

# GHANA PROVINCE JULY 2011



## SVD NEWSLETTER



### A WORD FROM THE PROVINCIAL

Dear Confreres,

These months in the province are the busiest of the year because a lot of things are happening. We just finished the first vows of the novices yesterday – sixteen of them professed first vows in the Society. It was a good celebration with the AFRAM Zone Formators in attendance. St. Peter's Chapel was full with family members of the novices, friends and parishioners from close by.

As I write today the AFRAM Formators' course comes to an end. We are very happy that it has gone very well. We also thank the provinces who sent their members as participants of this course. Their comments to me indicate the course was very good. Our thanks to the Generalate for financing this course and to all the organizers, headed by John Asiedu.

Many more big events are still to take place:

- 6<sup>th</sup> August, the ordination of six of our deacons to the priesthood in St. George's Cathedral, Koforidua
- 15<sup>th</sup> August, four of our confreres will profess their perpetual vows as members of the Society at St. Peter's, Nkwatia
- 21<sup>st</sup> August, our confreres continuing in temporary vows will renew their vows in Tamale.

May I also remind you about our upcoming retreats. The first retreat starts on 24<sup>th</sup> July and closes on the 30<sup>th</sup>. The second retreat starts on 31<sup>st</sup> July and closes 5<sup>th</sup> August. Please be reminded to attend one of these retreats, even if you haven't signed up. We have enough places on both retreats to accommodate you.

A note of gratitude to Fr. Vincent Burke who left Ghana yesterday for good for the second time after three years in the Catholic University in Sunyani and two years as Director of the English Language Learning Centre in Nkwatia. We wish him a very happy and well-earned retirement.

As you will read in the newsletter we had a beautiful three day Brothers' Day Celebration in the Province, I won't try to repeat the report here.

May you find these various events and celebrations inspiring and encouraging you to give yourself fully in the Lord's service.

Your confrere,



Thomas D'Mello SVD  
Provincial

## FROM THE GENERALATE

### NEW PROVINCIALS WORKSHOP BEGINS IN NEMI WITH "GHANA MAFIA" AGAIN

At 9.00 AM GMT, on the Feast of Holy Trinity the Superior General welcomed New Provincials elected for the current Triennium to Nemi with an opening Mass in the Chapel. After the entrance song Fr. Anthony Bon Pates, Director of Nemi, called all to their seats and gave the new Provincials a word of welcome. He then gave the role call statistics of those present as AFRAM and ASPAC had five (5) delegates each present, PANAM seven (7) and six from Europe making a total of twenty-three new Provincials at the arrival Mass.



Fr. General in his homily counted on the happy coincidence of starting the workshop on the Feast day of the whole Society. He charged the New Superiors to live in the Trinitarian way of Life where they all lived without counting the cost. In a world abound with injustice; a Superior must give all he has to express love to all confreres who love him in return or not. He charged them again to be self-emptying and even give ten to Jesus and nothing for themselves. He ended his Homily with an appreciation for the Superiors elect for accepting the leadership roles without which the Provinces might have suffered difficulties.

Within the group there were some who were either Ghanaians or had worked in Ghana before their transferred to those current places. When Fr. Peter Accorley was asked whether he knew he was making history as a first Ghanaian in the Missions becoming a Provincial he responded with a smile and shouted he was not aware. Fr Denkmayr also insinuated that Kofi Kodom also becomes the first Ghanaian in the Missions in Europe acting in the capacity as Vice Provincial. “Ghana must go” is the acronym of the day. There were fifty one people in attendance in the opening ceremony. We wish all of them the best of luck in their respective places of leadership.

## **PROVINCE NEWS**

### **“BROTHERS VOCATION DAY” CELEBRATION**

#### **THURSDAY 16<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2011**

At around 3.30 pm, SVD confreres gathered at the Guest House situated in Accra to mark the beginning of Brothers Vocations Day Celebration. It started with introduction by Fr. Andrew Quaye-Foli who stated that the Brother Vocation is our identity (SVD), we are like one body and when one part of the body suffers other parts also feel with it. He also said that confreres were gathered there so as they can talk about the Brother Vocation in the SVD before going to talk about it outside. It was followed by a welcome address by Fr. Thomas D’Mello, SVD Provincial Superior, who also conducted a Bible Service on Our Missionary Vocation taken from *Vademecum* Page 224.

After the Service, Fr. Andrew Quaye-Foli invited Br. Pius Agyemang, SVD, to come and take the floor to give a lecture about the Brother Vocation. He began by saying that he had been a brother for 47 years. When he was about to join the SVD, he intended to be a priest but unfortunately there was no formation for priesthood in the SVD then and he made up his mind to join the Brothers. He said that it came to his attention that “dedication” and “service” were two words in Brothers’ lives. He mentioned these Brothers by their names. He pointed out that each of these Brothers had a very dedicated task to build the Church and develop the lives of the people. He recalled the beautiful and encouraging words of the late Fr. Thornton who was their first Novice Master which he read to them time and again for their vocation. The reading was taken from 1 Jn 4:9-11, 21 which talked about the love of God. Fr. Thornton brought to their knowledge that God called them out of love and has brought them together to form a community of faith and love. He said that Brothers were to be formed into the image of Christ, a man of love and service.

Brothers were formed, reformed and transformed into the image of God just like Christ through the processes of formation. They were also to live a community life just like Christ who lived in a community of his family and disciples. The foundation stone of their community living was prayer, work and recreation. They shared their lives in faith, love and service.

As state in 1 Jn 4: 9-11, they were called to be men of sacrifice, ready to forgive and love one another. They often read from Pt 1:22 at table which talk about loving another from the heart.

He mentioned that Brothers are true imitators of Christ. They are Christophers - meaning, Christ bearers - by carrying Christ wherever they go. They might not be seen at the Ambo on Sundays preaching but they preach by their lives and services to others. They are like yeast in the dough, quietly working, effectively producing but not making open noise.

Brothers were very hospitable (1Pet 4: 9-10), the action of Jesus washing the feet of the disciples is the key action of service which Brothers followed (Jn 13:14-15). He said that the lives of Brothers are to deny oneself and take up the cross and follow Jesus as being encouraged by Mt16:24.

The Brother call is a special one; Jesus was a brother to everyone when he came into the world. He used his talents and gifts at the service of all people. He went about doing good. He asked Brothers to encourage themselves with readings from Phil 2:3-5, to be humble before others and also that their call is a call of true freedom: Gal 5: 13-15. He concluded by a reading from 1 Thess. 4: 9-11 which talks about brotherly love. He asked Brothers to remember that mere talk and good intention avail nothing. Do good! Then socializing and snacks followed. Confreres left afterward to their various places.

### **SATURDAY 18<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2011**

In line with the continuation of the Brothers' Vocation Day Celebration, a rally was held at Christ the King Parish in Accra to interact with the youth and to concretize the Brother Vocation for them. The programme commenced at around 10.00 am with a welcome address by Fr. Andrew Quaye-Foli. He began by welcoming the congregations that were present: brothers, sisters and priests. They were Marist Brother, Sisters of St. Louis (SSL), Salesians of Don Bosco (SDB), Franciscan Missionaries of Mary (FMM), Brothers of Immaculate Conception (FIC), Missionaries of Charity (MC), Handmaids of the Divine Redeemer (HDR), Sister Servants of the Holy Spirit (SSPS), Divine Word Priests (SVD) and Brothers who hosted the programme. He also welcomed the youth who attended the rally and who were the target of the programme to give them a fair knowledge about this noble vocation. Then he gave the purpose for the gathering, i.e. to concretize and promote the Brother Vocation especially to the youth.

The Service of the Word, which was presided over by Fr. Thomas D'Mello, SVD Provincial Superior, followed. In his reflection, Fr. D'Mello said that in any book that one reads, the introduction gives one the content of the book. The Gospel of John begins with the prologue which speaks of various themes in the entire Gospel. The introduction of the book also tells us what we will experience when we are reading. The Gospel of Luke refers to Jesus as Emmanuel.

The prologues of the gospels tell us who Jesus is and his existence. They also tell us about the power of the scriptures. They talk of the relation between God and the scripture, and God and Trinity.

John the Baptist came to bear witness to the truth, he was not recognized but those who recognized him became children of God and the truth. The word of God constantly points us to the truth and we cannot therefore alternate its actions. Through the Word of God we learn the forms and meaning of our lives and the entire Gospels are our daily manna. He reminded those present of their duty as missionaries and the need to do the will of God.

Br. Peter Edze, SVD, was given a chance to present his talk. In his talk, Brother Peter Edze, said that no society can survive without youth since they are the future and without them the future remains a mystery.

He also stated that nothing in life is considered stagnant or permanent. Everything is in flux and changing. It is only the young ones who are yearning to live and hold the key to the future. The young people should be given good training to bring about future that is expected of them.

The first calling/vocation in life is a call to be a Christian. It is the foundation of all other vocations. When the first vocation is weak all other vocations cannot stand. How can we be salt to transform the world while we have no taste? A Christian life is a life of dedication, discipline and service. He reminded Christians that they would fail to transform the world if they do not become its salt and light (Mt 5: 13-15). He called for hard work, dedication, honest and commitment in their work.

He further pointed out that the society of the Divine Word (SVD) was founded on the prologue of St. John. As one of the many bodies in the Church, the SVD Society is striving in humility to bring the light of Christ to all corners of the world. He said the Catholic Church is a unique church where its members and organizations listen to the call to bring the body of Christ to life. He told participant that they live the life of humility. As a matter of fact, calling to mind their call which is to be a Christian, they must simply strive to apply the principles of their Christian values or virtues with the means of commitment, dedications, humility and discipline.

He stressed the importance of education in all areas of life. As it is said that education is the key of life, he urged that education should be taken seriously especially by youth who have a long life ahead of them.

After the talk, Brothers and Sisters who were present from various congregations were given a chance to introduce themselves and briefly mention who they are, what they do and the places they work. The youth were also given a chance to ask questions about religious life especially those concerning the Brother Vocation and issues that pester them relating to this vocation and needed clarification. The questions that were brought up were such as: why brothers do not celebrate mass, what is required for one to join brotherhood, if ones past life that might not be so good is put into consideration before one is recruited as a candidate for brother vocation, why there is a demand for one to pass all examinations before admitted to the seminary? (An example was given of a boy who did very well in all tests except English but could not be recruited because of a poor grade in this test only and which he is still struggling to upgrade), if one is compensated in case he is discontinued before he becomes a Brother or a religious, etc. There were questions addressed properly by Fr. Andrew, Br. Pius and Br. McDaniel.

The input ended around 12. 40 pm and it was followed by snacks and socializing.

## **SUNDAY 19<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2011**

The programme coincided with Holy Trinity Sunday which was also Fathers' Day. The Mass was presided over by Fr. Andrew Quaye-Foli and started around 8.00 am. The church was full to capacity. Br. Pius Agyemang, SVD, began by mentioning the

purpose of several religious congregations present in the Mass i.e. to mark Brothers Vocation Day Celebration.

In his homily, Fr. Andrew Quaye-Foli cited the relationship of vows that Brothers take, i.e. the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, and the Holy Trinity. He said the vow of poverty is the acknowledgement of the total dependence on God the Father and the need of a brother or a religious to entrust his total trust to God the Father. The vow of chastity is the emulation of the example of Jesus who remained chaste or celibate (unmarried) for the better service of God. The vow of obedience relates to the Holy Spirit which comprises listening to his prompts.

He also said that there is no difference between a priest and a brother. The difference is the role they play. Brothers work with people and convert them and also prepare lay faithful for special call of priesthood whereas priests are ordained to carry out the sacramental ministry of the church. But in reality there is no special difference, all of them are religious and consecrated.

At the end of the Mass Br. Pius was given a chance to elaborate deeply the meaning of the Brother Vocation. He said that Brothers' work involves following the examples of Jesus, i.e. doing good to everyone. Jesus was a brother for three years and instituted the ministry of priesthood for only three days. It is therefore clear that brotherhood is more important even than priesthood. Furthermore one becomes a brother before he becomes a priest.

He said that it is quite sad that the Brother Vocation has been neglected by the people. The number of Brothers has gone down drastically and there is a need for something to be done to revive this vocation. This was the reason for gathering, to concretize this noble vocation. He also argued that it is the tendency of people when introducing people to start with the priest, sister and then lay faithful, without even mentioning Brothers. He said Brothers, though they do work quietly with the people converting and transforming their life without going to pulpit, it is now the time for them to wake up and bring to the conscience of the people their vocation.

In his presentation, he also mentioned the noble work Brothers have done for the country and the Church as a whole. He pointed out the churches brothers built including Accra Cathedral and that of Koforidua. Other tasks Brothers have assumed are teaching, the medical sector - especially Br. Tarcisius who started the Orthopedic Training Centre in Nsawam, communication, working and teaching in technical schools like St. Paul Technical School etc. These are the concrete works Brothers do and which many times are unnoticed.

The impression Br. Pius implanted in the minds and hearts of the people will be memorable. It is the hope that his message and appeals will bear fruits and the Brother Vocation will be recognized and appreciated and more young men will join this noble vocation.

After the mass the snacks were served which later were followed with lunch. It was a very superb day.

## FROM THE DISTRICTS

Accra

### Ss. PETER & PAUL CHURCH IS 11 YEARS

For a short while no one knew what was in the mind of the pastor-in-charge; he moved up and down the aisle, seeing to the proper arrangement of the church before the 7: 30am mass began. And boom!! Fr. John Straathof is 45years as a priest on 3rd July. The homily unveiled to the anxious parishioners.

On the occasion of the 11<sup>th</sup> year celebration of the fast growing church of Ss. Peter & Paul, there was a combined joyous feast. The feast of the Patrons, namely, Ss. Peter & Paul was on 29th June which was moved to 3rd July, a Sunday which coincided with Fr. John's 45th anniversary.

In his homily, Fr. John recalled the history of the church. Telling the story of the fast growing young community, he recounted both the struggles and joyous moments of the church. He again mentioned the purpose for which the church was started. He unraveled that his vision is to get closer to the compound, thus, getting a parish house. For, a "shepherd must be by his sheep" he disclosed.



Fr. John and Fr. Hans

There was a wonderful performance by the church's school children as they came to show their appreciation to the entire church community for giving them the opportunity to study there.

The day was remarkably observed by the day-born groups with food and drinks although the rain had its way some time in the afternoon.

*(Our motto)* is “SS. Peter & Paul, Pray for us we shall build our Church and School”. May God bless you Fr. John for your untiring service over all these years. Happy anniversary.



*Some pictures of the day. The school children as they performed in both traditional and in their school attires while Fr. Hans prays for Fr. John.*

***By Rev. Samuel Yaw Adu, SVD - New Aplaku***

## **ARRIVALS/DEPARTURES**

## **FORMATION NEWS**

### *Ordination in Sankt Augustin, Germany.*

The Ordination of six young men took place here in Sankt Augustin on 19<sup>th</sup> June 2011 at 3.00pm. In his introduction the Bishop (Bishop Emeritus Paul Werner Scheele) Said: "we are experiencing today here in Saint Augustin a bit of the universal Church, which one can only experience in Rome". He said this in view of the fact of the internationality being expressed. The five Deacons who were ordained were: Albert Pongo from Ghana, Egide Muziazia from Congo, Rodel Liquid from the Philippines, Gabriel Adur and Vinsensius Mbui from Indonesia. The occasion was graced by people from the different countries who joined the SVD to give thanks to God for his purpose for the newly ordained Priests; their attendance made the occasion very colorful.

In his homily, the bishop shared with the people that the work of a priest is to proclaim the Word as God's love of humankind. The Priest should not see his position as a status but should be a representative of Christ himself who went to the people and proclaimed the love of God to them. The newly ordained priest were therefore charged to go and proclaim that Love of God to the people. He encouraged them to let the joy of Christ, who is love, be seen in their lives and also in the celebration of the sacraments they would be administering to the people.

Four of the newly ordained priests are assigned to work in the German Province while one is assigned to the Austrian Province. As we join them in thanking God, we also pray that they will remain focused in the new life they have taken. We wish them ayekoo

while we pray also for the other deacons to be ordained in their respective countries. We remember their colleague deacons Junmar Maistrado and Joseph Anorkwah Frimpong who would be ordained in their respective home provinces (Philippines and Ghana August 2011) within the year.

## **OUR SICK**

Fr. Bogoslaw Dan Berek was on admission at the 37 military hospital. Fr. In an attempt to lose weight in a short time he rather ended up in the hospital.

## **OUR DEAD**

The SVD Ghana Province is sad to announce the death of:

### ***PASCHAL ANANI KUMORDJI***

The Younger Brother of Bishop Gabriel Kumordji, SVD on 8th June 2011 at Korle Bu Hospital.

**Wake keeping 29<sup>th</sup> July at 6:30 pm without the body**  
**Burial Mass on 30<sup>th</sup> July at 9:00am, all at Derby Avenue.**

He is survived by his wife and child. Our Condolences to the Entire Family  
May his soul rest in peace.

The SVD Ghana Province is sad to announce the death of

### ***MRS. THERESA DOMELEVO***

The Mother of Br. Stephen Domelevo, SVD on 23rd May 2011

**Wake-keeping 12<sup>th</sup> August 2011**  
**Burial Mass 13<sup>th</sup> August 2011 at Adeemmra-Kwahu.**

Followed by Interment in Catholic Cemetery and final funeral rite at the residence  
Our Condolences to the Entire Family. May her soul rest in peace.

## **INFORMATION**

The contact address of Fr. Joseph Michna, a missionary in Ghana and a former Parish Priest of Kwahu Tafo and Wenchi:  
anhcim@poczta.onet.pl

Fr. Fred Timp, the Province Secretary, will be on home leave from 17 July to 17 November. He will not be answering his phone or checking the office email while he is on leave. During this time Brother John Lengari will be taking care of the Guest House. Please contact him at 027 536 0629 or 030 222 7714 to make reservations at the Guest House. Please contact the Provincial for things the Province Secretary normally takes care of.

## **FROM THE MISSIONS**

*Fr. Stephen Dogodzi shares his experiences in Mission and counts on our prayers. He is fine and giving his best to the Nigerian migrants in Vicenza in Italy. Fr Stephen, Good Luck.*

*Fr. Edward Tetteh recounts his experiences in the United States. He shared how the Church has lost money in the “sins” of the past and cautions those in Africa to be careful not to laugh about it as it is coming to us soon. Fr. Edward welcome and God bless you.*

## **WISE SAYINGS**

*“Trust the Lord in every situation, whether it is day of 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*

*“Live quietly with God. Work gladly for God. View things from God’s viewpoint. Talk things over with God. Glow with zeal for the glory of God. Find your joy in God. Rest deep in the heart of God”. - Mother Mary Michaela, Co-foundress of the Holy Spirit Adoration Sisters)*

## WORTH REMEMBERING

### July

1	Thierry Kombate	B / F. day	13	Henry Kweku-Duah	Feastday
3	Ireneus Boli Lolan	Birthday	13	Henry Noordermeer	Feastday
3	Thomas D'Mello	Feastday	18	Frederick Timp	Feastday
4	Julius Keeke	Birthday	23	Matthias King	Birthday
4	Anthony Dugay	Birthday	25	Maurice (James) Djadoo	Feastday
4	Stephen Dogodzi	Birthday	25	James O. Amankwah	Feastday
5	Emmanuel Arthur	Birthday	26	Joachim Mika	Feastday
6	Aurès Da Silva	Birthday	27	Rudy Chamenyi	Feastday
10	Hans Gerber Agbenafa	Birthday	28	Victor Leones,	Feastday
10	Alfred Ayem	Birthday	28	Gerson D'Souza	Birthday
13	Henry Kweku-Duah	Birthday	30	Joachim Mika	Birthday

July	Our departed confreres	Died
2	James Doerfler	1992
3	Lawrence Aurbach	2001
6	Alonso Arockiadass	1990
11	Curtis Washington	1985
13	Yeremias Palur	2002
14	Fred Hahn	2006
19	Clement Hotze	2001
23	Willibald Regnath	1989

### August

1	Anthony B. Amissah	Birthday	15	Joseph Sakite	Birthday
1	Alfons Amanor	Feastday	17	Charles Ashun	Birthday
1	Alphonse Dungdung	Feastday	19	Augustine Amanor	Birthday
2	Alfons Amanor	Birthday	20	Bernard Adjei Appiah,	Feastday
2	Jean Marie Aluku	Birthday	20	Germain Mukinisa	Birthday
4	Daniel Ntem	Birthday	20	Bernardus Tang	Feastday
4	John Duah Prempeh	Feastday	20	Gideon Nana Apreku	Birthday
4	Jean Marie Aluku	Feastday	20	Bernard Assenyoh	Feastday
8	Dogba, Paul	Birthday	21	Francis (Pius)Agyeman	Feastday
8	Dominic Asare	Feastday	21	Victor Gbotso	Feast day
8	Emmanuel Azure	Birthday	21	Patrick Kodom	Birthday
8	Boniface Mbithi	Birthday	24	Apollonius Bria	Birthday
8	Dominic Chemaringo	Feastday	25	Apollonius Bria	Feastday
9	Edmund Afagbegee	Birthday	28	Hans Gerber Agbenafa	Feastday
11	Antonius Hibur	Birthday	28	Gideon Nana Apreku	Feastday
12	Julius Keeke	Feastday	28	Emmanuel Makayie	Feastday

12	Peter Accorley	Birthday
14	Alfred Ayem	Feastday
15	Anthony L. Djimatey	Birthday
15	Tarcisius de Ruyter	Feastday
15	Anthony Lawer	Birthday

28	Emmanuel Arthur	Feastday
29	Dominic Asare	Birthday
29	Josef Sprehe	Birthday
31	Jan Urban	Birthday

Aug.	Our departed confreres	Year
14	Charles Erb	2002
17	Franz Huber	1994
28	Richard Hajduk	1993
29	Thomas Leibold	1993

## JOKES

Yesterday, the UN made a survey in the whole world in connection with the food situation in the world. The question simply put was:

*“.....would you please give your honest opinion about the problem of food shortage in the rest of the world...?”*

When the results were collated, it was found to be a complete failure.

The Latin Americans did not understand please as they buzz dose their way.

Those from Eastern Europe did not understand the word honest as dishonesty was the order of the day.

Those from the Far East did not understand opinion as the government decides for everybody.

Those from the Middle East did not understand problem as they lived in the midst of problems.

The Africans did not understand food as they have not seen food for a long time.

The Western Europeans did not understand shortage as they had everything in abundance

The Americans did not understand the rest of the world as they thought their country to be the only country in the world.

At the end, the survey was a successful failure.