

FEBRUARY 2015

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**PEOPLE WHO ARE
INTERESTED ONLY IN
UNSPIRITUAL THINGS
CAN NEVER BE
PLEASING TO YOU.**

Rm.8:8

Have a fruitful lent

A WORD FROM THE PROVINCIAL

Dear Confreres,

As we are still in the earlier part of the year, although at the same time of the Year of Consecrated Life that Pope Francis gifted to us, it is fitting to wish you a happy New Year! As we do this, it is also good to ask ourselves how well we are on track in “waking up the world” as our pontiff had challenged us.

I am aware that across the country and in many dioceses, various programmes have been laid out especially around February 2, to celebrate the year of the consecrated life. I had the opportunity of joining that of Accra at which over 110 members of the consecrated and religious life were present, among whom were many of you my confreres. At that occasion, we had the Apostolic Nuncio, Archbishop Jean Marie Speich interacting with us and in his talk that he presented without a prepared paper, he reiterated a few things which the pope had also made known in his many writings on this theme for this year in the past few months.

Focusing on the topic of the challenges that the members of the consecrated life face today, he stressed especially three points. The first one, he said, was the temptation to forget about “our first love,” that is, the God who has called us in the first place. He acknowledged that there can be times when we become so busy taken up by various activities and at the end of the day, we find ourselves tired and lacking in the zeal to pray. Therefore, for all of us, during this year of the consecrated life, it is a reminder to us all to go back to God and hence take our prayer life seriously, praying many times in a day, privately and as well, with the community. Do you realize how zealous our founder has been as he showed himself to be a serious man of prayer as bored out by his many devotions – the Quarter Hour Prayer, his love for the visit to the Blessed Sacrament, Stations of the Cross, and Meditations etc.? The next point is the fact that during this year, we are to make efforts and go back to our founders and foundresses and see how they availed themselves to God’s spirit working in them and they cooperating with it.

In fact, the Nuncio said that we should all read again, the lives of our founders and foundresses and share this together with our brothers and sisters. We are also to make an effort to make a reflective reading of our Constitutions, discussing and appreciating it in our communities. While doing so, we are also to similarly reflect upon the charism of our congregations.

The third important point Archbishop Speich stressed was upon each one of us as an individual. In a question form, he asked how each one is living his or her life to practically live out and witness to our calling as members of the consecrated life. This is logically tied out to the living out of our vows and he asked how faithful we have been to these. Do we obey our superiors or we like to do our own things? Are we really living out simple lifestyles out there or we cause the poor people to be scandalized by our ways of living in the security of the walls of our convents and rectories where our three meals are assured? What about those keeping private bank accounts? he asked. He also challenged us to be cheerful religious so we can attract many young men and women to this life and also give hope to people we meet. We should not be a people who wear moody faces otherwise we hide the joy of the Gospel! Additionally, the Nuncio added that during this year we endeavour to learn more of the charism and life of other congregations apart from our own.

Other news items from the province:

Book Centre: From the beginning of February, Mr. Anthony Segla, began his work as the new manager. He is settling down well to it.

Provincial Office movement to Castle Drive completed and thus office matters, Council meetings as well as meetings with the provincial and the like will normally be held there. Accordingly as planned, the treasury has moved upstairs to occupy my former place.

Personnel: Kim Nam Doo, our South Korean confrere who was here for OTP has been assigned to Ghana and we should have him back soon after his priestly ordination later in the year. Fr. Benediktus Bau of IDT transferred to us is almost set to arrive next month in March. Fr. Vincent Owusu takes up as the Priest-in-Charge of Sts. Peter and Paul, New Aplaku from beginning of March. We congratulate him for his many years of work at ICF and wish him well in the pastoral ministry now. Well done also to Fr. John Straathof who we can say founded and saw the New Aplaku community grow to this stage. Ayekoo!

Most of you may be aware already, but we are having to hand over to the bishop of Techiman in the Brong Ahafo district, the three places of Kranka, Jema and Magazin as the bishop requested and also coinciding with part of the implementation of our recent Visitation Protocol. That is going to be at the end of July. We thank the confreres who have worked hard in these areas and wish them well in whatever new place they will have to be reassigned.

As we journey through this forty days of pray and reflection, I wish you all a fruitful season of lent.

George Angmor



Fr. Provincial with one of the old catechists of Fr. Lobianco at Labadi proudly wearing a T-shirt with the inscription: "SVD WE'RE PROUD OF YOU"



Arrivals

- Fr. Martin Akwetey Dumas [JPN] arrived on the 2nd February to bury his father
- Fr. Edmund Deku [NEB] arrived for his home leave.
- Fr. Maxwell Wullar [CHI] came for a compassionate leave.
- Fr. Wilfred D'Souza arrived from his home leave on the 9th of February.
- Fr. Albert Ziem [PHS] arrived 19th February for the funeral of her mother on the 28th of February; and he will also take his advanced homeleave. *ikaw ay malugod*

Pray for our dead

- The mother of Sr. Ernestina, SSps would be buried on the 28th of February.
- The father of Fr. Martin Akwetey Dumas was buried on the 21st February at Osonson.
- Esther Emma Joana Joko Quaye-Foli, the sister of Fr. Andrew Anumu Quaye-Foli whose death occurred on the 11th December, 2014 at Madina-Accra has since been buried.
- Anna Boham, mother of Fr. Albert Ziem [PHS] died on 5th February 2015 at their hometown in Upper West. Wake-keeping: Friday, 27th February: Burial: Saturday, 28th at Gbengbe Eremor, Lawra in the Upper West. The family would like to know how many SVDs will be coming for the funeral so they can make adequate preparations for them. Please call Rev. Fr. Felix Ziem on 020 763 4009 or Fr. Angmor to let them know if you will be going to the funeral.
- Mr. Edward Yaw Mensah (75), the brother of Fr. John Alphonse Asiedu died on 5th February at Donkorkrom, Afram Plains. Wake-keeping: Friday 20th March, 2015, at 8:00pm; at the family House, Adeemmra-Kwahu, Afram-Plains. Burial Service (Presbyterian) on Saturday 21st March, 2015 at 8:30am at the Family House, Adeemmra-Kwahu, Afram-Plains.
- Mr. Timothy Akpatsa paternal uncle and Ms. Josephine Azah, the maternal auntie of Elorm Akpatsa . The latter will be buried on March 14, 2015 in Fodome, Volta region while the former will be laid to rest on February 28, 2015 in Awate, Ghana.

Please remember them in your prayers.

Pray for our sick

- Fr. Henry Noordermeer and Bro. James Djadoo all retired at McCarthy Hill.

PRAYER FOR THE YEAR OF CONSECRATED LIFE

O GOD, THROUGHOUT THE AGES YOU HAVE CALLED WOMEN AND MEN
TO PURSUE LIVES OF PERFECT CHARITY THROUGH THE EVANGELICAL COUNSELS
OF POVERTY, CHASTITY, AND OBEDIENCE.

DURING THIS YEAR OF CONSECRATED LIFE, WE GIVE YOU THANKS
FOR THESE COURAGEOUS WITNESSES OF FAITH AND MODELS OF INSPIRATION.
THEIR PURSUIT OF HOLY LIVES TEACHES US TO MAKE A MORE PERFECT
OFFERING OF OURSELVES TO YOU.

CONTINUE TO ENRICH YOUR CHURCH BY CALLING FORTH SONS AND DAUGHTERS WHO,
HAVING FOUND THE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE,
TREASURE THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN ABOVE ALL THINGS.
THROUGH OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, YOUR SON.WHO LIVES AND REIGNS WITH YOU
IN THE UNITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.
ONE GOD. FOR EVER AND EVER.AMEN.

Family Feast 2015

This year's SVD-SSpS Family Feast which was scheduled to take place at Madonna, Koforidua could not take place there 'due to circumstances beyond control' as we say in Ghana. In the end, it happened at Nsawam bringing together the Arnoldus Family in the south including Most Rev. Gabriel Kumordji, SVD and many confreres and sisters.

As has been the tradition, the Mass was presided over by one of the Jubilarians of the year, namely Fr. Henry Duah, SVD, 25 years of ordination whilst a reflection was delivered by Bro. Emmanuel Affum, who is 25 years in vows. Other confreres honoured were Frs. Otmar Auinger and Thomas D'Mello, 40 years of ordination and vows respectively, Fr. Patrick Ofori, 50 years in vows. Others who would be honoured in the north are Frs. Francis Koimb and Erasmus Norvieuw-Mortty both 25 years in vows. Bro. John Lengari who is doing further studies was remembered for his 25 years in vows.

The theme of the day was "celebrating a mile with a smile". Giving his reflection, Bro. Affum analysed the prologue of John's Gospel "the Word was there before creation". He questioned that when we Divine Word Missionaries proclaim the Word, what effect does it bring to our listeners? Does it destroy or does it arrange just as God arranged things in the creation story in Genesis".

Touching on the theme of the day he asked, "Do our faces reflect a smile to others and to ourselves?" He said our smile would be a genuine one only when we put Jesus in it; without Jesus in our smiles, our faces would portray something else to people when we smile.

The SSpS Jubilarians honoured were Sr. Dinah Ofosu, 25 years in vows, Sr. Angelina and Sr. Claudette, both 60 years in vows.

All the Jubilarians were presented with gifts from their respective leaders.

The day ended with a sumptuous meal after which some confreres engaged in some outdoor games.



Fr. Henry receiving the Prov. Gift from Fr. Sofofornio



Fr. Otmar receiving the Prov. Gift



L-R: Srs. Claudette, Angelina and Dinah



SSpS versus SVD at the volley court

Please send your stories from the districts by 25th March.
svdghanacom@yahoo.com
Visit: www.svdghana.org

Pray for our novices who are having their 30-day retreat.

Bishop Boi-Nai at 70



Bishop Boi-Nai decorated with flowers

St. Maurice Parish, Labadi was one of the old bases of the SVD in Accra. This is the home parish of Most Rev. Vincent Boi-Nai, SVD, Bishop of Yendi. At 70, the bishop decided to come home to celebrate this important birthday with his family members and friends. The celebration took place on the 1st of January. His brother bishops Most Rev. Gabriel Palmer-Buckle, the Metropolitan Archbishop of Accra and Most Rev. Gabriel Kumordji, SVD, Bishop of the Vicariate of Donkorkrom flanked him around the altar to give thanks to the Lord.

Other priests concelebrating with the Bishop were Frs. George Angmor, SVD Provincial, Rex Vegbey, and Fred Timp. Fr. Joseph Arthur, the Financial Administrator of the Archdiocese of Accra and Fr. Neumann Tettehfiio, the Parish Priest. Also present to wish the Bishop well were Bro. James Djadoo, SVD; Sr. Dinah Oforu, the Provincial leader of the SSps Ghana and her delegation.

Delivering the homily, Bishop Boi-Nai spoke on the angels visiting and sharing their story of the revelation of the birth to all. In the same way as we have entered a new year we become witnesses that would bring sunshine to others. The Bishop recalled with delight his first Mass celebration almost forty years ago during which her mother was present but passed on a week later. He thanked the SVD and the sisters for the immense support he has received from them over the years.



Bishop being helped to cut the ann. cake

Religious Day at Christ the King

Most Rev. Jean-Marie Speich, the Apostolic Nuncio to Ghana was the speaker of this year's Religious Day celebration in Accra. The theme was in line with the Year of Consecrated Life which was 'Challenges of Religious life today'. He challenged us the religious to make our presence felt among the lay people. He said many of our Catholics do not even know who the religious is in the church so we should use the Year of the Consecrated Life to 'publicise' ourselves.

There were over hundred religious present representing the following congregations currently engaged in different ministries in the Accra Archdiocese.

They are:

1. School Sisters of Notre Dame (SSND)
2. Missionary Sisters Servants of the Holy Spirit (SSpS)
3. Divine Word Missionaries (SVD)
4. Order of Friars Minor Conventual (OFM Conv.)
5. Notre Dame De L'Église (NDE)
6. Franciscan Missionaries of Mary (FMM)
7. Handmaids of the Divine Redeemer (HDR)
8. Congregation of the Holy Spirit (Spiritans)
9. Society of the Holy Child Jesus (SHCJ)
10. Hospitaller Brothers of St. John of God
11. Sisters of Mary Immaculate (SMI) were absent
12. Handmaids of the Holy Child Jesus (HHCJ)
13. OrdoVirginum (OV)
14. Salesians of Don Bosco (SDB)
15. Society of Jesus (Jesuits)
16. Comboni Missionaries of Jesus (MCCJ)
17. Salesian Sisters of Don Bosco (FMA)
18. Society of African Missions (SMA)



The nuncio in the middle

A section of the religious



The Mission to Liberia: an update.

It has been a little over a year since the talks came up about Ghana Province opening a district in Liberia. The team has not reported at the place and doubtless, many may be wondering at what is happening. I would like to give a brief update.

In 2013 when the province was preparing to celebrate the 75 years of SVD presence in Ghana, the Generalate administration challenged us to take this up and proposed it could be part of a significant mark of the diamond jubilee celebrations. This was taken up in good faith and deliberated upon by the confreres. In November 2013, the General Visitor to the province Very Rev. Fr. Budi Kleden, together with two confreres of the province, Frs. Cyprian Kuupol and Marius Pacula, travelled for a few days from Ghana to Liberia to meet Bishop Andrew Karnley, the bishop of the diocese of Cape Palmas to which we were being invited. Indeed, they also made the eleven-hour journey (over two days) eastwards from the capital Monrovia, to Zwedru City in the Grand Gedeh County, wherein is located the Christ the King parish that the bishop is offering us as a base to begin our mission in Liberia. Reports from this on-site inspection and talks with the bishop helped us to make the final decision and agreed to go there. The General Council also highly encouraged us to do so.

Preliminary arrangements were made and contracts also discussed. Ghana offered two priest-confreres: Josef Mazur from Poland and Joseph Addai a Ghanaian. Fr. Louis Awoudja of TOG was also transferred to Ghana for this new district of Liberia. It was of a high interest at the time when Fr. Patrick Urey Mark of USC was also transferred to Ghana in view of the same mission. This was because he was our lone Liberian confrere and we thought it would give an added boost. However, towards the end of last year, we received word that he is considering quitting the SVD and incardinating in a diocese in the US. This certainly means that he can no longer belong to the pioneer team that was originally planned. We are grateful to Fr. General and his council for helping us get personnel for the pioneer team, and also appointing to Ghana the deacon Jean-Bertrand Tchekpi from Togo, now in his final year of theological studies in Ghana also in view of the same Liberian mission.

With talks had with the bishop, it was originally planned that the four-man pioneering team would arrive in Liberia to coincide with the beginning of the present liturgical year: that was, towards the first Sunday of Advent 30th November, 2014. Before that time could come however, as you may be aware, there was the outbreak in Sierra Leone, Guinea and Liberia of the deadly Ebola virus which today had claimed the lives of over 8,000 souls and many more having been infected and/or affected by it. Thank God this is now quite under control now and many fatal dangers diminished. Together with Bishop Karnley, we thought it wise to postpone our reporting time to the occasion when it would be safer to do so. This is now going to be, God willing it, by the last quarter of this year. Apart from Fr. Mark mentioned above, the rest of the confreres remain committed to report to Liberia as soon as things are fairly set. They are enthusiastic about it and Fr. General Heinz Kulüke had the opportunity of meeting them all last November in his visit to Ghana and Togo and they all repeated their readiness for this mission.

This is not the first time that Ghana or the Society is attempting to extend to Liberia. In 1989, Archbishop Michael Kpakala Francis of the archdiocese of Monrovia had written to our superiors that "... I have been requesting for personnel for ten years!" Before we could go there however, there broke out the civil war which took many years to come to an end. No wonder some try to find out whether there is any link from these semblances of occurrences. Well, as the saying goes: "Man proposes but God disposes!" It is the Lord's own mission, and we will continue to discern the right moment He would want us to report there. The important thing is to be ready when at last He says "Go" and we go without unnecessary further delays! Indeed, I can vouch that we are ready. May the Lord bless us all to make us answer boldly His call to this Liberian mission in the manner that our founder St. Arnold Janssen would have courageously put his heart into. I am reminded of our founder's own words at times such as these when he may have repeated many times: "We want to begin this undertaking in God's Name and if it succeeds we will say, 'All honour to you, O Lord.' If it does not succeed, 'To us the burden.'"

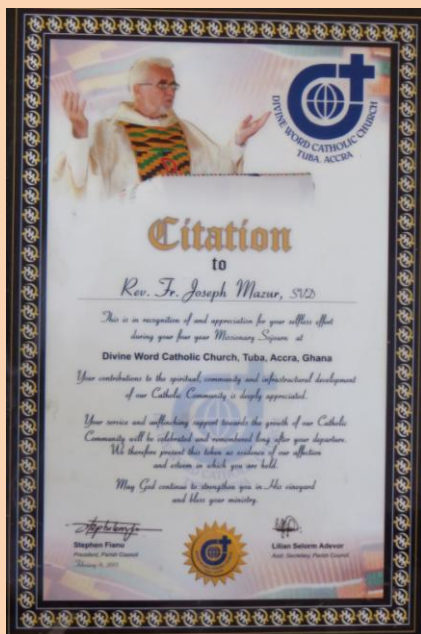
George C. Angmor

Send off for Fr. Mazur



On the 8th of February, Fr. Mazur bid farewell to the Divine Word Catholic community at the premises of St. Arnold Janssen Spirituality Centre, Tuba.

He presided over a solemn Eucharistic celebration to mark the occasion. Present were Frs. George Angmor, Provincial Superior; Rex Vegbey SVD, Accra District Superior, Konrad Dreyer, Board Chairman of St. Arnold Janssen Spirituality Centre and Stephen Dogodzi, Provincial Mission Secretary who has been assigned as the Director of the Centre and pastor of the Divine Word Catholic Church. Fr. Mazur expressed his appreciation to the 100-member (not counting children) Church for their motherly care and the consideration the youth has given him as a father. Above all, he thanked them for their immense financial contribution towards the development of the Tuba property.



On the part of the community, Mr. Fianu, the Chairman of the Pastoral Council expressed gratitude for the contribution Fr Mazur has made to the spiritual life of the community particularly developing catechesis not only for the children but for the adult congregation as well.

Fr. Mazur volunteered to the new mission in Liberia but due to the outbreak of the Ebola last year he could not leave. It is hoped that the situation would improve in the course of the year to enable the team depart for their mission. Fr. Mazur is due for homeleave this year and so is currently at the Yendi District House till he departs for his homeleave. Hopefully, by the end of his leave, he can take up the mission assignment in Liberia.



St. Arnold Janssen Spirituality Centre Project

Work on the first phase of the **St. Arnold Janssen Spirituality Centre** is progressing steadily. This comprises a place of convenience, two classrooms, a dining hall, a store and a kitchen in addition to the already completed small chapel and a hall that is being used as a church for the Tuba community on Sundays. The construction is being supervised by Fr. John Straathof. Fr. Stephen Dogodzi is the Director of the Centre.

From Easter, the centre would be opened for day recollections, workshops etc. Do let your faithful know.



Progress of the construction to complete phase 1



St. Paul's Day

A week-long celebration with various activities took place at St Paul's Technical School at Kukurantumi in the Koforidua Diocese to mark St Paul's Day. Among the activities organized during the week, were an interaction with old students on career prospects, a talk on the life of St. Paul by an old student, Fr. John Duah Prempeh, SVD, a clean-up exercise in the Kukurantumi township, and a symposium with Fr. Joseph Sprehe, SVD who spoke on the history of the Institute.

In a sermon to climax the week, Most Rev. Joseph Afrifa Agyekum, the Bishop of Koforidua was happy that such an occasion is celebrated and he encouraged the school authorities to make it an annual activity. He urged the old students to sponsor the celebrations.



The Bishop cutting the tape to unveil the statue



Blessing of the unveiled statue

He thanked the founding fathers of St. Paul School referring to the late Bishop Bowers and Fr. Sprehe who was there at the celebration.

Addressing the staff, he asked them “to convert” those who are sabotaging the smooth running of the institution.

Referring to an incident of exams malpractice that occurred at the Nursing Training School at Berekum Catholic Hospital that was reported in the daily newspapers, the Bishop urged the students to take their studies seriously in order not to find themselves cheating in exams.

He expressed his pride of the many former students of St. Paul who are holding various important positions in the country. Later on, an imposing statue of St. Paul was unveiled and blessed by the Bishop.



A section of the students



A section of the students dancing

Concelebrating with the Bishop were Fr. George Angmor, SVD, Provincial Superior, Fr. Josef Sprehe, former Principal of the institution, Fr. Rex Vegbey, SVD Communication Coordinator of the SVD, Fr. Dan Berek and Fr. Francis Allah, the chaplain of the school.

Our brothers present were the community members Oswald Bangfo, Stephen Bonsu and Bernadus Tang. Right after the last blessing, the heavens opened and a torrential rain poured which some of the locals saw as a sign of blessings on the St. Paul's Technical School.

Bishop Afrifa blessed St. Paul SVD Vehicle Diagnostic and Service Centre

A new Vehicle Diagnostic Centre has been established on the premises of St. Paul Technical School. This is a SVD oriented project managed by Bro. Oswald Bangfo. On the feast of St. Paul, Most Rev. Joseph Afrifa, the Bishop of Koforidua blessed the new facility. The centre offers the following services:

- ❖ CAR DIAGNOSTICS
- ❖ DRIVER TRAINING (DVLA)
- ❖ SPARE PARTS
- ❖ CAR WASH
- ❖ WHEEL ALIGNMENT
- ❖ BRAKE SERVICING
- ❖ ENGINE TUNE UP
- ❖ ENGINE OVERHAULING
- ❖ RECONDITIONING



The Bishop blessing the workshop

A Course on Communication held in the Novitiate

As part of the formation programme, the novices are offered the opportunity to interact with the coordinators of the various priority areas of the SVD. The 2014/15 novitiate year had their communication interaction with Fr. Rex Vegbey, the provincial Coordinator of Communication half way through the novitiate year programme.

The five-day programme took the novices through the handbook of the communication policy of the SVD, the various church documents on communication, the SVD and communication, going through the history of communication right from the founder, through the various chapters till date and the constitution on communication and narrowing down to communication on the General SVD, AFRAM and Ghana levels.

In addition, they were taken through the various styles in writing to be understood and writing to deliver. Each novice wrote an article some of which are published in this edition of the newsletter and a three-minute reflection script which each



delivered on camera. Each was evaluated based on the principles of 'delivering to be understood'. This was meant to help the future missionaries to see how their viewers and listeners would view them. Not only that, but also, they were led to examine the disturbing

issues of communication in community and to prepare them with possible solutions should those issues pop up in their future communities.

To climax it, the novices were exposed to the new media, the positive use of its tools as well as the dangers that their use can cause to the religious especially the use of social media which has become predominant among young people of today.

Commenting on their impressions after the programme, one novice writes "What I liked most was the opportunity to deliver our reflections on camera". Another wrote, "The course was practical; the aspect of writing to be understood was very helpful."



A few of the novices expressed the stressful nature of the course and suggested the extension of the time to cover two weeks at different times during the novitiate year. *Over to you Novitiate Director!* In all, in spite of the stressful nature of the programme, the novices expressed their gratitude for all that they have learnt.

I did not know I was a Shepherd

Many are the novices who have come to discover open heartedly during the period of less than six months the rich potential and marvellous talents that God has granted them before they came into this world. This is as a result of the formation programme which novices follow in our novitiate at Nkwatia-Kwahu.

Deep are the testimonies from the novices who had a very fruitful experience in their various activities and their different monthly offices. These experiences are seen from the way each novice carries out his duties in the novitiate. The experiences differ from one novice to the other, due to the various experiences one had before beginning the formation programme. Some novices were able to call themselves farmers just because they had been able to hold the cutlass well just as a serious farmer would. Some of them acquired knowledge in gardening and in animal keeping; "the experience of the latter had made me feel great as a shepherd", said one of the novices. In fact, this has been his first time to come closer to animals and to enter into the world of animals. "It is funny to see the sheep running toward me whenever I am passing by the animal husbandry", he exclaimed. This brings to mind the image of our Lord Jesus Christ the Good Shepherd; He knows His sheep and His sheep know Him.

While some novices are having their experiences in the farm and with the animals, some found themselves as the organizers of the life of the novitiate, discovering thus leadership skills in themselves. Though some are still struggling in the English language they are proud to discover their ability to learn new languages for the sake of their missions in the future. In the same line those who are open to music are foreseeing greater abilities in regard to mission animation with their musical skills. So many are the witnesses and the testimonies about the self-discovery in the area of talents and abilities in the novitiate that I feel challenged to discover more of my talents. This is the direct result of the novitiate structure.

One can therefore notice that, the novitiate is a place where talents are nursed. Indeed the novitiate is a place of discernment. It gives the opportunity to develop into a mature individual, who uncovers the various talents God has endowed in him.

Fr. YAWO David Marcellin (Novitiate)

PEER FORMATION AND EFFECTS ON COMMUNITY LIFE

I have come to understand that the novitiate year is a time of serious discernment in the formation ladder which opens the door way for candidates to come to a decision as whether to continue their formation in the Society or to withdraw. In their discernment, novices in a solitude confinement are limited to the “four walls” of the novitiate thereby restricted from the outside world to help facilitate the process.

*Due to its structures, life sometimes becomes boring, stressful and tensed because of vicious cycle of the daily activities. Our novitiate group has 14 candidates composed of different nationalities obviously with different cultural and family upbringings. However, the community, blessed and endowed in all aspects of life cannot be submerged by differences. So, this batch of novices (2014/2015) first of all adopted the principle **“one for all and all for one.”** The concern for a brother is a first priority to the community and vice versa. Secondly peer correction is effective among the novices. This, I believe, also helps ease the work of the formators especially when dealing with students. Thirdly, effective communication is identified among them. For example the use of jargons such as “people are changing oh” is used either to prompt a brother of a wrong doing or to encourage a good initiative. More so, “you are late” alerts on how others are lagging behind. In all these, adaptation and tolerance contribute enormously to effective bonding without serious conflicts. Again the spirit of sacrifice and dedication are at the centre of the community’s activities. With this no prolific plan has ever gone unutilized.*

The question however is, how lasting will this solidarity spirit be, especially when these novices find themselves in other communities? I strongly believe that many religious have similarly enjoyed these unity and love in their novitiate years. If this is the case, what then can be the cause of problems in religious communities? Could stern style of formation have its effects? Probably yes. Stern formation where students are overly dictated to, compel many of them to mask their behaviours. The

impulses that are injected by formators in the process, apparently force students to flow with the thoughts and feelings of their formators without regard for the Spirit’s direction of their own lives. Emergence of friction and the distortion of aspiration and inspiration of that divine call of students are evident. Consequently, being ill at ease, feelings are insecurely repressed and can be brought to the fore at unguarded moments.

I think peer formation should be a priority in formations. When formandi are able to diligently solve issues among themselves, they do not only grow in maturity, but they interiorise values that can help them live in harmony in their future communities. I believe that peer formation is the requisite tool to religious growth and responsibility.

Frt. Constancio Koh

RELIGIOUS LIFE AND PRIESTHOOD TODAY

How nice it is to see young men and ladies holding their candles processing to the altar to give themselves as holocausts to God by the profession of their vows or by ordination! How courageous they are! However, some of them have little or no idea about what his/her religious life or his priesthood is going to be like. Looking at the various transformations which are occurring in the world today, the advancement of technology, changes in the society and within the Church, to be a witness to the Gospel of Christ is becoming more and more a challenge. The world needs today, priests and religious, not by mere name but by action; people who will really testify by their way of life that in spite of the difficulties, tribulations, there is a glimmer of hope for humanity. Priests and religious are therefore called to offer not only professional help to people but also the spiritual one. Indeed, being a radical follower of Christ in religious life and priesthood demands a lot of sacrifice. So those in formation to embrace this way of life should take into consideration the four main dimensions of their formation: spiritual, human, intellectual and pastoral. By so doing, they will be able to face the various challenges which are awaiting them on the pastoral field. Those who are already on the pastoral field should perpetually seek the face of God and never cease praying in order to grow more and more in their spiritual lives.

DEO JEREMIE SOSSOU

Waking Up the World through the Year of Consecrated Life

On the first Sunday of Advent, 30th November, 2014, Pope Francis inaugurated this year as “The Year of Consecrated Life.” The Pope, who is himself a religious, said it was necessary because it coincided with the fiftieth anniversary of the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, “*Lumen Gentium*”, which speaks of religious in its sixth chapter, and of the decree *Perfectae Caritatis* on the renewal of religious life. This year-long celebration will conclude with the Feast of the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple, 2nd February 2016.

In his Apostolic Letter to the Consecrated persons, the Pope underlined the aims of the Year of Consecrated Life, namely **to look to the past with gratitude, to live the present with passion and to embrace the future with hope.**

The Pope expressed his expectations for the observance of the year: that consecrated men and women would be witnesses of communion, of joy and the Gospel, and go evermore to the peripheries to proclaim the Good News.

“I also expect from you what I have asked all the members of the Church: to come out of yourselves and go forth to the existential peripheries.... A whole world awaits us: men and women who have lost all hope, families in difficulty, abandoned children, young people without a future, the elderly, sick and abandoned, those who are rich in the world’s goods but impoverished within, men and women looking for a purpose in life, thirsting for the divine...”, he writes.

He urged religious communities to guard against gossip, jealousy and pettiness in community life, to live “in synergy” with other vocations in the Church, and to “step more courageously from the confines of our respective institutes and to work together.”

The Pope said he also expected consecrated men and women to examine their presence in Church life and to respond to the “new demands constantly being made on us, to the cry of the poor.”

As we mark this year of Consecrated Life, we pray that all consecrated men and women may experience their calling as a grace and live it radically.

By: Frt. Stephen Osei Asante,

MAILS

Greetings from Poland! I left Ghana exactly one year ago. Since then many things have happened. First of all, I am very grateful indeed for your letter of appreciation sent in September last year. In fact, the experience of Ghana, the people, the confreres will remain in my memory forever.

After my transfer to the Polish Province, I was appointed to our seminary in Pieniezno. Some of my duties are: (i) translation of various texts *into* or *from* English, (ii) teaching English language, (iii) working in the Provincial archives gathering material on Fr. Zelazek SVD - our long serving missionary in India considered to be a 'holy man', etc. I will also start helping in a formation course for future missionaries: it is a six - month program for priests, religious women and men as well as laity appointed to mission work outside Poland. The present group consists of 28 young missionaries to-be. My missionary experience in Ghana, especially in TICCS, will be a great help for me as I am going to help in the immediate preparation of new missionaries. Finally, in October this year (the new academic year), I am supposed to undertake more systematic teaching activities in Missiology. Thanks also to Fr. Rex Vegbey: I have been able to follow the very many activities in the Ghana Province (I still get the SVD Ghana Newsletter).

Marek Kowalik

MAILS

Greetings from Brazil. First of all, let me take this opportunity to congratulate you for the good work you are doing and especially for keeping us informed of the news of the province. I am writing to update you on the progress I am making so far in my OTP experience in the Brazil Central Province (BRC).

It is interesting to note that after the OTP experience of Fr John Kudjo Dorborkoe and the theological studies of Fr Boniface Issaka, the BRC has not received Ghanaians SVD missionaries working in the province. But the year 2014 came with the blessings of the arrival of Fr Clement Addae Kyei who has been assigned to the province and the arrival of two of us for OTP – Fr. Stephen Osei Asante and I. Fr Clement who arrived earlier in April was going through the Portuguese language and cultural learning before the two of us later joined him; first Osei and later I.

Just at the beginning of this year, the three of us are blessed with the arrival of Fr Boniface who has been transferred from Mexico-Cuba Province to work in Brazil Central. So now we are four Ghanaians in the province together with five others from the AFRAM Zone. Fr. Clement who has since finished his language learning has been assigned to St Anthony's Parish in Juquia as Assistant Parish Priest. Fr Boniface has been assigned to St Mark's Parish in Sao Paulo.

I must say that I have begun my experience on a positive note and so far the language learning and cultural exposition are going on smoothly. For now, Osei and I are living in the community of St. Joseph Freinademetz where the language studies take place every day from Monday to Friday. During the weekends, we have the opportunity to visit the nearby SVD parishes in Sao Paulo to observe the activities that take place in the parishes. We also participate in the various activities organized in the province for both confreres and seminarians. For instance, we participated in the Provincial assembly that took place last October where we met most of the confreres working in the province and also had an overview of the various activities and projects the SVDs are doing. Recently we also joined the seminarians for their retreat to open the academic year and later joined them on their excursion during Carnival.

The various activities are enriching and are helping us to open our eyes to the realities before we begin our pastoral experience. We wish to thank the Ghana Province, the Provincial and his Council, the Bursar's Office, the Superior Delegatus, the Mission Secretary and you Fr. Rex for the support and assistance we enjoyed during our time of preparations before departing from Ghana. We also congratulate the entire Province for the various milestones chalked recently. May this year also be fulfilling for us serving the Divine Word and may you keep us also in your prayers.



APPEAL



The McCarthy Hill Retirement Residence is a home for the retired religious Brothers and Priests who have retired from the mission. This home was built 27 years ago and has not seen any major renovation since and we would like appeal for donations to renovate it.

The estimate for the renovation is €45,000. All donations be marked MCCARTHY HILL GHANA RENOVATION PROJECT and sent to the Ghana Provincial Treasurer. Thank you in advance. For Further information, contact Bro. Stephen Domelevo, SVD

(House Prefect) e.mail: sdomelevo@yahoo.com Tel. +233 208150821

WORTH REMEMBERING**March**

02	Marek Kowalik	Birthday
03	Stephen Ayisu	Birthday
05	McDaniel Acquaaah	Birthday
05	Edward Asafu-Adjaye	+ 2006
06	Rene Derinck	+ 1965
07	PiusKamuti	Birthday
07	William Kane	+ 2001
08	AnastasiusOsei	Birthday
11	PhanuelAgudu	Birthday
11	Thomas Motzko	+ 2009
15	Gideon Davordzie	Birthday
15	PeterTiet	+ 1981
17	Patrick Kodom	Feastday
17	Patrick Moroney	Feastday
17	Owusu PiusOduro	Birthday
17	Patrick Ofori	Feast day
18	AlexPowathu Chandy	Feastday
18	Thomas Halleran	+ 2004
19	Joseph YoutaDjiba	Feastday
19	Jozef Mazur	Feastday
19	Joseph Panabang	Feast day
19	Joseph Sakite	Feastday
19	Joseph Sprehe	Feastday
21	Benjamin Adusei-Poku	Feast day
21	EmmanuelKimario	Birthday
21	Erick Isabwa Okumu	Birthday
21	PaulTawiah-Richmond	Birthday
21	Matthew Yeng	Birthday
22	Boguslaw Berek	Feastday
23	Marcel Kakrabah	Birthday
23	Patrick Twi	+ 1995
24	Janvier WKoutandji.	Birthday
24	Gabriel Kumordji	Birthday
24	BoleslawGielata	+ 2008
25	Acquaah, McDaniel	Feastday
27	Andrew Campbell	Birthday
27	Theodore Smeets	+ 1998
28	Gregorius Boss	Birthday
28	GermainMukinisa	Feast day
28	Henry Noordermeer	Birthday
31	Benjamin Asare	Feastday

April

03	WumbortiBakilatob	Birthday
03	Patrick Moroney	Birthday
04	RonaldAming'a	Birthday
07	James MburuguKimathi	Birthday
09	Andrews Obeng-Aboagye	Birthday
09	Theodore v. Eijndthoven	+ 2000
10	Marek Dabrowski	Birthday
15	Archbishop A. Noser	+ 1981
17	Stephen Osei Asante	Birthday

April

18	Cletus Hodapp	+ 1967
19	Alex Awuah-Osei	Birthday
20	Harold Lauck	+ 1990
21	Konrad Dreyer	Feastday
23	George Angmor	Feast day
23	Bosco O'Connor	+ 2008
25	Emmanuel Anyomi	Birthday
25	Marek Dabrowski	Feastday
25	Marcus Hipólito	Feastday
25	Marek Kowalik	Feastday
26	David K. Tengey	Birthday
26	Joseph Skorupka	+ 1982
29	Thomas D'Mello	Birthday
30	Jean-Aimé Andrianandrasana	Birthday

May

01	Joseph Addai	Feastday
01	Kingsley Sagru-Larr	Feast day
01	Cyprian Kuupol	Birthday
01	Joseph Panabang	Feast day
01	Albert Ziem	Birthday
02	Gideon Davordzie	Feast day
03	Jacobson Dey	Feastday
03	Jojo Monoth	Feastday
03	Peter Wildenburg	+ 1984
04	Francis Allah	Birthday
05	Joshua Garibah	Birthday
05	Alexander P. Chandy	Birthday
07	Matthias Felber	Birthday
08	Stanislaw Gergont	Feast day
09	Samuel Aboo	Birthday
09	George Makonzo Mondo	Birthday
10	Samuel Yaw Adu	Birthday
10	Bruno Yirzie	Birthday
12	John A. Asiedu	Birthday
13	Eugene Agyapong	Feastday
14	Matthias King	Feastday
14	Mathias Yaadar	Feastday
14	John McKillip	+ 1979
15	Samuel Victor Kusaga	Birthday
16	Déomba Honoré Karo	Feastday
17	Paul Ayitey	Birthday
18	Mariusz Pacula	Birthday
19	Joseph Youta Djiba	Birthday
20	Bernard Assenyoh	Birthday
21	John Ohene Akuffo	Birthday
22	Emmanuel Anyomi	Feast day
22	Emile K Dzokpe.	Feastday
22	Emil Setsoafia	Birthday
25	Boniface Issaka	Birthday
25	Fr. Otto Welter	+ 2003
26	Wladyslaw Madziar	Birthday
27	George Wilson	+ 1985
30	Frank Quainoo	Birthday
31	Maxwell Wullar	Birthday