



SVD NEWSLETTER



A WORD FROM THE PROVINCIAL

Dear confreres,

As I write this my 'two words', we are in Holy Week already, the time we commemorate the Resurrection of our Lord, the victory over suffering and death. We see suffering all around us; we read and watch on our screens suffering all over the world from natural calamities and other man made disasters. The risen Christ and in Him the Church stands out as a symbol of victory and hope, despite human evil and wrong doing. For early Christians Jesus' suffering and His victory over it gave them strength to endure their own suffering. We as individuals and as a church have to do all possible to reduce and to remove suffering from the world. We have to bear witness to others that they are not left alone in their suffering but rather should experience fellowship with Jesus. This experience of fellowship should help all in maintaining dignity in suffering. When one is able to accept then suffering does not make one bitter but opens ones self to God.

I gladly take this opportunity of wishing you all a truly Joyful Easter. As we celebrate the mystery of Christ's Resurrection I pray that all our confreres and friends may share abundantly in the peace and joy which our Risen Saviour won for us by His death and resurrection. Let this Joy be ours always even when many things in our life become cloudy and the going tough.

By now most of you must have received the circular letter sent to all the confreres in the province regarding the Province visitation in the coming months of May and June. We request you all to pray that the visitation may go well and bring us all together to realize and achieve our mission.

Our Most dear Bishop Joseph Oliver Bowers is a week old in his 100th year. The Ghana Province and the Society of the Divine Word is delighted and rejoices with him and thanks God for His abundant blessings upon him. Indeed 'This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad!

Thomas D'Mello SVD
Provincial

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	BLESSED EASTER TO ALL!



PROVINCE NEWS

Northern Sector Celebrates Family Feast



Whereas the Southern sector of SVD and SSps in the Ghana Province celebrated the closing of centenary year on 15th-16th January at Divine Word Catholic Conference Center (DWCCC) Nsawam, the Northern sector celebrated it on 17th – 18th February 2009 at Divine Word Common Formation Center (DWCFC), Tamale. Since this was the closing of centenary year of our first two saints: St. Arnold Janssen and St. Josef Freinademetz, this celebration was called “Special Family Feast” – A feast, full of prayer, fellowship, and joy!

About 3:00 pm on 17th February 2009 delegates from Wiaga, Saboba, Gushiegu, Samboli, Yendi, Kintampo, New Longoro, Nsawkaw, Jema, and Kankra began to arrive. At 6:30 pm when all the delegates had gathered in the SVD Chapel, Deacon, Beguem Yves Nanguem led the sung evening prayer. After the inspiring prayer, the SVD Vice-provincial, Joshua Gariba inspiringly gave his warm welcome address. Since all felt at home with the welcome the rushing to the kitchen for a simple dinner was not difficult. The celebrative mood began to swell when Fr. Dionisio Nellas proposed a toast thanking God for the gift of two Saints: Arnold and Joseph and wishing all the joy and success as he declared this Special Family Feast dully opened. Frt. Abraham and Sr. Matilda Quist kept the atmosphere of joy

swelling as they facilitated the night’s programme. The dancing around the chairs was enticing; the centenary quiz was brain draining; the story telling, the jokes, the pillow fighting among other activities were heart warming. So much so that even time was bracketed, as if it didn’t turn. The participants forget that it was about midnight when they retired to bed.

In the following day, at 6:30 am, when all had assembled in the chapel, the same Deacon, Yves Beguem Nanguem led again, this time, Morning Prayer. All participated joyfully in the singing of the Psalms. After that, breakfast followed. Then a short time interval to prepare for the Holy Eucharist. At 9:00 am. Fr. Joy Panamthanam led the celebration of the Holy Eucharist. He was chosen to be the main celebrant because of his 25th Jubilee in the Priesthood. True to his name, he accepted it with joy. In the introduction, he invited all to help him thank God for the many graces and blessings he has received all throughout these 25 years in the priesthood. The solemnity of the thanksgiving Mass touched the hearts of all. This moved all to renew their commitment as Missionaries having one prayer: *“May the darkness of sin and the night of unbelief vanish before the light of the Word and the Spirit of Grace and may the heart of Jesus lives in the hearts of all people.”*

Their following was a variety of games waiting after the mass: scrabble, draught, cards, tug of war, egg relay, sack race, bicycle race, table tennis and volleyball. To facilitate participation the organizers divided the whole assembly into four families: St. Arnold family, St. Joseph family, Blessed Helena family, and Blessed Josefa family.

All the games, from scrabble, draught, cards, to ludo and from tug of war, egg relay, sack race, bicycle race, table tennis to volleyball were played in a competitive but gentle manner. At the end, although some got their prizes and some did not, all came out to be winners because all played well.

As the celebration was opened it was also closed. At 3:00 pm the celebration was offi-



cially closed by congratulatory speeches of the Archbishop emeritus of Tamale, Most Rev. Gregory Kpiebaya and the Bishop of Yendi, Most Rev. Vincent Boi-Nai. To wrap it all up, on behalf of SVD – SSpS in the Northern sector, the SVD Provincial gave his vote of thanks to all for the heartfelt participation. He also gave special thanks to Most Rev. Gregory Kpiebaya and Most Rev. Vincent Boi-Nai, SVD for their fatherly support. It was indeed a feast full of prayer, fellowship, and joy - an event to remember.

**HAPPY FEAST DAY TO ALL THE MEMBERS
OF ARNOLDUS FAMILY: SVD; SSPS;
SSPSAP!!!**

Bro. Pius Agyeman Facilitates Lenten Recollection

Like Advent Recollection, Lenten Recollection is a yearly spiritual exercise for the SVD-'s in Ghana. This year, the dates chosen were: 6th - 7th March 2009 for the first batch, and 9th - 10th March for the second batch. This took place in the Divine Word Catholic Conference Center, Adoagiri Nsawam.

Since it was a Lenten Recollection, Bro. Pius Agyeman - the facilitator - did his best in explaining the Liturgy of the Paschal Mystery of Christ. He said that, *the Paschal Mystery is the culmination of Christ's saving work on earth.* He continued by saying that this Paschal mystery is *sublimely revealed in the Holy Triduum.*

In his step – by – step explanation, he mentioned that, *Holy Triduum started in the evening of Holy Thursday (Last Supper) and ends in the evening prayer of Easter Sunday.* This Triduum offers us three powers of Christ: **the power of the fire of love; the power of the heat of suffering, and the power of the light of redemption.** All these powers were present in each day of the Triduum.

Using the analogy of a lighted candle, he persuadably explained that like a lighted candle the fire, the heat and the light are inseparable so as the three powers of Christ in the Triduum.

Although the noticeable focus on Holy Thursday was the *fire of love* since Jesus in instituting the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist and of the Priesthood proclaimed the covenant of love which expressed the power of the fire of love, the power of the heat of suffering, and the power of the light of redemption were also present because the agony in the garden and his victory over darkness were incorporated on that day. And on Good Friday, though the undeniable scene was suffering since in his way of the cross Jesus experience the power of the *heat of suffering*, the power of the fire of love and the power of the light of redemption were also there because he was in control of the situation. And then on the Easter Vigil though the power of the *light of redemption* was emphasized since Jesus has risen from the dead, that is why we light the Easter Candle, the power of the fire of love and the power of the heat of suffering were also incorporated because his Apostles forgot his message that the son of Man will suffer, die on the cross and on the third day he will rise again. They were in hiding and were terribly afraid. Because of that, he breathed His Spirit on them “Received the Holy Spirit...” (Jn. 20:23)

He encouraged everybody, especially the priests to celebrate Holy Triduum solemnly so that, with the grace of God, the community of the believers will experience the solemn joy of Easter.

Br. Rudy Kwame Chamenyi, SVD Represents Ghana

In the just ended SVD Mission Secretaries Meeting for the Africa – Madagascar (AFRAM) Zone held in Luanda, Angola on 8th – 13th March 2009, Br. Rudy Chamenyi, SVD represented Ghana Province.

Each Mission Secretary who represented the different Provinces of AFRAM reported the developments, challenges and the way forward of SVD missions in his area in order to promote one of the most important characteristic dimensions of the Society: **Mission Animation.** In his report for SVD Ghana province,



Br. Rudy underlined the important role of education in the proclamation of the Gospel values.

In the past and as it is today, the Divine Word Missionaries became popular and were well respected by the Ghanaians because of their involvement in providing quality education in the county as he said, *“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.”* Education became the good vehicle of spreading the Good News. It was, in fact, the way forward in those days: *“Some of these people were well trained by them and they turned out to be catechists and teachers in their 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 those schools established by them”.*

Without undermining the role of education, he continued, as he explained the present trend of SVD mission in Ghana, *“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 in.

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 (Korle-bu Teaching Hospital)

It is also very important to note that, our Ghana province from the year 2008 up to date was in a position to send 26 Ghanaian SVDs 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.”

Br. Rudy expressed his gratitude to the Holy Triune God, for providing the Divine Word Missionaries in Ghana the necessary grace to respond to the present challenges of the mission.

CCROM Seminar



This year's Lenten CCROM seminar which was scheduled for the 10th to the 11th of March 2009 at the Divine Word Catholic Conference Center, Nsawam was a success. The theme for the seminar was CONFLICT DISPUTE AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION. The resource person was Sr. Mercy Benson, SSpS. There were 19 SVD confreres and 5 SSpS sisters in attendance. Among other things, we



learnt what a conflict is, the sources of conflict, the reason why conflicts escalate and ways to manage conflicts. A word of caution that our resource person left with us is that, "As we enter into relations with others, we must NEGOTIATE and RENEGOTIATE our undertakings and outcomes." We say thanks to all who made this seminar a success.

Andrews Obeng, SVD

DISTRICT NEWS

Accra District:

Dansoman

St. Bernadette Soubirous School Commissioned

On 11th February, 2009, the St. Bernadette Soubirous School - a school under the care of St. Margaret Mary Parish - Dansoman, Accra, where three of our SVD priests are working-launched its 30th Anniversary. As part of the launching, a modern school library was commissioned. Present at the ceremony was the Vicar General of Accra Archdiocese, Very Rev. Fr. Francis Adoboli, the headmistress, Mrs. Aquiline Cato and the three SVD confreres working there - Frs Patrick Ofori, Fred Obeng & Andy Obeng. Also present was Fr. John Straathof, the former Parish priest of St. Margaret Mary Parish, Dansoman. The School library which is well furnished will enhance the education of the young ones in the school and thus prepare them adequately to face the challenges of the modern world.

Andrews Obeng, SVD

Kwahu District:

Kwahu - Tafo

Pilgrimage to the Grotto of Our Lady of Good Counsel

Fr. Alex Awuah, SVD, (District Superior, Parish Priest of Kwahu-Tafo and School Chaplain of St. Joseph Technical School), and Fr. Michael Awuah Ansah, (the School Chaplain of Pope John Senior High School and Junior Seminary) organized a day of pilgrimage to the Grotto of Our Lady of Good Counsel at Kwahu – Tafo for 1276 graduating students from 21 Senior High and Technical Schools in the Eastern region of Ghana on 21st March 2009.

The pilgrimage was organized in order to encourage the students to pray and recollect, to socialize and to prepare spiritually and psychologically for their upcoming West African Senior Students Certificate Examination (WASSCE).

To achieve these purposes the organizers steered the group with this theme: "Whatever you ask of the Father in my name you shall receive". As soon as the students arrived, at 8:30 a.m. the prayer leader for the recitation of Holy Rosary led the prayer in the Grotto. This was followed by the Stations of the Cross and then recollection talk with regard to the theme. After the talk the students who were members of the Legion of Mary were given time to have an induction ceremony of their new officers. The rest who were not members were there to support by their presence and encouragements. This brought them to the next part which was socialization. This involved, knowing each other's name and school; rendering of songs and dances among others.

To meaningfully conclude the pilgrimage, Most Rev. Joseph Afrifah, the Bishop of the Diocese of Koforidua celebrated the Holy Mass for them. He was assisted by the organizers: Fr. Alex Awuah, SVD; Fr. Michael Awuah Ansah; Vice Principal of St. Peter Senior High School, Fr. Daniel Lenwah, SVD; Chaplain of St. Martin Senior High School, Fr. Emil Setsoafia, SVD; Associate Pastor of Kwahu – Tafo Parish, Fr. Sofronio Endoma, SVD; and the Associate Pastor of Adweso Parish, Fr. Dionisius Kopong Ola, SVD.

In his homily, the Bishop encouraged the stu-



dents to make good use of their remaining days in the school; review all their lesson well; have a good rest especially on the day before the examination; and during the examination ask the guidance of the Holy Spirit to remember what they have studied; and read the questions carefully before answering them. In addition, he told them to take good care of themselves because they were the hope of the Nation and the Church. He continued by saying that, they should avoid drug addiction, prostitution and occultism because indulging in these kind of activities will damage their future.

As the student were leaving back to their cherished schools, the organizers and well wishers expressed their appreciation to them for their heartfelt cooperation and wished them good luck, good health and God's blessing for the success of their examination.

Sofronio Endoma, SVD

Koforidua District:

Kukurantumi

St. Paul Technical School Receives Donations



St. Paul Technical School (SPATS) received machines for Carpentry and Joinery Department, electrical cables and accessories for electrical Departments, and computers for Computer Laboratory Department from the partner schools in Hallstatt and Bad – Ischl, Austria.

The partnership started when *Professor Han Geisberger* (Head of Special Wood Engineering Work and Sculpture School in Hallstatt) and *Magister Ulrike Schneider* (Department head of Bundis Gymnasium) from Austria thought of possible partnership to any Technical School in Ghana. Along the line of processing their desire Dr. Christopher Nelson (Ghanaian Medical Practitioner working in Austria), who was their good friend suggested to coordinate with the Bishop of Koforidua, Most Rev. Joseph Afrifah.

On February 2007, Most Rev. Joseph Afrifah came to visit SPATS together with Prof. Han Geisberger and Mag. Ulrike Schneider to meet the principal and staff to discuss matters concerning the school and possibility of collaboration and partnership with the Wood Engineering Work School in Hallstatt and Bundis Gymnasium in Bad - Ischl. The wholesome discussion and promising agreement marked the beginning of partnership.

On August 2008, Prof. Han Geisberger and Mag. Ulrike Schneider visited SPATS again to report the pleasant news that in Austria through many donors they were able to get machines, computers and some electrical accessories worth around € 40,000 for SPATS and to plan on installing the gadgets when the container would arrive.

On 13th February, Prof. Han Geisberger and Ulrike Schneider visited SPATS for the third time. This time they came not alone but with a medical officer, Dr. Zuzanne, and 21 other students who were assigned to assemble the wood-working machines and install the computers. As soon as the container had arrived in SPATS on 25th February, the students with the help of the professors installed the computers and assembled the machines.

In the send-off party (27th Feb), the Principal, the staff both the teaching and non-teaching; and the whole student body of SPATS expressed their profound gratitude to Professor Han, Mag. Ulrike, Dr. Nelson, Dr. Zuzanne, and all the Austrian students for their generosity, care and personal involvement in helping



SPATS.

Agomanya

Bishop Joseph Oliver Bowers clocks 99

Most Rev. Joseph Oliver Bowers, SVD, former Bishop of Accra, has called on Catholics to pray for him as he prepares to celebrate his 99th Birthday on March 28, of this year.

In an interview with *The Standard (Catholic Newspaper)* at his residence at Agomanya in the Krobo District of the Koforidua diocese, he said his constant prayers and devotions had kept him strong till this age, saying the same faith would lead him to celebrate his 100th birthday next year.

Bishop Bowers, a West Indies Divine Word Missionary (SVD), who gave this interview on his bed, expressed gratitude to Catholics all over the country for their continuous prayer and recognition of his Missionary work as a former Bishop of Accra. He urges Catholics not to relent in their prayers and devotions to the Blessed Virgin Mary “since prayer is the powerful tool to overcome problems, troubles and evils in society.” Bishop Bowers was ordained on January 22, 1939 in Rome, consecrated Bishop of Accra on April 22, 1953 by his Eminence Cardinal Francis Spellman in the United States of America (USA) and later enthroned in Accra on September 23, 1953. He retired in 1981 in the Caribbean as Bishop of St. John’s in Antigua, having been transferred there in 1971 from Ghana.

In 1943, he was entrusted with the care of Krobo Area and had to trek from Accra to establish churches and schools at Osonson, Nsutapong, Kwaopeniase, Akruso, Akotue, Korwhere and other areas. Through his prayerful encouragement, the Krobo area experienced growth and expansion, yielding to the establishment of the St. Anne’s Vocational School, St. Martin de Porres Hospital, Mount Mary Training College and the co-founding of the Handmaids of Divine Redeemer (HDR) Congregation.

Bishop Bowers paid tribute to the late Paramount Chief of Krobo, Nene Fred Azu Mate Kole (1939 -1990) for cooperation and assisting him to achieve his missionary aim of evangelizing the people of Krobo land. He commended the Catholic Church and other Religious Bodies for praying for peace before, during and after the last December elections, saying that it was a sign that they (Churches) were the originators of peace in the country. He said over the years, Churches have been very vocal on issues bordering on Justice and peace, a feat, he said, is in the right direction. He noted that Ghana was a peaceful and Catholic Nation which Ghanaians should be proud of.

The former Bishop of Accra added that, the peaceful environment made him to return to Ghana upon invitation for the 40th Anniversary of the HDR and since then had remained in the country to continue sharing his Missionary experience with the people he had shepherded and served for almost seven decades. He lauded the Catholic Standard for its sacrifices and rich contents and packaging, even though it was facing many problems. Bishop Bowers paid tribute to the first Editor of the Paper, Fr. Derix for his invaluable services as well as all those who through many ways have brought the Paper this far and encouraged Catholics to read the Paper since it is the only Catholic newspaper in the country.

In his old age, Bishop Bowers is currently being cared for by Rev. Srs. Margaret Rose Woedi, Clare Spencer and Fedelis Gagli, one of the four HDR Sisters to have been invested as Novices in 1957.

Damian Avervor
Agomanya

Tamale Collaborative District:

CFC Hosts Family Feast

The Rector, his Council and Members of the SVD Common Formation Center, Tamale hosted the Northern sector’s version of the SVD Centenary Family Feast on 17th to 18th



February 2009.

The celebration was well attended by SVD confreres and SSpS sisters from Wiaga, Yendi, Saboba, Sambuli, Chereponi, Gushiegu, Sunson, Kintampo, New Longoro, Nsawkaw, Jema, Kankra, Tamale itself, and two representatives from Accra. There were around 80 persons in attendance. The two – day celebration was packed with prayer, games and fellowship with festive food. The all-out participation of the members of the Arnoldus family who came on that occasion made the Family Feast very successful. Best Credit then went to the Rector, his Council and Members of the CFC for the good hosting performance.

Archdiocese of Accra (Tema – Battor and Accra District):

A Day For the Religious

The coordinator of the Religious Priests, Brothers and Sisters in the Archdiocese of Accra, very Rev. Andrew Campbell, SVD organized a Day of the Religious in Our Lady of the Apostles (OLA) Parish, New Achimota on 7th February 2009.

The Day of Religious was a special day set aside for the Religious Priests, Brothers and Sisters purposely to pray, reflect and appreciate the mystery of their call to the religious life. The exact date was supposed to be on 2nd February – the Feast of the Presentation of our Lord Jesus Christ. But for convenience and more practical reason, the celebration was celebrated weekend closest to the feast.

On 7th February 2009, more than 100 Religious gathered at OLA. Out of these numbers there were 12 SVDs who came to participate. The first part of the program was welcome by the parish priest of OLA, Followed by the talk of Msgr Jonathan Ankrah on the importance of Instrumentum Laborem of the 2nd Synod of Arch Diocese of Accra. Then talk on the theme: Challenges of Religious life in the present times. Short break and then, Holy mass.

In his sharing during the Holy Mass, as main celebrant and preacher, Fr. Andrew pointed out that the challenges of religious life in the present times are enormous: individualism, materialism, electronic media communication negatives, culture of indifference and death, community life, justice and peace and integrity of creation. We cannot cope up to these challenges unless we go back to our basic call. God in Jesus Christ called us because he loves us unconditionally. We responded his call because He is so good all the time and in response answer his call because we love him. In short the story of our religious life is a love affair story. It is a story of love between us and God in Christ. So we concretely express it by following his footsteps in evangelical poverty, consecrated chastity and apostolic obedience. What we need is to continue what we have started and get involve in the affairs of the society with a difference. In this way, as the society in which we live poses many challenges on us, we too become the challenge of the society.

Yendi District:

Yendi Cathedral Parish

Yendi Parish Celebrates 50th Anniversary



Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, Yendi in the Northern Region of Ghana celebrated her 50th Anniversary on 15th February 2009. The White Fathers started the parish in 1959. Then the SVDs were invited to help Yendi mission. Fr.



Henry Janssen, SVD had arrived Yendi on February 1960. He was the first SVD in the area. When the White Fathers left for another mission outreach, more and more SVDs came. They did their mission work and stayed until now and are ever grateful to celebrate the Golden Jubilee.

In the Golden Jubilee Mass, Most Rev. Vincent Sowah Boi – Nai, SVD the Bishop of Yendi, invited all the people of Yendi to join him in praising and thanking God for the abundant blessings God has showered upon Our Lady of Lourdes Cathedral Parish and her parishioners *“We are here today to praise and thank God for the numerous blessings God has given us in Our Lady of Lourdes Cathedral Parish.”* He cautioned that, in celebration like this we should not focus our attention only how much we have achieved materially but how far we have witnessed our Christian life and spread the Good News: *“When people celebrate anniversaries they will look back and recount their achievements in life. As we celebrate 50th Anniversary one may ask the question: What has the church achieved within these past 50 years? One may say, Oh the church has done a lot. We can boast of numerous schools the church has established. We can boast of various Health Centers in the area as well as socio-economic development bishop has initiated, etc., etc., etc. But for me, what is more important is the question on how far the church has promoted the gospel values and lived Christian life.*

He added that, as we thanked God, it is not wrong to be also grateful to all His missionary priests, brothers and sisters past and present, *“... In this case we thank our pioneer missionaries: the White Fathers who came here first; the SVDs especially those who are with us this morning; the SMI sisters and all who contributed in their work of evangelization. In fact, with untiring effort, hard work, even under scorching sun they preached the Gospel message to villages, towns and parish communities.*

He continued that, those who in their blessed memory already should be remembered too.

“All who died in the mission ... We remember the White Fathers who came here first. Then following them Fr. Henry Janssen, SVD, Fr. Charles Erb, SVD, Fr. Boleslaw Gielata, SVD... We thank God for the gift of their lives. And we commend their souls to God.” And the living who were with us before but now working in different mission areas should be saluted: *“We salute Bro. James Djadoo, SVD, who worked in St. Martin Catechetical Institute, Sunson for 9 years as director and then in Yendi for 2 years as Local manager of our schools now in SVD Residence McCarthy – Hill; Fr. John Straathof, SVD who worked as parish priest in Tatale for 13 years and Parochial Vicar in Yendi for 8 years now Parish Priest of Sts Peter and Paul Catholic Church, New Aplaku, Accra; Fr. Thomas D’ Mello, SVD as parish priest and youth coordinator in St. Brigid Parish, Chereponi for 10 years now our Provincial Superior...”*

We should not forget our lay leaders and catechists also who were in the forefront of our missionary activities, he concluded. *“there are also many lay people who worked hard to promote the mission of the church like Mr. Al-hasan,...Auntie Diana among others...thank you very much”*

At the end of the celebration he wished all a very happy 50th Anniversary and encouraged all to be united with Our Lady of Lourdes in working for peace, promoting justice, helping the poor and the marginalized in the society.

Yendi District Journeys with St. Paul

The confreres in Yendi District had the privilege to journey with St. Paul in their Lenten recollection on Tuesday, 17th of March. Preaching the recollection the custodian of the Diocese Most Rev. Vincent Sowah Boi-Nai, SVD took the confreres through the theme: *“The Spirituality of St. Paul”*. According to him he chose this theme since this year marks the end of the universal celebration of the jubilee of St. Paul or the 2000 years birth anniversary of St. Paul.



In doing justice to the theme, the preacher led the confreres through some significant hallmarks in the Pauline spirituality. He said as far as Paul's Damascus experience is concerned in view of Paul's mission to the Gentiles, one cannot talk of Paul's *conversion* or *call* but rather his gradual Transformation process. He stressed the fact that Paul's understanding of Christ developed throughout his life and not a three day process as Acts 9: 18-20 might suggest. Bishop Boi-Nai underlined the fact that for Paul knowing Christ Jesus was more precious and valued than any other thing or issue in his earthly heritage. And once Paul decided for Christ he went all out for him, no turning back to his traditional practices. Paul surrendered his righteousness based on the law to receive righteousness based on Christ. Thus as followers of Christ confreres should strive and do the same.

The Most Rev. Boi-Nai was also firm on the ground in stating that Paul's transformation of pre-Easter tradition was characterized by his idea and experience of the Kingdom of God. He then encouraged, exulted and challenged confreres to see themselves in Paul and allow his spirituality to inspire them in their journey toward God, in Christ through the Holy Spirit.

As Paul's drastic change of heart and mind helped him to understand the people he ministered to and influenced their lives, so also religious missionaries confreres need to shed off their unproductive, unrealistic and unhealthy traditions in order to undergo a positive change of heart and mind with the help of the letters of St. Paul. By doing so, they would understand not only the people among whom they live in order to affect their lives but also their confreres among whom they worked with in order to celebrate life.

The recollection came to an end with the celebration of the Holy Eucharist. Here again the Bishop reiterated his plea on confreres to take after the virtues of St. Paul.

Benjamin Asare, SVD

A Priest Turned An Ambulance Driver

About one and half months ago while Fr. Marcelo Oyarzun, SVD was on home leave, Fr. Boli Lolan B. Ireneus SVD and I went to Tamale for some business. On our way back I drove to Chereponi, a journey of 200kms. We arrived at Chereponi around 6: 00pm. I entered my room, put my luggage down and we went for supper with the idea to take my bath after the meals. Just as we finished eating and came out to sit under the summer hut to officially welcome Fr. Julius Keeke, SVD who had paid us a visit and to *wash his feet* as tradition demands some people came to beg us to take their patient, a woman in labour and was in critical condition to Yendi Hospital because the clinic ambulance was spoiled and there was no other means, a distance of 97 kms from Chereponi. Fr. Ireneus could not go so I agreed to go immediately since human life was at stake and after Ireneus had a talk with me. When I got to the clinic to pick the woman to Yendi another patient was brought in who had delivered at home the previous day and was bleeding since then. Her case was so serious that the clinic personnel could not help so they referred her to Yendi and asked if I could pick her also of which I consented. The Medical Assistant asked that we keep this second patient in the bucket of the car for good ventilation because she had bled so profusely and was feeling dizzy. Her husband joined her there with two other relatives of the first patient while the rest sat in the car. And so without wasting time we took off. After covering about 30kms it became



dark. Suddenly, the husband of the second patient started hitting the roof of the car asking me to stop of which I obeyed. When I inquired from him the matter he told me the wife was feeling dizzy and was becoming weaker. I understood his frustration and helplessness at the sight of seeing his wife dying slowly. So I told him there is nothing we could do than to try to get to the hospital in time meanwhile let's keep on praying. Then we continued for about a distance of 25 kms then the knocking on top of the roof came again. This time round the knocking became more intense. I stopped and went back to the bucket and saw the woman in convulsion. As I looked at her condition, I felt so helpless and did not know what to do. Less than a minute after, her head dropped backwards. It dawned on me that the woman has finally given up. So to save the life of the other patient I told the man it is not late let's us rush to the hospital, then he told me his wife is dead. At the hospital she was declared dead. Thank God we got the other patient there alive

Benjamin Asare, SVD

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Arrivals:

Bro John Bissue: 17th January 2009 from Bogotá Columbia for his well deserve holidays in his homeland Ghana. He will go back to Bogotá Columbia. ***You are most welcome John! Have a restful stay.***

Bro. Rudy Chamenyi: 15th March 2009 from Luanda, Angola, after a successful SVD Mission Secretaries Meeting for the Africa – Madagascar (AFRAM) Zone. ***Captain, welcome back home!***

Frt. Peter Kabutey: 27th March 2009 from Bogotá, Colombia. He completed his OTP. Now he is back to continue his Theology. Welcome Back to Ghana.

Departures:

Bro. Rudy Chamenyi: 6th March 2009 to Luanda, Angola for SVD Mission Secretaries Meeting for the Africa – Madagascar (AFRAM) Zone. He will be back on 15th March 2009. ***Rudy, have an enjoyable trip and a successful meeting. Until we meet again.***

Bro. Pius Agyeman: 20th March 2009 to Nigeria to facilitate a retreat for Priests and religious in Benin City. ***Nana Pius, Awurade na wo nko!***

Bro. Thaddeus Nyanuba: 6th April 2009 to Kenya. He will stay there to secure his VISA for Mozambique. In Mozambique, he will study Portuguese Language to prepare for mission in a Portuguese speaking country. ***Bro. Thaddeus “Mulito Obregado- Barka Yaga” and wishing a very happy trip to Kenya and successful language study in Mozambique!***

Bro. John Bissue: 14th April 2009 back to Colombia. ***Tengo felix biaje amigo!***

Fr. Matthew Yeng: 14th April 2009 to Rome to secure his Visa for Nicaragua. ***Matz, all the best!***

COMING EVENTS

1. 1st June 2009 – Second Novitiate continues at Nkwatia – Kwahu
2. 18th – 23rd May 2009 – Seminar on the Life and Teaching of St. Paul at DWCCC
3. 8th -12th June 2009 – AFRAM Treasurers' and Formators' Meeting at DWCCC
4. 5th -11th July 2009 – First SVD Retreat at DWCCC
5. 10th July 2009 - 10th Anniversary of The Episcopal Ordination of Most Rev. Vincent Boi – Nai, SVD
6. 12th – 18th July 2009 – Second SVD Retreat at DWCCC



VITAL INFORMATION

1. Appointment of Bro. Stephen Domelevo, SVD

On the 24th January 2009, Rev. Brother Stephen Domelevo has received his double appointments from the Archdiocesan Bishop of Accra, Most Rev. Charles Palmer Buckle, as the Communication Coordinator of the Archdiocese of Accra and the Producer of the Catholic Digest of the Bishop's Conference of Ghana. *Steve, Congratulations and all the best and God's blessing on your ministry.*

2. Biblical Ministry bible course on St. Paul.

The Biblical Pastoral Ministry (BPM) of the Divine Word Missionaries in collaboration with the Biblical Center for Africa and Madagascar (BICAM) and the office of the Biblical Apostolate at the National Catholic Secretariat of Ghana is organizing a Biblical Seminar on the Life and Writings of St. Paul that will take place on 18th – 23rd May 2009 at the Divine Word Catholic Conference Center, Adoagiri Nsawam. This seminar is designed to respond the call of Pope Benedict XVI to celebrate the Year of St. Paul which was launched last June 29, 2008 and will end on June 29, 2009. Target group: Priests, Religious and the Laity. Registration fee: **GH¢ 40.00**. For more details kindly contact:

Fr. Jolly Mudakkampurath, SVD,
DWCCC, Nsawam P. Box 306
jollysvd@gmail.co or ghana-jolly@yahoo.com
Tel: (Office 0832 22211), (Fr. Jolly direct 0245912032, 0207983809) and (Mr. John 0243214980)

3. Pastoral Liturgical Music Ministry

Bro. Pius, director of PALIMUS: 20th March, left for Nigeria to give a course on Liturgical Music and facilitate Lenten Retreat to the Priests and Religious in Benin City, Nigeria. We wish Bro. Pius success and joy in his missionary endeavour.

4. Communication Coordinators

Africa – Madagascar (AFRAM) Zone: *Fr. Wolodko Miroslaw (Togo)*

Ghana: *Fr. Dionisio Nellas* dionisionel-las@yahoo.com

Togo: *Fr. Wolodko Miroslaw* mirekwo@yahoo.fr

Congo: *Fr. Kankonde Bandowa, Michel* micbandowa@yahoo.fr

Angola: *Fr. Eguizabal Garcia, José* angsvd@hotmail.com

Botswana: *Fr. Marciniak, Marek* mjetek@svdbotswana.com

Kenya: *Fr. Cellan, Narciso* narcell@yahoo.com

Madagascar: *Fr. Grad, Zdzislaw* svdmana@googlemail.com

Mozambique: *Fr. Libangan, Juan C. Jr.* enetakon@yahoo.com

Zimbabwe:
superior@svdzimbabwe.com

Chad svdchad@yahoo.fr

REMEMBERING OUR DEAD

Mr. Caus Messan Djadoo, nephew of Bro. James Djadoo. He died 24th December 2008 at Lome, Togo. He was born 1947. He left behind wife and 4 children. Funeral was on 2nd January 2009. *Bro. James and bereaved family receive our sincerest condolences.*

Fanziska Denkmayr, mother of Fr. Joseph Denkmayr, SVD, died on 24th March 2009. She suffered lengthy illness of 87 years old. She died exactly 10 years and 10 days after the death of her husband. Funeral was on 28th March 2009. *Fr. Joseph and bereaved family members accept our sincerest condolences.*

May the souls of our faithful departed through the mercy of God rest in peace!

FROM THE MISSION outside
ghana

Paraguay



Home away from Home....

It gives one lots of joy to read once in a while newsletters or communications posted by Afram member countries over the Internet. Not only does the information serve to inform, it also motivates us seeing how confreres in different places and missions are trying their best to carry out responsibilities conferred on them. But as the old adage goes, 'all work without play makes jack a dull boy', there are moments when one need to go it easy.

I'm a Kenyan SVD. I work in the Parish of Saint Michael the Archangel in Salto de Guaira in Paraguay. Last December, I had the opportunity of joining confreres in neighbouring Brazil in their Annual Christmas feast-cum-district meeting. Guess who were there? I met Jean Bosco Ngipe, SVD, Congolese from DR working in Itakirai Parish in Brazil. I had lastly met him in Tamale in 2000 when he was still a seminarian. Present was also Fr. Omir Oliviere, whom I lastly met in Livingstone when I made my first vows in 1996. Another surprise was Emmanuel Azure, a Ghanaian missionary who did his theological studies in Nairobi, Kenya. The last time I met him he was in philosophy in Freinademetz house in Tamale! There he was, newly ordained and beaming with smiles and full of enthusiasm to start his mission work in Brazil. We all headed to the shores of River Parana where we did just to a number of roast ribs and emptied a number of cans of beer! Mission is not always a "via cruce" (Way of cross), there are also those experiences of Cana of Galilee with Jesus making merry with friends!

We swam near the shores and even risked venturing into the deep where the river measures 18 metres of depth to experiencing the joy of floating over water(don't try it without a life-saver jacket and a master swimmer because you may end as past tense) in mid of river Parana. We were scared at first but once out of the outboard motorboat we calmed down and floated freely for more than a Kilometre under the watchful eye of the Master. He later on told us he was not a good swimmer!

Many times at Tamale, Fr Vincent Owusu the then rector used to repeat without ceasing: treat one another as brothers; you don't know where you meet one day. There at the shores of River Parana, thousands of miles from our countries, family, familiar environments, we felt just happy and proud to be African SVDs among other SVDs from Europe, Asia and the Americas.

It was quite a great moment for us. Of course we revised all our experiences in tamale talking about the hot sun and dust, the about *dasiba ... Naa, harmattan*, bicycles, we also evaluated how the formators treated us in formation and many other things which for now remain in brackets! Sssshhhhhhhh! Who knows, may be the devil's advocate may make use of them in our canonization. The language factor was something very interesting. I converse in Spanish, my other confreres response in Portuguese and vice versa. Though it was confusing, but we manage to understand each other.

When all was over, we headed back to our respective parish reenergized to face our various duties. The parish of Salto is situated some 5 km to the Brazilian border. It's a common factor for confreres in Brazil to come to Salto to do their shopping over the week.

Pascal Kinoti, SVD.
(Salto de Guaira Paraguay)

Colombia

My Missionary Journey in Colombia

I work as an SVD missionary in Colombia for 8 years now. This Three- month stay in Ghana is my second holiday. When I went first to Colombia, I was there as an "OTP" student. "OTP" means "Overseas Training Program". This program, in my case, included: a) learning the national language – Spanish; b) learning local language and culture of the people – immersion/inculturation; c) then involvement in pastoral activities in the parish. It took me two years to complete the program. After my "OTP", I returned to Ghana to take my final



vows to the religious life. This time as a full fledged member in the SVD, I went back to Colombia. There I was appointed as a missionary helping potential SVD missionaries. That means I worked as one of the formators in the seminary. The term given to me was three years. For these three good years as formator, I've learned a lot from the formandi – seminarians. Our seminarians have lots of youthful strength, talents, and capabilities. In them, I saw myself, when I was once a seminarian as strong, talented and promising. But now I realize that “my help is in the name of the Lord who made heaven and earth”. After my memorable and meaningful term as formator, now I am doing what my new appointment requires of me. Currently, I'm doing primary evangelization mission with the natives in the Northern part of Colombia. To be in this area primary evangelization means, teaching catechism of the Catholic Church translated in their own local language. In addition, since this area is divided between rebels (UNITAS) and government - paramilitaries, the civilians are the defenseless victims of corruption, exploitation and cross fire. In what way? On the one side, when the paramilitaries see them mingling with the rebels, the paramilitaries brand them as “supporters” so they deserve punishment. And on the other side, when the rebels see them collaborating with the paramilitaries, the rebels consider them as “informers” so they deserve to be brutalized. Because of this situation, I also involve myself in promoting Justice and peace. Anyway I am not alone in this mission. There are several religious brothers and sisters and justice and peace advocates in the area. In fact we have already some Christian communities called “Peace Village Please Don't Touch”. The members of these communities are united in witnessing the Gospel values proclaiming peace and respect in the neighborhood. These communities appeal to “Unitas” and paramilitaries” to respect their way of life and keep certain distance from them so that members can live a more humane and more peaceful living. This appeal is well respected by both parties. The rebels “Unitas” and government troop's “paramilitaries” understand the value of their appeal so they try to keep distance. So far I am happy that in my small way I am able to promote the Divine Word in my mission station.

I will go back to Colombia on 14th April 2009. Please remember me in your prayer. *May the Holy Triune God live in our heart and in the heart of all people.*

John Bissue, SVD

WISE SAYINGS FROM FOUNDING GENERATIONS

“God's will is eminently precious; it is the fount of all happiness. Our good God means so well with us. If only we would always faithfully fulfill his holy will and pay attention to the promptings of the Holy Spirit.” - St. Arnold Janssen

“Trust the Lord in every situation, whether it is day or dark night, whether storm clouds fly overhead or the sun smiles down gently. Leave everything in his hands. Oh, he means so well with you. When the time comes he will calm the storms, you are safe in his care” - St. Arnold Janssen

“Let us see life for what it really is: seed sown for eternity.” – St. Joseph Freinademetz

JOKES ONLY

Beans

A primary class teacher asked her pupils to give example using beans in a sentence.

Teacher: *Samuel, use beans in a sentence.*

Samuel: *My mother sells beans in the market.*

Teacher: *Very good Samuel! How about you John?*

John: *I ate plantain with beans this morning before coming to school.*

Teacher: *You did well John! Now sleepy James it is your turn. Use beans in a sentence.*

James (surprised): *Hmm... madam we are all human beans.*

Fools

Speaker (getting tired of being interrupted): “We seem to have a great many fools here tonight. Would not it be advisable to hear one at a time?”

Man (in audience): “Yes. Get on with your speech.”



WORTH REMEMBERING

May 2009

1	Joseph Addai	Feastday
	Cyprian Kuupol	Birthday
	Kingsley Sagru-Larr	Feastday
	Ziem Albert	Birthday
3	Franciszek Kowal	Birthday
	Jojo Monoth	Feastday
	James Ife Saco	Feastday
4	Francis Allah	Birthday
	James Anane	Feastday
4	Sylvain-Franck Tettekpoe,	Birthday
5	Joshua Gariba	Birthday
	Alexander Chandy	Birthday
	Dennis Asiamah	d. 2007
6	Martin Tetteh	Birthday
9	Grzegorz Kubowicz	Feastday
	George Makonzo	Birthday
	Samuel Aboo	Birthday
10	Bruno Yirzie	Birthday
	Samuel Yaw Adu	Birthday
12	John Alph. Asiedu	Feastday
13	Agyapong Eugene	Feastday
14	John McKillip	d. 1979

	Matthias Helms	Feastday
	Matthias Yaadar	Feastday
15	Denis K. Yaou	Birthday
15	Peter Atuba	Birthday
	Victor Samuel Kusaga	Birthday
16	Joshua Gariba	Feastday
17	Paul Ayitey	Birthday
18	Mariusz Pacula	Birthday
20	Bernard Assenyoh	Birthday
21	John Ohene Akuffo	Birthday
22	Emil Setsoafia	Birthday
	Emmanuel Anyomi	Feastday
23	Joachim Zok	Birthday
	Stanislaw Gergont	Feastday
25	Fr. Otto Welter	d. 2003
	Boniface Issaka	Birthday
26	Wladyslaw Madziar	Birthday
27	George Wilson	d. 1985
28	Augustine Tsohi	Birthday
30	Frank Quainoo	Birthday
31	Alphonse Elsbernd	d. 1997
	Frank Quainoo	Feastday

June 2009

2	Erasmus N. Mortty	Feastday
	Erasmus N. Mortty	Birthday
3	Bertin K. Koudoagbo	Feastday
7	John Tumawu	Birthday
9	Emmanuel Affum	Birthday
10	James Djadoo	Birthday
	Kamale, Sam L. Georges	Birthday
13	Anthony Dugay	Feastday
13	Augustine Amanor	Feastday
	Anthony Mensah	Feastday
	Anthony Lawer	Feastday
	Joseph Hus	d. 1988
14	Emmanuel Fianu	Birthday
15	Francis Damoah	Birthday
	Lambert Azieve	Birthday
19	Gabriel Sosu	Birthday
21	Jerome Agbeko	Birthday

	Dionisio Nellas	Birthday
	Horst Wizask	d. 1986
22	Emmanuel Dzisi	Birthday
	John Ayanga	Feastday
	Vincent Owusu	Birthday
	Stephen Bonsu	Birthday
29	Pierre Avonyo	Birthday
	Peter Edze	Feastday
	Peter Accorley	Feastday
	Paul Richmond T.	Feastday
	Paul Plawky	Feastday
	Paul Ayitey	Feastday
	Pierre Tevi-Benissan	Feastday
	Paul Dogba	Feastday
29	Peter Atuba	Feastday
31	Frank Quainoo	Feastday



LITURGY CORNER

The meaning of Liturgy

The word “liturgy” includes the celebration of all the sacraments, as well as the program of psalms and prayers of the church called “Liturgy of the Hours” (Breviary). In general Liturgy is the combined activity of God’s people, the Church, and activity of the Saviour of God’s People, Jesus Christ. Liturgy is the holy ground where both come together in order to continue the mission of Jesus in the world today – his mission of salvation.

Historically speaking, Jesus died and rose once and for all for our salvation. He can never die and rise again. But through the sacred action of liturgy, the effects of his dying and rising are carried into the present and on into the future so that people in every age can experience redemption.

To explain further, consider the example of the sun. Historically speaking, the sun came into existence billions of years ago. Just as Jesus can never die and rise again, so neither can the sun be created anew. But the effects of the sun’s light continue to influence our planet now. Just as they did billions of years ago when the sun first burst into existence, so too, the *effects* of Jesus’ death and Resurrection continue to influence our lives here and now – through liturgy.

Pius Agyeman, SVD

Blessed Easter to All !

