembly that he attended. Other presentations included; *After the 2<sup>nd</sup> Synod of Africa, what?* By Archbishop of Parakou, Benin



Fidèle Agbatchi, *Self Reliance and Finance* by Fr. Bernhard Rudolf, Treasurer General, *The Political and Economic Reality of Africa Today* by Mr. Edem Kodjo, Former Prime Minister of Togo. The partici-

pants had a day of outing to visit Adoration Sisters and various SVD historical sights in Togo, our first mission in Africa!

### Zonal Matters

#### New EXECOM

Zonal Coordinator- Sanchez Xene, Chairman of Executive Committee - Zeferino Martins, Provincial, ANG, Vice Chairman- Tadeusz Grenda, Mission Superior ZIM.

#### Amendment to the AFRAM Statutes: The Executive Committee

The Chairman of the Zonal Assembly, the vice-chairman who is the hosting Provincial of the next Zonal Assembly, and the Zonal Coordinator make up the Executive Committee (EXECOM). The vice-chairman will succeed the chairman if he leaves the office, and the ex-chairman's successor becomes the vice-chairman.

#### Area Coordinators

We are waiting for the newly elected area coordinators to be appointed officially by their respective provincials with the consent of their councils.

#### Schedule for Zonal Meetings and Workshops

Zonal Assembly: in Zimbabwe, Sept 2013

Bible/Communication: in Madagascar, Easter 2011

JPIC and Mission Animation: in Kenya, April 2011

Formation: in Ghana, June 2011

Afram Formation Board: in Congo, June 2010

#### Film on Pope John Paul II

On the 31st of January 2010, a team of film crew from Poland led by Szymanski visited Dambwa Parish. They are making a film on the late Pope John Paul II to be released in April, on the occasion of his 5th death anniversary. The focus of the film is on the life of the church today, especially in countries of his apostolic visitation. St. Francis Parish, Dambwa was one of the parishes in Zambia which had the privilege of participating in this venture. The director and the producer were happy about the filming in Dambwa. 'We got enough material for the film from Dambwa, in terms of inculturated celebration of the Mass. The whole church was alive and there was a mood of celebration here which was not found elsewhere' said Christopher Ziemienc, the narrator of the film.

#### Bible Ministry

Mukobeko Parish is a small and old parish in Kabwe, Zambia. In Mukobeko area, there are seven protestant churches. Most of them are using fundamentalist approach of interpreting the Bible. The protestant generally look down on the catholic as people who are ignorant of the Bible. So our parishioners feel the need for knowing the Bible better. Besides, there is an evident hunger and growing interest for the word of God, especially among young people. In response to this need we formed Bible Ministry in 2008. We started by conducting Basic Bible Seminars (BBS) and Biblio-drama seminars for the adults and the youth. The response to both seminars was impressive and overwhelming in terms of number. We also organized seminars on Pauline Literatures to high light the year of St. Paul.

It was facilitated by Fr. Wojciech Szypula, SVD. Besides these, we also hold occasional Bible Quiz for the youth, weekly Bible sharing for youths and adults in the Small Christian Communities. Based on the good performance in the first two years of our Bible Ministry, the Parish Council decided that similar programme will be continued and regularly offered every year. This year we sent two parishioners for the Bible course in Harare (Dei Verbum). With the people's interest for the word of God, together with our trained lay leaders under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the Bible Apostolate in Mukobeko Parish shows some sign of hope to grow in the future.

#### Renovation of Zambia District House

Fr. Romek SVD took up the forgotten challenge of restoring the District House in Zambia which was built in the 1950s. The repairs and the maintenance of the house had been overlooked for a long time. Nevertheless, the restoration project initiated by Fr. Romek with the help of a Building Committee that included confreres from the area did a commendable restoration job with the available fund. The committee met regularly to review the progress and resolve difficulties. The renovation also caused its share of confusion and uncertainties such as high quotation because of the 'muzungu' and poor workmanship since many were unskilled amateurs seeking piece jobs. Among them was a boy who was tasked to paint. When he was painting a window frame, he painted the glass and everything around as well. Young men, who run "Filling Station - Baghdad" (they sell smuggled cheaper fuel for passing vehicles in jerry cans and plastic containers) in

front of our house were very supportive to clean the place and to plant some trees and flower plants. Everyday they sweep the place and maintain it very clean. Fr. Romek says, "During the renovation I had to be a man of many skills. My mission experience developed over the years, also from home and the seminary, was fully used and even enriched! Sometimes workers asked me: Father how many jobs you

can do? I am only trying not to forget to be a priest, I answered them. Many confreres were very supportive, some not, but at least they were not disturbing. In some places there is a saying - "if someone did not disturb your work, he already helped you..." Please feel free to visit us and stay with us, and of course your contribution and support are always very much welcome. (Fr. Romek svd)

## ON-GOING FORMATION FOR THE UNDER SIX



Sixteen young confreres of our province including two from Zimbabwe gathered together at Mater Dei Pastoral Centre in Mokopane, South Africa from 16-17 January 2010 for the on-going formation. It was the second consecutive on-going formation for the under six, organized by the Province Mission Secretary, Fr. Sunny. Most of us are young and new in the Province as well as in the ministry but others were not young in the ministry but new in the Province.

We began the day with a talk by Fr. Paul, the Provincial Superior. He said that our theology has to be purified by the faith of the people. He challenged us to put more efforts on learning the culture and the language of the people which is a basic tool in the work of evangelization. The next session was led by Mr. Joseph Ramokolo, a lay man from the local parish of Mokopane. He is a retired teacher and an active member of the Church with full of energy, zeal and tenacity. The passion in which he shared about his African Culture and the real life issues affecting the priests, religious and lay people was an eye opening one. He reminded us that no matter how different our cultures are, we all share the same 'ubuntu' (humanity). We share the same love and faith of family and our basic needs are the same.

This gave us new insights and a reflective approach, that the catalyst of our journey into bridging the gap between us and the local people is our shared 'ubuntu'. Staying away from this core that makes meaning of our human lives will not assist any new missionary no matter how hard one tries to adapt oneself to the culture. He gave us a lot of insights on the new paradigm of seeing the Church

and the priests based on the teachings of Vatican II. He said that that the seminary training is more academic and the theology we learn is sometimes different from the reality so he challenged us to be more practical people in our mission fields. He also put emphasis on respecting the culture and language of the people. Mr. Joseph's presentation was very helpful as he put into words some of the thoughts of lay people. The need to listen to the people and parishioners is important while working in the parish. He stressed the importance of collaboration in our ministries between priests, religious and laity.

The second day was led by Fr. Jerome Nyathi from the Arch-diocese of Bulawayo, Zimbabwe. His presentation of the room setup gave us a glimpse of the Masters in Spirituality that he graduated from in Rome. Fr. Nyathi said that our spirituality is the foundation of our missionary life. Therefore, a missionary should have a deep spiritual life and become an integrated person. He must be a person who can find his spirituality in all the areas of his life and ministry. Reflecting on the Eucharist, Fr. Nyathi pointed out that life as a missionary is about being aware of and living out these four words of Christ: Taken Blessed, Broken and Shared. We are chosen to be blessed; we are blessed to be broken; and we are broken to be shared. That is the life of being a missionary.

He gave us a different angle of insight, the experience of an African priest. He also articulated some of the views and insights of how lay people think and expect from priests and religious. He added experiences of his own and other priests, to give us a broader look of the goals and expectations of the local church in Africa.

The new missionaries of the Province came away that day with a plate full of tips of how to be a good missionary in Africa. The stories, views, and insights shared in these two days were invaluable. The last part of session was individual sharing. Every one shared their experiences of ups and down moments of their life and mission. There are lots of challenges in our missionary journey ahead of us which we have just started in this part of Africa. But it's what makes the life of a missionary exciting, and satisfying. At the end of the day all of us felt that it was worth spending two days together for this kind of on-going formation. The group felt that it should be continued. The proposed venue for next year's on-going formation is Plumtree, Zimbabwe.

(Reported by Fr. Ioane Racumu SVD and Fr. Elfridus Kowot Udjan SVD)



### 2011 Nemi Courses

The General Council has announced the schedule of programs to be offered at Nemi in 2011. There are three programs in English that may be of interest to Botswana Province members:

Dates	Programme	For Whom?	Deadline for application
25 <sup>th</sup> January to 5 <sup>th</sup> March 2011	<b>On-going Formation for Third Age Confreres in German (65 and above)</b> <i>Venue: Nemi</i>	<b>SVDs 65 years and over – Who can still travel to Nemi.</b>	<b>15<sup>th</sup> October 2010</b>
23 <sup>rd</sup> March to 16 <sup>th</sup> June 2011	<b>Combined SVD-SSpS Tertiate Renewal Programme in English</b> <i>Venue: Steyl, Oies, Nemi</i>	<b>For SVDs: Usual Tertiate Age bracket – up to 60 years of age.</b> <b>For SSpS: Their usual Tertiate age bracket.</b>	<b>31<sup>st</sup> October 2010</b>
8 <sup>th</sup> August to 9 <sup>th</sup> December 2011	<b>Spanish Tertiate Renewal Programme</b> <i>Venue: Steyl, Oies, Nemi</i>	<b>SVD Confreres also open to non SVDs</b>	<b>31<sup>st</sup> March 2011</b>
14 <sup>th</sup> September to 9 <sup>th</sup> December 2011	<b>Dei Verbum Biblical Course</b> <i>Venue: Nemi</i>	<b>Lay, Religious and Clerics – Ministers of the Word</b>	<b>31<sup>st</sup> April 2011</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> October to 30 <sup>th</sup> November 2011	<b>On-going Formation for Third Age Confreres in English (65 and above)</b> <i>Venue: Nemi</i>	<b>SVDs 65 years and over – Who can still travel to Nemi.</b>	<b>31<sup>st</sup> May 2011</b>

Anyone interested in applying for any of these courses should send a letter to the Provincial stating your interest in a particular course after seeking approval from your District Superior and Council. Deadline for sending the letter to the Provincial along with the District Superior's endorsement must be at Provincial's office by the end of June 2010.

## XVII GENERAL CHAPTER 2012

Fr. Superior General has officially announced the theme of the 17<sup>th</sup> SVD General Chapter by evoking an eloquent image from the Book of Revelation (7:9): **'FROM EVERY NATION, PEOPLE, AND LANGUAGE': Sharing Intercultural Life and Mission.** Our three General Chapters since the start of our new century may be integrally viewed as a process of writing a mission statement for the whole Society. The 15<sup>th</sup> General Chapter of 2000 was a search for reformulating our missionary commitment expressed as Prophetic Dialogue; the 16<sup>th</sup> General Chapter of 2006 drew the consequent demands of that mission paradigm for the internal and integral dynamics of our Society. In doing so we strove to renew our vision or our self-understanding of who we are as Divine Word Missionaries in the global mission setting of today. And the main aim for the 17<sup>th</sup> General Chapter in 2012 will be to draw up an Action Plan for our whole Society – *ad extra* and *ad intra* – by building on the spiritual foundation of the last two chapters. We as a province is urged to re-read the Chapter Statements of the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> General Chapters, to take part actively in the local discussions, sufficient and optimal time be given for fraternal exchange of ideas, and that the ideas shared be the fruit of prayerful reflection. I request the District Superiors to make available the copies of guide questions for communal reflections to every confrere in your respective Districts.

### **New Document on Formation**

There is a new document on formation published by the Generalate: "**Re-imagining the Pathways of Our Common Vocational Journey**". It seeks to re-focus the formation in our Society and is relevant to all stages of formation as well to confreres in final vows. District Superiors, Please make it available to all the confreres in your respective districts especially those who have no access to the internet. It will guide us in revising the formation manual of our province



**Lutaba Village Service Centre, St. Arnold Mission – Mwandi**



This is when Bishop prayed before the blessing of the Center

St. Arnold Mission, established in 2003 is one of the rural Parishes in the Diocese of Livingstone in Zambia. At present it is under the care of Fr. Klemens Amaunut, SVD and Fr. Natun, SVD. With the help and support from Misereor, and Mrs. Anna Bellany and Wayman of Germany and England, a Village Service Centre in Lutaba Village was built in order to promote social and sustainable development. It was blessed by His Lordship Bishop Raymond Mpezele, Bishop of Livingstone Diocese. It also responds to climate Change and its impacts on the people through natural disaster e.g. drought, floods, animal diseases etc. The invited guests included CARITAS Coordinator for Livingstone Diocese, CFAARM, DRR and DEP officers. Fr. Klemens SVD in his speech on the occasion

stated that the Village Service Center is initially put up as our response to the hazards caused by global warming and climatic change. It aims to reduce people’s vulnerability and enhances capabilities in management of the disaster risk reduction measures. It also looks at the empowerment (capacity building) of the poor and vulnerable individual and groups especially women, Youth/Children and Small Scale Farmers.

**WORTH REMEMBERING—BIRTHDAYS**

<b>MARCH</b>		John Lugun	28	<b>MAY</b>	
John Kennedy	2	Piotr Sledz	31	Joseph Vaddakkan	1
<b>Marie Jose</b>	<b>7</b>			Martin Kawana	3
<b>Ewa</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>APRIL</b>		Francis Allah	4
Chrysostome	17	Marek Marciniak	4	Kuriakose	10
Tony Rebello	18	Alex	4	Rajesh D’Souza	18
Theophan Misengo	18	Victor Noronah	15	Elfrid Ujan	19
<b>Juanilda</b>	<b>19</b>	Lutwin Dollwet	25	<b>Raji Mathew</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Marita</b>	<b>24</b>	Simon Nyrenda	28	Ariel	25

**CONGRATULATIONS**

On 15<sup>th</sup> January Frs. Thomas Nelluvely and Kuriakose Kozhikaddan celebrated the 50<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of their ordinations as Divine Word Missionary priests. The SVD Botswana Province celebrated their jubilees on the feast of St. Arnold which was also our family feast day, held in Mater Dei Pastoral Center, Mokopane. On behalf of all the confreres in the Province, I would like to wish our Jubilarians God’s blessings, good health and happiness on their anniversary.

**Appointments**

Fr. Thomas Koikara from INC  
Fr. Passador Marcio Sanchez from BRC to Zambia (former OTP to Zambia)

**Ordinations**

Arun Vijay D’Mellow INM on 3 May  
Thomas Przybyl POL on 16 May

**Transfers**

Fr. Alejandro Villasante to PHS  
Fr. Wojciech Michal Zolty to POL (Health)

**Workpermits**

The work permits of Simon (SA) and Vincent Mwiya (ZIM) are out, and they would be traveling to their destinations any time from now.

