



NOVITIATE NEWS

May the Holy Triune God live in our hearts and in the hearts of all people.

GHANA PROVINCE

Novice Director:

Asst. Novice Director:

In-Residence:

Fr. George Clement Angmor

Rafael Mesi

Bro Anthony Lawer

Experiencing Pentecost!

Very soon, the solemnity of Pentecost will arrive; that moment when we commemorate the birth and rebirth of the Church. When the disciples of Christ received the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on that great day, they felt in themselves a new vigour of life and empowered to be bold witnesses to the risen Lord.

I feel that in the past few weeks, over here in the novitiate, this Pentecost experience has been visible in many ways in our midst in our community – through the experiences shared, new activeness etc... This has particularly come about as a result of the very significant 30-Day Retreat Journey that we embarked upon at the beginning of March.

The new commitments, the new enthusiasm and the conviction of one's vocation, the assurance of God's unconditional love for us and so forth, especially, experienced in the retreat could only be part of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, a Pentecost!



As we prepare for the Pentecost day on the calendar of the Church, it is my prayer that the fruits of the Holy Spirit seen in you may not disappear when Pentecost is over, but continue to grow in us all into the future.

It is the same wish we have for all our well-wishers, friends, confreres, sisters and readers across the world. May we all be truly opened to the Holy Spirit to be led into mission to bear fruits abundantly for the risen Lord!

Happy feast of Pentecost!!

Fr. George Angmor
(Novice Director)

Akwaaba, Selamat Datang

After a well deserved home leave in Indonesia, Fr. Rafael Mesi, our Asst. Novice Director is due to return by 15th June. **Father, you are welcome back home.**

Congratulations

We congratulate the new Provincial Council for 2011-2014. We are glad our Novice Director, Fr. George Angmor is now the Vice Provincial. As you assume office on June 1st, we pray for the guidance of the Holy Spirit in your administration and may Sts. Arnold, Freinademetz, our Holy Martyrs and Blessed Mothers always intercede for you.

EVENT

**SSPS-SVD KWAHU DISTRICT
PENTECOST GATHERING**

Date 12th June, 2011

Venue: SVD Novitiate

APPRECIATION

Our novitiate community would like to express our heartfelt and sincere gratitude to you our confreres, sisters, friends and relatives who are supporting us in diverse ways to make our formation thrive on in a happy and serene atmosphere. We appreciate all your gifts and prayers which always nourish and sustain us. We also promise our continual prayers and intercessions for you and your intentions. Kindly forward your prayer intentions to our contact at the back page.

God bless you.

Celebration of Cultural Day

Inspired by the prologue “*God’s loving grace has gathered us from various peoples and continents into a religious community dedicated to the Divine Word*”,

our Community, for the first time, organized a two-day Cultural Celebration. Our community is made up of six nationalities: **Benin, Ghana, Indonesia, Kenya, Madagascar and Togo**. Fr. Vincent Burke from USA and his students from the Divine Word Language and Cultural Centre, who are from **Bolivia, D.R. Congo and Poland** joined us to celebrate. A **Nigerian**, Anthony Izuchukwu Ezeobebe, from the Institute of Continuing Formation in Cape Coast who was having his live-in experience in our community also enriched our celebration with his culture. Our SSPS sisters from St. Joseph’s community in Kwahu-Tafo were also present.



We cooked the following food: **Ravitoto, Ranonanpango** (drink prepared from rice) from Indonesia and Madagascar; **Chapati** from Kenya; **Accassa** and **Amiwɔ** from Benin and Togo, **eba** and bitter leaves soup from Nigeria, and **Apapramsas, Tubani** and **T.Z** from Ghana. Mr. and Mrs. Kudiabor, Headmaster of St. Peter’s High School and his wife, were the special Guests at our Cultural durbars. We shared different aspects of our cultures and national histories. It was a joyful celebration of unity in diversity.



The Cry of HIV/AIDS

Msgr. Alex Bobby-Benson and three in-mates of Matthew 25 House in Koforidua paid a two-day visit to our community from 27th to 28th February to give us a pastoral insight into the care and support of People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA). Msgr. Bobby-Benson presented a PowerPoint on HIV/AIDS with pictorial illustrations of symptoms and effects of the disease.

Msgr. Bobby Benson is the Director of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) in Koforidua. He explained that when he began the CPE modules in Koforidua he decided to incorporate the care for HIV/AIDS patients into his programme. He established the Matthew 25 House to register and support people living with HIV. Currently the house has 70 registered members made up of 60 females and 10 males. The group meets once a month to discuss issues and share ideas. Their vision is to reach out to as many Ghanaians as possible in order to create awareness of the pandemic and sensitize the youth especially on the preventive measures. We hope that the insights we got would help us further their vision and reach out to PLWHA.

PARENTS VISIT

They always look forward to their Day

This year’s Parents’ visit to the novitiate came off from the 11th to 13th of February. About 30 parents, relatives and friends visited us. Five of our parents and relatives came from Togo and Benin. Some parents came with some gifts or food items to support us. Confreres who witnessed the Saturday gathering were Most Rev. Vincent Boi-Nai, SVD, Bishop of Yendi Diocese, who spent a week earlier facilitating a workshop on “*The Religious Life and Family Relationship*”; Father Provincial Thomas D’Mello, Rev. Fr. Vincent Burke, SVD; Fr. Sofronio Endoma, SVD, from Kwahu-Tafo; Fr. Lambert Assogba, SVD from Koforidua, Rev. Eugene Agyapong, SVD and Fr. Emmanuel Kabatey, who led the parents from Togo and Benin.

We were also honoured by the presence of 25 Christian Mothers (CMA) from Obo, Obomeng, Abetifi, Nkwatia, Bepong, Pepease and Kwahu-Tafo led by their president, Madam Valeria Doh. Our Friends, Ms. Helen Dzikunu and Elisabeth Pomany represented the Friends of the SVD (FOS) from Dansoman in Accra and witnessed the function in *totus*.

Our parents and relatives, though some were not Catholics, appreciated our community and formation programme and pledged their support for us. We are grateful to God for granting us a successful and historic visit since it was the first time for Fr. Provincial Thomas D’Mello to be present at the programme.

See you again next year.

Picnic

“*All work and no play...*” The Kwahu District Arnoldus Family had its annual picnic and interaction at Ekye Amanfrom in the Afram Plains. Together with our Salesian friends from their novitiate in Sunyani, we had wonderful relaxation moments with various in-door and out-door games. Our SSPS sisters were there in their numbers. How good it is for brothers and sisters to make merry together!



WORKSHOP AT FOYER DE CHARITE

As part of effort to give greater attention to basic formation of future priests and religious, the South-Eastern Sector of the National Association of Religious Formators (SE-NARF) organized a one-week workshop from 14th to 19th February for novices of this sector at Foyer de Charite in Alavanyo-Abehenease in the Ho Diocese. Its topic was *"Fidelity to the Vows"* and aimed at preparing us, novices to embrace the evangelical counsels of obedience, chastity and poverty.

The workshop was facilitated by Most Rev.

Vincent Sowah Boi-Nai, SVD, Bishop of Yendi Diocese. Fifteen of us, SVD novices participated in the workshop. The other participants included four novices from Sisters of Mary Mother of the Church (SMMC) in Sokode-Ho, and three novices from The Handmaids of the Divine Redeemer (HDR) in Koforidua. Sr. Esther Honuga, SMMC sat in for the formators of the sector.

Bishop Boi-Nai helped us to understand the need to remain focused and convinced about our vocation in order to make a difference. He insisted that fidelity to the vows we profess require a radical way of living which comes through suffering and endurance yet nourished by prayer and Christian asceticism. We were happy and grateful to have the privilege to attend the workshop to boost our morale and zeal for the service of God and humanity. We thank all who made the workshop possible for us. We say Ayekooo to all our formators.



RETREAT JOURNEY

Our 30-Day Retreat Journey opened on 5th March and closed on 6th April. The Retreat Master was Fr. Andy Obeng with the support of Fr George and Bro. MacDaniel Acquaaah as Retreat Guides. Sr. Lidwina Koban, SSpS assisted the guides in all aspects and dynamics of the retreat.

The exercises were based on the Trinitarian Mission Spirituality of the SVD. As a result, we celebrated the mysteries of God, the Father's Love for us, the life and passion of Christ, and the manifestation of the power of the Holy Spirit. We had two breaks: the first for personal reflection and the second was used for an excursion to various places in Kumasi including the Manhyia Palace, the Spiritan University College, Sisters of St. Louis Novitiate.

The aunt of Fr. George, Catherine and his husband, Dr. Aklaku at KNUST hosted us and provided a sumptuous lunch for all of us. One of the unique dynamics of the retreat was a Seder Eucharistic Meal Celebration which is the combination of the Jewish Passover and the Christian Eucharist. The retreat journey was a unique experience for us novices as well as our able and dynamic retreat guides. Thank you all for your support and prayers.

EVENTS AND CELEBRATIONS

New Year

We welcomed the new year, 2011 with great joy and a lively Eucharistic Celebration. We were joined by our friends from the neighboring homes who we call our 'parishioners'. Mrs Margaret Owusu-Ansah (Auntie Ekua) from Obomeng provided a free supper for us, a generous gesture that reminded us of the providence and kindness of our God. Auntie Ekua, Thank you and may

God reward you always. Thus we began the year with hope and quiet confidence.

Epiphany

The Solemn Mass was presided over by Fr. Vincent Burke, SVD and concelebrated by Frs. George Angmor, Anthony Anala, and Daniel Lenwah. Fr. Burke reminded us that we are the new instruments of God to reveal Christ to the World. We treasured the celebration because the previous evening, Fr. Anala who is working in the U. S. Southern Province shared with us his mission experience and how he is making Christ known in that part of the world. His sharing was inspiring and heart-warming.

Founder's Day

We marked St. Arnold Janssen Day with a solemn Mass presided over by Fr. Vincent Owusu and concelebrated by Frs. Burke, George, Rafael and Thomaz. The celebration was preceded by a novena to our Founder seeking for missionary zeal for all priests and religious. As part of the celebration, we toasted for the realization of the missionary vision of the SVD. *St. Arnold, open our hearts to all people.*

Following the Cross on the Krobo Mountain

Together with our Novice Director, we joined the faithful of the Krobo Deanery on the April 15th for this year's Way of the Cross on the Krobo Mountain. We were very happy and touched by this spiritual exercise and the enthusiasm of the faithful, especially, old men and women as well as pregnant women who made frantic effort to reach the top of the mountain. The Krobo Mountain is located at the Akuse Junction along the main Accra-Ho road. After the exercise, we made a stop-over at Agomanya to visit Bishop Emeritus Bowers, SVD and his companion, Msgr. Pius Kpeglo; HDR Sisters at the HDR Mother House as well as Fr. George's Family at their family house.

FIRST SVD—SBD INTERACTION

In order to foster our oneness and the sharing of experiences in mission, we hosted our friends, the Salesians of Don Bosco (SDB) from Sunyani in the Brong-Ahafo Region, for a three-day inter-novices interaction at our Novitiate here in Nkwatia-Kwahu. The interaction was based on the theme: *“There is a diversity of gifts but the Spirit is the same”* (1Cor. 12:4). The Salesian novices were seventeen coming from Ghana, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Liberia. They were led by their Novice Director, Fr. Silvio Roggia.

The programme, the first to be held between us, offered us the opportunity to interact, share and appreciate the charisms of our respective congregations. This is to enable us build a religious friendship that would help us work together in witnessing the Good News to all people. The Salesians have as their charism the privilege preference for the youth especially, those of the lower classes. Five years ago, Fr. Andrew Quaye-Foli, the former SVD Novice Director and Fr. Silvio Roggia, the SBD Novice Director mooted the idea to have an annual exchange programme. It is only this year that the first part of the exchange became a reality.

We are privileged to be the first to host the interaction. As a result, we made the effort to make the interaction memorable. Our *Akwaaba* ceremony involved a rite of symbols at the forecourt of the novitiate house. Each of our guests drew a symbol of expectation on a board, and the symbols were interpreted at the closing ceremony. Our opening and farewell socials were coloured with varieties of entertainment, jokes, quizzes and sharing of ideas.

We also made our guests have a feel of the Volta Lake via boats as we joined the SVD confreres of the Kwahu District, for their picnic at Ekye Amanfro in the Afram Plains. During the farewell ceremony, our Salesian friends surprised us by donating a set of football jerseys and a complete set of Christmas Crib to us. The interaction was generally evaluated as lively and enriching. See you again!



Our Akwaaba ceremony involved a rite of symbols at the forecourt of the novitiate house.

VOCATION PROMOTION

It is important to encourage and support those who show clear signs of a call to priestly life and religious consecration, and to enable them to feel the warmth of the whole community as they respond “yes” to God and the Church. I encourage them, in the same words which I addressed to those who have already chosen to enter the seminary: “You have done a good thing. Because people will always have need of God, even in an age marked by technical mastery of the world and globalization: they will always need the God who has revealed himself in Jesus Christ, the God who gathers us together in the universal Church in order to learn with him and through him life’s true meaning and in order to uphold and apply the standards of true humanity.”

**(Extract from Pope Benedict XVI,
Message for the 48th World Day of Prayer
for Vocations)**

EXPERIENCE

**Anthony Izuchuckwu Ezeobele
University Sons of Assumption (USoA)**

At the beginning of the New Year, Bro. Anthony Izuchukwu, a Nigerian Seminarian and student at the Institute of Continuing formation (ICF) at Cape-Coast passed three weeks in our novitiate community to have his live-in experience. The experience forms part of the programme of the ICF where our confrere, Fr. Vincent Owusu, SVD is the Director. Bro. Izu belongs to the congregation known as the University Sons of Assumption (USoA) founded in Nigeria about six years ago. The congregation has its women counterpart known as University Sisters of Assumption which was founded about twenty-two years ago.

Their charism is to work among university students and staff offering them guidance and counselling as well as the needed spiritual direction. During his experience, Bro. Izu participated in all our activities and contributed meaningfully and creatively to various programmes including our interaction with our Salesian friends and our Cultural Day celebration. He also made time to give us an input on Journal Keeping. At the end of his experience he praised our community for its joy and dynamism. He jokingly concluded that “For me, after God it is the SVD”.

Bro Izu, we enjoyed your company, come again.

CAN YOU COUNTERACT STRESS?

In the modern era of hectic, harrowing and fast pace, a great majority of our civilisation experiences high stress at one time or the other. Stress has become a major contributor, either directly or indirectly to coronary heart disease, cancer, lung ailments, accidental injuries, cirrhosis of the liver and suicide. Most often, stress consists largely of how we respond to events, not the events themselves, so that we bring a lot of our stress on ourselves. Managing stress successfully involves more than relying on the automatic, symptom-reducing reactions to stress. It means taking charge, directing and controlling our responses to stressors, thereby modifying the overall stress.

Modifying our environment and altering ourselves in some way are the major techniques through which stress could be reduced to a considerable extent. Building up a greater tolerance for the stress and changing our pace of life could be of immense help in this direction. So the next time you are waiting in the queue, stuck in the traffic, or late for an event keep track of your stress level and watch out your reaction!

Curled from What is your Emotional IQ

By Dr. Aparna Chattopadhyay

“If we do our part, God will come to our assistance, and he knows that even out of evil, good comes.”

(St. Arnold Janssen)

NOVITIATE PROJECTS

BOREHOLE

This year the water shortage in our area has been very severe, necessitating a late in the night and an early rise for search of water. In fact, we, the novices and our Directors were fetching water from the surrounding wells for almost two months.

But now, by the Grace of God, we have a borehole that supplies us water. Thanks to the Provincial and his Council; our benefactors, our Novice Directors and the Pro-Hydro Ltd, the company that drilled the borehole which is located at the middle of our farm. The first mechanized water was pumped on March 4th. We had a special prayer service at the site on 5th March to commission it. The prayer was led by



Fr. Rafael. Now we have water flowing for us every day. We thank you for your prayers and support as well. May this project help future generations.

FARM

We have begun the farming season as the heavens have opened their gates for us. We have cleared the land and have begun sowing corn, groundnut, planting cassava and plantain suckers. We pray that the season will be good for us and all farmers to get an appreciable yield. Our vegetable garden is also growing very fast and with the rains, we hope to make it greener for domestic consumption.

ANIMAL HUSBANDRY

The sheep and goats are doing well. The local poultry is also multiplying. The guinea fowls, we started rearing last year have started laying eggs.

Bee Keeping: At the beginning of this year, we were able to colonise some bees into our hives. Unfortunately for us, they have all fled after a rainstorm that caused a tree branch to fall on the hives. We are making frantic effort to bring attract another colony.

Crabs: Our crabs have also gone under hiding waiting for the raining season. We hope to keep them in a pool when we get more rains.

Rabbits: The rabbits are increasing rapidly. With two males and females, we now have 13 matured rabbits and 18 litters growing at a very fast speed. In all we have 36 rabbits in cage aside the few that have landed on the table for our meals. We have been enjoying the benefits from this project and they are also a delight to watch.

Life Experience

Daniel Ntem, an ex-SVD seminarian who is our batch mate visited us in the novitiate from 23rd to 24th May and shared his life experience with us. We were greatly moved by his ability to use his experience in the seminary to help his parish. He participated in *Dei Verbum 2010* and he is using the knowledge gained to spread the Word of God and to organise his parish bulletin. **Daniel, Good work, keep it up and come to visit again.**

Profession of First Vows

The profession of First Vows is slated for 10th July, 2011. The details will be communicated to you in due time.

VISITS

We are glad you came to us...

- 23rd Dec. Bro. John Lengari, Provincial Bursar, Accra (Holiday)
 - 3rd-23rd Jan. Anthony Izuchukwu Ezeobebe USoA, from ICF (3-week Immersion)
 - 5th Jan. Fr. Anthony Anala, SVD from US South Province (Visit)
 - 14th Jan. Fr. Vincent Owusu, SVD, from ICF Cape Coast (Visit)
 - 21st-22nd Jan. Sr. Hanna Lellek, SSpS from Koforidua (Workshop on Arnoldus Sisters)
 - 23rd-26th Jan. Bro. Pius Agyemang, SVD (Workshop on Sacred Music)
 - 29th Jan. Sr. Vasanthi, SSpS Novice Directress from Sunyani (Visit)
 - 31st Jan; & 2nd Mar, Fr. Provincial Thomas D’Mello, SVD (Visit)
 - 6th Feb. Sr. Winifred SSpS from Mozambique (Visit and sharing of mission experience)
 - 6th -13th Feb. Bp. Vincent Boi-Nai, SVD from Yendi (Workshop on Family)
 - 7th Feb; 28th Mar. Bro. Jerome Agbeko, SVD from Kintampo (stop-over)
 - 9th Feb. Fr. Alfred Ayem, SVD from US (Visit)
 - 14th -19th Feb. Postulants of SSpS, SMMC, Redemptorists, HDR (Workshop)
 - 25th -26th Feb. Fr. Andrew Campbell, SVD from Accra (Recollection for novices)
 - 2nd Mar. – 7th Apr. Sr. Lidwina Koban, SSpS from Sunyani (Facilitator, 30-Day Retreat Journey)
 - 4th Mar. – 6th Apr. Fr. Andy Obeng and Bro. McDaniel Acquaaah, from Accra (30-Day Retreat Guides)
 - 21st -29th Mar. Sr. Andriana da Silva, SSpS from Saboba, (Personal Retreat)
 - 11th April Sr. Estella, SSpS from Rome accompanied by Sr. Erwina from K’Tafo (Visit)
 - 27th Apr. Fr. Alex Chandy from Donkorkrom (stop-over)
 - 29th Apr. Sr. Jana Pavla Tothova, SSpS from Nkawkaw (sharing on her life and SSpS in Slovakia)
 - 5-8th May Mr. George and Mrs. Cecilia Musey from Dansoman, Accra (Input on Married Life)
 - 9th May Mrs. Olivia Osei Pomaah, from Holy Family Hospital, Nkawkaw (Input on Relationships)
 - 16-17th May Sr. Mavis Mensah, OHP Anglican sister from Sunyani (Input on Anglican Religious Life)
 - 20-21st May Flavian Akumbilim, Raymond’s Sister from Dormaa-Ahenkro (Visit)
 - 21-23rd May Sr. Helen Akparibu, postulant of Sisters of Charity from Kumasi (Visit)
 - 26th May Sr. Maria Erwina and Sr. Nelsi, SSpS from Kwahu-Tafo (Recollection for novices)
- We also hosted our confreres who passed by: Bp. Gabriel Kumordji, Frts. Godwin Fiawoyi, Gregoire Agbalevor, Eugene Asante, Emmanuel Dogble and Rudolf Babugih.

Thank you for coming, please come again!

We are Grateful

Donations

Msgr. Paul Lawer, Parish Priest of St. Michael Parish in Nkawkaw presented us with some assorted toiletry items when he came with Madam Olivia Osei Pomaah to give us input on *Boy-Girl Relationship*. The items, he said, are gifts offered by his parishioners at Easter for seminarians in the Nkawkaw Deanery. *Monsignor, Ye da mo ase.*

Goat: Madam Flavian Akumbilim, sister of novice Raymond, gave us a big nanny goat for rearing, *Sister Flavian, taa nye gyiam*

Altar Cloth: Mrs. Magdalene Kudiabor, wife of St. Peter’s Headmaster, donated a nice white Altar cloth for our Liturgy. *Woda, Akpe looo*

Thanksgiving: Madam Salome, a teacher at Nkwatia and a friend of the novitiate also donated a beautiful white altar cloth and some foodstuffs to us as thanksgiving to God for favours received. *Mama Salo, Thank you.*

Candle Making

Sr. Tarcildis Westerhoff, SSpS from Kwahu-Tafo taught us how to recycle used candle wax to make new candles. Sr. Tarcildis we are very grateful to you for this practical knowledge and skills you have taught us. *Sister, Danke.*

Foodstuffs: Our Confreres in the Afram Plains: Fr. Eduardo Simatupang brought a bag of maize; Fr. Alex Chandy brought us tubers of yam and a lot of mangoes.

Rev. Fathers, thanks a lot.

Assorted: Our SSpS sisters in K’Tafo, Nkawkaw, and Novitiate in Sunyani, thanks for the cookies, cakes, jams, mangoes and all the services you have been rendering to us. *Merci beaucoup!*

Editorial Board

- Abraham K. Dzibitor
- Martin Kotchoffa
- Diderick Andrinjatovo
- Ronald Aming’a Gatenga

Please pray for SVD NOVICES

Our **mission** is to share divine love in words and deeds with all creation. Our **vision** is that all creation become one in Christ.

MADAGASCAR

JEAN-AIME

DIDERICK

NICOLAS

ROBERT

KENYA

RONALD

AUGUSTINE

GHANA

RAYMOND

ARTHUR

ABRAHAM

VICTOR

MAKAYIE

PIUS

SABASTINE

BENIN

MARTIN

VICTORIN

TOGO

DAVID

Thank you, Sr. Paulina Osei (HDR Novice Mistress) and HDR novices in Koforidua for the **gari** you sent us. We are enjoying it and we appreciate it. *Thanks!*

Contact

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