

“Let the light of Christ shine, by increasing our pastoral care of the family, by preparing our youth for Holy Matrimony, by accompanying our families with or without children, with spiritual support, by taking care of the elderly and not forgetting the divorced in whatever circumstances.”

CCEE-SECAM Press Release

31 May, 2015

FROM THE PROVINCIAL'S DESK

Faithful to the Teaching of the Apostles...

In the last write-up, I had focused upon the theme of “Entering into Jerusalem,” and the challenge to brace all in order to fulfil whatever mission is entrusted to us, in the same spirit of Jesus who knew he was going to suffer and be crucified in Jerusalem and yet went ahead with courage to fulfil his divine mission. His death and resurrection led to the outpouring of the promised Holy Spirit upon his disciples who in the power of this Spirit, went around preaching the Good News of the risen Christ. This led to the establishment of the early Christian communities. Acts 2:42 states that these established communities were “faithful to the teaching of the apostles, and the common life of sharing, and the breaking of bread and the prayers.”

Over the past few weeks, the visitation of our various districts was undertaken by me and the other councillors. It was a good experience to meet you confreres in the various places, bringing to reality the many diverse conditions under which we are working. Some indeed can be seen in their isolated places with the minimal facilities available to them portraying all the love and dedication as well as the sacrifices they make - lack of good water supply, electricity or stable telephone communication signals, etc. In spite of all these deprivations, they meaningfully share their lives and the Good News, the Divine Word with the people in their stations.

Indeed, Acts 2:42 personally came powerfully to me in my rounds of the visitation. This was so because, it is expected of all of us and our communities, that like the early Christian communities, we will also remain faithful to the teachings of our Divine Master the risen Lord as well as the visions of our founding generation. It is expected that our prayer life in community, more especially, the Holy Eucharist or the breaking of bread together, help to continuously build up and sustain our communities and thus, share as well, our life in our own SVD community. We may ask how faithful we are, in respect of keeping to these basic requirements of a religious community life, fashioned out of the Gospel and our Constitutions.

This is part of the *Ad Intra* of the Congregational Directions that we are all working upon to bring out our witnessing as a religious community to a new phase. We are to improve our team spirit, and make an effort to do things together in our communities and on District level.

We must really live out our Eucharistic spirituality. These basic tenets of a religious community life cannot be shirked to the shelves. Turning to the early Christian communities from what we read above, should challenge us to stand upright “walk the talk” of our calling as religious. This is something that we are called to practise especially during this year of the Consecrated Life, when we are frequently reminded to return and revisit our heritage in the Founding Generation and the very beginnings of the consecrated and religious life.

In the coming weeks and months, may we endeavour to keep alive our faithfulness to the teachings of our master Jesus. May we find life and fulfilment in sharing our lives together in our communities. As we presently undertake our common spiritual exercise of annual retreat, may it help us to renew ourselves and encourage us to be truly faithful to the vocation we have embraced in the SVD.

May I recall that we are now close to the Province’s Profession of First vows, and the Renewal of vows. Perpetual Vows, henceforth will take place in November and in Tamale.

The priestly ordination of our three young men will also take place on 18th July 2015. May the Spirit of the Lord descend and invigorate all those who will receive these important ministries for God’s people and his Church.

It is also holiday time; as we wish our confreres going on home leave a good restful time, we welcome many of our brothers on mission who are arriving home for well deserving holidays and other activities. We wish them all a refreshing time at home. *Akwaaba! (Welcome in Twi)*

Fr. Charlie Schneider sends greetings from Techny, always with keen interest following the news in our newsletter.

He sends warm greetings to all and also sent us some contribution for mission work here in the province. We say a big “Thank You!”

May all of us keep the spirit of our founding members alive in whatever ministry we are involved in.

George C. Angmor

Departures

- Fr. Edmund Deku [NLB] left on the 7th May after his deserved holidays.
- Fr. Maxwell Wullar [CHI] returned to his province after a short holiday..
- Fr. John Straathof left on 8th May for a short leave. We are looking forward to seeing you soon.
- Fr. Otmar Auinger left for good back to Austria on 25th April. We wish you all the best in your retirement.
- Fr. Konrad Dreyer left for his home leave on 15th May.
- Andrew Campbell left for his home leave.
- Mariusz Pacula left for his home leave and then to Nemi.
- Joseph Mazur left for his home leave and on his return to the Liberia mission.
- Fr. Wladyslaw Madziar left on 1st July for home leave and then to Rome for further studies. *Wish you well!*
- Fr. Stephen Ayisu [USW] left on the 26th June after his vacation.

Arrivals

- 9th June: Fr. Anyomi Emmanuel Mawuli, [MAD] arrived for his home leave. *Woezor!*
- 10th June: Fr. Alfred Ayem [USS] arrived to bury his brother and sister. Our sympathies.
- 11th June Fr. Albert Pongo [OES] arrived for his home leave. *Willkommen!*
- Fr. Stephen Ayisu [USW] arrived for his home leave. *Welcome home!*
- Fr. Lawrence Kponor [HUN] is transferred to Ghana. He arrived on the 20th May and would take up a new assignment in the province after his vacation. *You are welcome!*
- Fr. Anthony Pates [Steyl] arrived to preach the annual retreat of SVD/SSpS Ghana.
- Fr. Moses Awinongya [GER] will be arriving for about six weeks for a research programme.

Pray for our dead

- Fr. Alfred Ayem's brother Edward Kofi Ayem who died on 12th May 2015 and her sister Mawulawoe who died later. They have since been buried. We wish Fr. Alfred and the rest of the family our heartfelt condolences for losing two family members at a go.
- Mr. Nicholas K. Gbotso, father of Fr. Victor Gbotso, SVD who passed away on 12th May; he was 80 years. He was buried on the 27th June.
- RofinusWodaWangge, the father of Fr. VinsensiusWangge who died on 13 June. Age: 78.
- Fr. John Harpel(4th Aug. 1917-3rd July 2015) of the Chicago Province. He worked in Ghana for many years. He was the one who started and first developed St. Paul's in Kukurantumi. His last station was St. Theresa's Parish, Kaneshie, Accra. May he rest in peace.

Fr. Dreyer retires from active ministry



Fr. Dreyer praising God in a dance with the Christian Mothers

When the Ghana Province was celebrating 75 years, Fr. Konrad Dreyer was also celebrating 75 of life. In fact, our province is only three days older than him. After 40 years of active pastoral work in Ghana, which were all spent in the Archdiocese of Accra, Fr. Dreyer says with St. Paul *"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day"* (2Tim. 4, 7-8). On the 10th of June, he said good bye officially to the people of St. Charles Lwanga Parish, Abeka his last station where he spent 6 years as a pastor. That celebration marked for him the end of active pastoral ministry.

Among those who joined the community to express gratitude to Fr. Dreyer were: Frs. George Angmor, the Provincial Superior, Rex Vegbey, Accra District Superior, Fr. Andrew Quaye-Foli, the in-coming Parish Priest and Godwin Fiawoyi. It was a moving scene as Fr. Dreyer presided over the usual two Sunday Masses and one could feel what was going through his mind: "is it possible that my daily routine of meeting parishioners, attending regular different parish meetings, taking measurements at construction sites, making sure that

measurements at construction sites, making sure that things were in order are going to change to something else which is unknown to me?" These characteristics of Dreyer were well choreographed by the youth of the parish after the Mass and it was absolutely evident to all present that the children have known their Parish priest very well.

The preacher was Fr. Andrew Quaye-Foli who saw Fr. Dreyer as a true reflection of the Gospel of the day: "No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends" and this has been exhibited by Fr. Dreyer in different ways. He recalled when in a bid to save a confrere from armed robbers suffered a bullet in his thigh.

There were a number of speeches, and representatives from all the places that Fr. Dreyer had worked acknowledged his good works. These included Tema Community two, Ada and Ashaiman.

Fr. Dreyer, we say *Ayekoo*, (well done) may the Lord bless your work and may the lives you have touched in ministry be a blessing to you.

Fr. Dreyer is currently on home leave till October when he may take light duties in the province.



Procession with the gifts to the sanctuary

Almost 40 years of service, Fr. Otmar leaves Ghana for Good

As reported in the previous edition of the Newsletter, The send-off planned for Fr. Otmar had to be called off due to ill health and he had to advance his departure. We share with you his days in Ghana.

Fr. Otmar Auinger arrived in Ghana in June 1976 and after 6 months of language learning in Kwahu Tafo, under Frs. Kofi Ron Lange and Norbert Mushoff he left for Wenchi in the Brong Ahafo region, to assist the then parish priest Fr. Clement Hotze. He was taking care of the numerous outstations together with Fr. Victor Leones. Seven years later when Techiman became vacant he was assigned to that parish where he remained for 5 years. Having spent a successful 12-year ministry in the region, he wanted to challenge himself to more difficult conditions in the Yendi district and was invited by the confreres there. All was set to go there only for him to return from home leave to be assigned to the Afram Plains where there was a greater need of personnel. That landed him in Tease, his third station where he worked for nine years.

He returned to the Brong Ahafo and started the New Longoro parish to administer to the "Mo"-people for 11 years. It was during his home leave of 2009 that prostate cancer was diagnosed and treated. As he was not so sure of the success of the treatment he resigned from active parish ministry and decided to embark on a last project in his life and this led him to build the SVD Guesthouse on the hilltop in



Fr. Otmar Auinger just before departure

Kintampo. After 3 years, lab tests gave the hope that the cancer was over, so he asked to go back into pastoral work and was assigned to take care of a recently started satellite parish in Kintampo, called "Star of the Sea".

Being at the Star of the Sea Church for three years, he later realized that his strength was waning and signs of old age was becoming more visible. As a result, he asked to return to his home province, Austria. As the whole province was planning for the opening of the new church and a send-off and departure in August he experienced a slight stroke on the 31st March which forced him to leave earlier than scheduled; on the 25th of April.

After a little farewell party, organized at the Guest House in Accra for him, Fr. Otmar bid farewell to his beloved Ghana.

I asked him if he could share with us his high moments during his life in Ghana and this is what he says: "I liked the ministry in remote places very much, starting new stations and Christian communities. To watch them grow and to provide the necessary infrastructures was the joy of my life as well as to help poor children towards a better chance in life through education.

In contrast to that there were the low moments: frustrations or sorrows, when I saw a Christian community collapsed due to lack of leadership or a student did not succeed with the target due to his or her academic weakness or character or due to the poor quality of the school attended.

Another kind of frustration I experienced was due to my own limitations and my inclination to enjoy life too much."

Finally I asked if he has a message for the confreres in Ghana:

"Harder times are ahead. There is only one thing of importance: Keep close to Jesus Christ, his example and his message and give witness to him.

May He bless you all."



Star of the Sea Church, Kintampo, the last project of Fr. Otmar



The participants with Fr. General Heinz Kulūke

AFRAM ZONAL COORDINATORS MEETING HELD

The AFRAM Zonal coordinators meeting took place in Mokopane, South Africa from the 27th May to the 1st of June. It brought together almost all the coordinators of the four characteristic dimensions of the Society in the zone. Also in attendance were the AFRAM zonal coordinator and the four General Coordinators.

From our Province were Biblical Apostolate: Fr. Alex OseiAwuah; Communication: Fr. Rex Vegbey; JPIC: Fr. Peter Kabutey; Mission: Fr. Stephen Dogodzi

In addition there were other guests from VIVAT International, New York, Catholic Federation of the Bible (CBF), Germany and Fr. Xene Sanchez from Verbum Bible [CNG]. Fr. General Heinz Kulūke joined us at the last two days.

The focus of this meeting was to draw up an action plan for each dimension to be applied in our respective Provinces, Regions, and Missions (PRMs). Among the conclusions of the action plan drawn by each dimension was the emphasis on teamwork in all our PRMs. We are to champion the fact that every SVD life and apostolate should reflect these dimensions and must stand out clearly, be it in a Parish or in an institution setting. The action plan has not yet been gazetted. However, it highlights on the celebration of an annual Mission Week in all PRMs of the Zone with an emphasis on the four characteristic dimensions.

Our Province Area Coordinators give their brief comments on the action plan of each dimension:

Bible: I consider the meeting of the various coordinators with the provincial/Council once a while very important. Another concern of our group is the stress of 2008 and 2012 General Chapters on spirituality at the detriment of the Bible. “Bringing food to the poor African without the Word of God is like depriving the African the faith and trust in God.”

Communication: All PRMs reported the difficulty in getting confreres to write for the Newsletter. I consider it welcoming that the Action Plan enjoins on the Provincial/Regional/Mission Communication coordinator to coordinate the other dimensions to give news, Bible reflections and information on any platform being used to disseminate information in the Province.

JPIC: Collaboration between SVD JPIC and the SSps JPIC including others who have the desire to trace the path of justice and peace. This can be a great network that needs to be embraced.



Fr. General giving his input



Participants going for meals

MISSION: I see fundraising in the action plan as a key component. I suggest we look at how we raise funds for our various projects together and not on individual levels. The mission office could be given the leading role in doing this as it is being done in other provinces.

Fr. General in his intervention, gave an up-to-date overview of the Society.

The General Coordinator of Communication informed us that a new website www.witworld.org has been launched by the Society. The idea is to present the Society from the general level to the world as the SVD curia website is for SVDs only.

There was an interaction with the Archbishop of Johannesburg. He acknowledged the SVDs presence in the Archdiocese commending the works of our confrere Gabriel Afagbegee and requested the SVD to expand in his archdiocese to take up lay formation. "I am ready to give an entire deanery to the SVD" he said.

To climax it all was a Mass presided over by Fr. General with the Parishioners of San Salvador where Fr. Gabriel Afagbegee is the Parish Priest. The parishioners treated us to an *agape* and provided us with accommodation in their various homes.

Throughout the meeting, Fr. General continuously asked "**are these meetings necessary? Do they benefit those in the grassroots?**" Well, it is our hope that in the next four years, this particular meeting would record some benefits in our province. Let us remember that the four dimensions are for all of us to champion.



Priestly Ordination 2015

**THE DIVINE WORD
MISSIONARIES
(GHANA PROVINCE)**

INVITES

All confreres, Srs, friends & benefactors

TO JOIN THIS CELEBRATION
ON SATURDAY, 18TH JULY 2015

@

ST. DOMINIC CATHOLIC CHURCH
ADWESO - KOFORIDUA

@

9:00 AM



**REV. VINCENT AGBEYOME-
AKPAH, SVD**
Thanksgiving Mass
Holy Spirit Cathedral
Accra
19th July 2015 @ 8:30am



**REV. EUGENE BRUCE KONUAH
ASANTE, SVD**
Thanksgiving Mass
St. Dominic Catholic Church
Adweso - Koforidua
19th July 2015 @ 8:00am



**REV. EMMANUEL ADJEI
ADJETEY, SVD**
Thanksgiving Mass
St. Anne's Catholic Church
Teshie
19th July 2015 @ 8:00am

BIBLICAL PASTORAL MINISTRY-SVD GHANA

Summary of the report presented at the AFRAM Zonal meeting in South Africa. BY ALEX AWUAH-OSEI, SVD

We have been promoting Biblical Apostolate in Ghana in collaboration with the Catholic Biblical Federation (CBF), Biblical Centre for Africa and Madagascar (BICAM) and Pastoral Care of the Ghana Bishops' Conference. We do this in two dimensions: Promoting Biblical Apostolate through our confreres in our missionary frontiers and through the National Dei Verbum Workshops organized locally bi-annually.

In between those workshops are annual refresher courses to update those Dei Verbum graduates and this year's refresher course begins from 31st August to 3rd September 2015. We invite all former Dei Verbum graduates to Nsawam for the celebration of the fiftieth (50) anniversary of the Dei Verbum document. We are inviting Fr. MathewThekkeyil from D.R. Congo to handle the group and our confrere Fr. Jan Stefenow of Catholic Biblical Federation as a Guest Speaker.

There are various district coordinators that facilitate programs in the districts where we work as Divine Word Missionaries. These promote Bible sharing groups in the districts and also animate confreres to have love for the Word of God. Through their activities, our SVD communities have added Bible sharing methods and enthronement of the Bible to their activities in the parishes.

Challenges

We are, however, facing challenges in different forms in Biblical Pastoral Ministry in Ghana. It is difficult for a coordinator to go round the districts as it is difficult to fund programs. The various districts too are not financially strong to support themselves. The power cuts also have a fair share in compounding the problem. The Basic Bible Seminar booklets that were used for promoting programs are also out of stock.

The Dei Verbum program too held at Nsawam is having its own challenges. Over the years, it has

been supported by DKA Austria and Missio Aachen Germany but last year's program was not supported by Missio. It was rather a joint project by DKA and Arnold Janssen Foundation.

Recommendations

We recommend Arnold Janssen Foundation to come in to support in the future and may be help all those promoting these workshops in various AFRAM Provinces.



Fr. Alex with the bible during the enthronement

Appreciations

We would like to show our appreciation to the Generalate for the continuous support financially in all programs. We are again grateful to DKA and Missio Aachen for supporting most of our programs. Our hearts go out to the Arnold Janssen Foundation for supporting the Dei Verbum program last year. We express our gratitude to the Ghana Province for their encouragement. We are also grateful to Fr. Matthew (Congo Coordinator) and Sr. Lucie (Burundi) for our joint cooperation in the Dei Verbum programs. The last but not the least, we are very grateful to all the facilitators of the Dei Verbum Courses and the bishops through whom we are enjoying the successes achieved so far.

Future Plans

Our future plans are to help BICAM organize the other African Countries that need our rich experience. We are also ready to help those SVD countries that are very dormant to wake up.

JPIC OFFICE –GHANA PROVINCE

A summary report presented at the AFRAM Zonal meeting in South Africa .BY REV. FR. PETER KABUTEY, SVD

Ghana's economy has been going through some challenges of late. This is largely due to the instability of the local currency against the international currencies. To add to that is the current menace of "DUMSOR" (the power going off and on intermittently) causing more harm to our economic condition. As a result companies and factories are relaying off their staff and investors are no more interested in

creating jobs, as relying on power generating plants is expensive. The issue of bribery and corruption is on the increase. In addition to all these is the illegal mining popularly known as (Galamsey), posing a threat to our water bodies, and land.

These and many other factors have motivated the JPIC Coordinators of the Ghana Province to strengthen the JPIC, a characteristic dimension of the Society of the Divine Word. Each of our six districts has a coordinator, apart from the province coordinator.

We meet quarterly. The coordinators encourage the confreres and the people among whom we work to get involved. During the past general elections in Ghana, we were involved in talking about free and fair elections especially in schools. We teamed up with the Dioceses where we work, and sometimes NGOS as they organize workshops to educate people on environmental friendliness.

In November 21st 2014 at Dansoman in Accra we met to outline the 2015 programme. The programme includes among other things, a visit to our Formation houses, parishes and other schools where we work to educate the students and confreres on issues relating to JPIC and also to encourage them to form JPIC groups.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

In partnership with the SSpS, we are working to help the "KAYAYEI" thus, young ladies under the age of eighteen who have travelled from the various villages especially from the North of Ghana to the city to work as head porters.

We are connected with one of our own confreres Fr. Andrew Campbell, SVD. He has established a home for the cured lepers and also a project for street hawkers with the aim of helping these people to identify their God given talents and to do something better with their lives. Though the projects are not registered in the name of the Society, we salute him and many other confreres in the province for their involvement in one way or the other in this important characteristic dimension, JPIC.

CHALLENGES

Currently we are facing financial difficulties, because what we get from the Generalate is not enough to curb all the expenses of the group.

To conclude, I would like to express my profound appreciation to the Provincial and his councilors for their encouragement and support. However, I think that the Ghana Province and the entire society must take JPIC serious. To quote from his Holiness Pope Francis in his address to European Parliamentarians, he said **"Human dignity is a gift from God, and no one has the power to take that from us"**. We must seek new ways to make JPIC visible as members of the society, and to help confreres practice it. We must be promoters of justice and peace at our work places, and



Fr. Kabutey making a point

**Do you want
the best of MUSHROOMS? Contact Freinademetz House, Tamale.
020 8803181 There is also liquid soap for sale.**



Fr. Rex Vegbey making a presentation

SVD GHANA COMMUNICATION

*A summary report presented at the
AFRAM zonal meeting
27th May – 1st June 2015 at Mokopane
South Africa*

By Rex A. Vegbey, SVD

“... immersed in the Word of God, we strive together to proclaim this word effectively by using traditional and modern means of communication...”

In line with the above Mission statement of the province the communication office has over the years embarked on different programmes to implement the Mission statement.

What we do

The communication Office runs in two areas: SVD Ghanacom and Verbo Media Ghana.

iii. **SVD Ghanacom** offers communication as ministry in the following:

- Production of the province Newsletter
- Running of an annual communication course for Novices
- Care of communication needs of the province: photo/video coverage of important celebrations, production of brochures and magazines etc.

- Management of province website, province social media platforms: WhatsApp, Facebook.
- Coordination of confreres' efforts in communication.

Confreres involved in Communication ministry:

- Bro. Stephen Domelevo is the Director of Communication of the Archdiocese of Accra producing and airing Radio and TV Shows.
- Bro. Pius Agyemang is the Producer and Presenter of a TV Show on Religion and culture which is broadcast on national TV weekly. Also, features on radio programmes.
- Bro. Andrew Kedziora runs an audio studio producing audio CDs for catechetical purposes in the Yendi Diocese.
- Other confreres feature on radio and do presentations on TV.
- Capacity building of confreres in communication.

2012-2015

- Workshops in all Districts
 - Communication in Community and trends in modern media

Other Activities:

- Workshop for St. Louis Sisters
- Expert contribution to the Lumen Christi TV, a new initiative by the Archdiocese of Accra.
- As part of the New Evangelization and the contribution of the SVD to it in Ghana, is the production of Catholic Teachings on Video and various reflections on diverse themes. So far ten videos have been shot including Catholic Questions and answers. There are other themes targeted at youth development issues to be filmed e.g, managing anger, the consequences of premarital sex, etc. This would be launched in the course of this year.
- Hymns of Praise: With the proliferation of Ghanaian contemporary gospel music, hymns seem to be giving way in our church services (Not only in the Catholic Church but in the other Orthodox churches as well). We are currently filming churches singing hymns for broadcast on national TV.

i. Verbo Media Ghana

This is yet to take off. It would offer media services to the public to generate some income for the province.

Verbo Media would also offer training to the youth in the effective use of media for development. A pilot project of training children (10 - 15 years) to make their own films to tell their stories has taken place in one of our parishes. We hope to get the necessary funding to continue it.

i. Other Communication initiatives

- a. Catholic Book Centre is engaged in publication and sale of religious books.
- b. Production of catechetical materials by some confreres,
- c. Production of annual Magazines in our formation houses.

Administration

The office is headed by a full-time Coordinator supported by a team of Board members who meet periodically to offer advice to management and the Provincial on matters of communication in the Province. There are district coordinators of communication who are supposed to handle issues of communication in their respective districts.

Challenges

The communication office takes care of the publication of the Province Newsletter. All attempts to get the confreres and the District Coordinators to write articles for the Newsletter have not been encouraging.

Updating the province website has become a problem due to the pressure of work upon the Coordinator especially generating stories for the province newsletter. Creating a common platform for the various characteristic dimensions to execute a common programme has not yielded results.

Above all, to secure the necessary funding to organise capacity building workshops for District Coordinators and to recruit a lay collaborator has been very challenging. Any donation is welcome.

Future Plans

Making the SVD communication apostolate to be felt in the parishes where SVDs are working by networking all of them through Communication youth groups. This would soon start in Accra, the capital. It is hoped that this concept would spread to the other Dimensions of the SVD.

It is hoped that the communication office would be taken care of by two confreres; one in charge directly of coordinating communication activities of the province whilst the other takes care of Verbo Media activities.

We are looking forward to secure the necessary funding to produce and distribute 3-minute videos through the social network WhatsApp. This platform is being used by many young people and some adults in Ghana today.

Conclusion

Although sometimes I have the feeling that confreres do not seem to understand this ministry of communication, I would like this ministry to be intensified in the Ghana Province. I am happy to say that some young confreres have been identified to join the office sometime after ordination to see to the continuity of the programmes being run by the department. Two of them are currently doing OTP in Brazil to have a feel of Verbo Filmes in Sao Paulo.

Perpetual Vows: Due to the preparation period that has been extended for the profession of Perpetual Vows, the profession would take place on Sunday 13th November at CFC in Tamale. The candidates are currently doing their second novitiate at Nkwatia and then continue the preparations in Tamale from mid-August until the celebration of Perpetual Vows two days before the ordination of Deacons at St. Victor's Major Seminary. This year the diaconate ordination at SVS will come off on Sunday 15th November.



The professors of the examination commission (from left to right); StenHagberg, KojoAmanor, Legon-Ghana (supervisor). Next to Joshua is Filip De Boeck – the promoter and supervisor. He was the pivot of the doctoral training of Fr. Joshua and also played a stimulating, coordinating and evaluating role throughout the doctoral process. Next to him is Ann Cassiman, a co-promoter, and the last on the role is Rudi Laermans, the chairperson of the examination commission.



Fr. Joshua flanked by some Ghanaian confreres and friends.

Fr. Joshua Gariba defends his thesis

17th June, 2015 saw the birth of a new Anthropologist as far as the long standing history of intellectual and academic tradition of the SVD is concerned. Congratulations to Fr. Joshua Gariba, who successfully defended his PhD dissertation on land conflict in Ghana during a public ceremony in Leuven, Belgium.

During the public defense which took place in one of the halls of the Catholic University in Leuven, Fr. Joshua gave a 20-minute presentation on his doctoral research entitled; ***“Land Struggle, Power and The Challenges of Belonging. The Evolution and Dynamics of the Nkonya-Alavanyo Land Dispute in Ghana.”*** The unique occasion that lasted for nearly 80 minutes was to present the result of many years of work not only to the jury, but also to a broader public composed of family (SVD), friends and colleagues. The ceremony was well represented by members of the SVD working and studying in the Netherland-Belgium province, Ghanaian students in Leuven, colleague doctoral students and friends from the Netherlands and Belgium. Among them were, Frs. Edmund Deku, Jean-Pierre Akueson, Benjamin Asare, Edmund Effah, Wm de Leeuw, Marcel Heyndriks, Guillaume Bumba, William OdekeOwire and Antonius Bastian.

In his closing remarks, Prof. Filip De Boeck congratulated Fr. Joshua for the great achievement and also commended him for his sense of comportment, diligent, humility and the persevering spirit by which he moved graciously through all the faces with determination. He also commended the SVD for its long standing intellectual and academic tradition especially in the field of Anthropology. He made a particular reference to Wilhelm Schmidt, SVD (1868-1954), founder of the renowned journal “Anthropos” in 1906 and other SVDs whose contributions helped in the development of Anthropology in the first half of the twenty-first century. Among them were Paul Arndt 1886-1962 – one of the early missionaries to Togo in 1913, Martin Gusinde 1886-1969, WilhemKoppers 1886-1961, George Holtker 1895-1976, Joseph Henninger 1906-1991, Dominik Schroder 1910-1974 and others.

Lastly, Fr. Joshua thanked all who were present and well wishers for the diverse support, prayers and encouragements. He also appreciated the SVD for the opportunity that has brought him that far. Dr Joshua Gariba, Congratulations

Fr. Edmund Effah

Does the Book of Exodus reflect an African reality?

The study of history reveals to us the richness of each stage of human evolution. This richness portrays a uniqueness, which may be found in different ways. By analogy, the culture is directly linked with the stages of evolution. True indeed, the rich culture of the ancient Jews portrayed in the story of the Book of Exodus, carried away the substance of its richness, but leaving behind a heritage which has something to say to our present situation in Africa. What is the message of the Book of Exodus today to African seeking deliverance from social, economic and political oppression?

Events that have marked the history of our continent, remains written in the hearts of many. For instance, we recall the slave trade which took almost half of the population of our continent to different parts of the world and the colonialism which has left its indelible marks on the continent. Furthermore, a mention can be made of the neo-colonial enterprise that is still holding our countries into slavery. We are to remember that 30 years back the eyes were turned toward South Africa, where many natives were deprived of their own riches and freedom in the name of apartheid. In sum, it is worth remembering that, the conditions of Africans have not been pleasant throughout history. (continue on page 14)

A WELCOME 'BOUQUET'

Papua New Guinea is a unique country in many ways. Even the way people welcome their visitors is unique. People show great delight in a person who visits them. Besides, they like to impress their visitors to the extent that there is an elaborate welcome for their guests.

Everywhere that one visits, the welcoming consists of three basic things: a *singsing* (the traditional dance of the particular place); *bilas* (traditional costume which the *singsing* wears); and *kaikai* (the traditional meal to be shared with the visitor). During such a welcoming ceremony, one is inexorably taken in by the joy and enthusiasm of the people at what they are doing. Besides, there is a welcome 'bouquet' for the visitors. This includes mostly a garland to adorn the visitor and a *bilum* (locally made handbag) or basket depending on the place and its particular custom.

Once I visited Palimbe with other confreres to celebrate the 25th anniversary of priestly ordination of one of our confreres. Palimbe is a small village on the Sepik River, in the East Sepik Province. This was a visit by the Junior SVDs to this part of the Sepik as part of our annual on-going formation and cultural orientation. Here too, the people did not fail to disappoint us by the way we were welcomed. However, there was an element of surprise.

As usual, on our arrival, the *singsing* group was ready and the whole village was waiting at the entrance to lead us into the village. The *singsing* group went ahead of us singing and dancing. Then we followed them and then the rest of the village behind us. The *singsing* group formed two columns of line, one on the right and the other on the left. Occasionally, they interchanged their positions by moving in circles as they danced along. It was such a beautiful procession.



Fr. Ankamah being welcomed

**Everywhere
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Finally, we arrived at the village square. Here a big circle was formed so that the *singsing* group could entertain all of us with some performances. They displayed different styles and patterns of dancing. As always, I was taken in by the sheer joy and enthusiasm of the people at what they were doing. When that was done, the village chief took the centre of the square and chanted some words in a loud voice in the local dialect at which the people responded with a huge roar like a

war cry. Then he fixed his gaze toward our direction and addressed us in tok-pisin, the common language which all the missionaries learn and use in our pastoral work. His speech was a simple welcome speech and an appreciation of our presence. Following this was the

presentation of the 'bouquet' to each one of us.

One after the other, each one of us was called and adorned with a garland and then presented with a *bilum* with a fan. Here, unlike most places, the fan caught my attention. What actually caught my attention about it were the tassels on the wide area of the fan opposite its handle. At first, I thought it was something fancy but I was wrong. I was surprised to learn the meaning of the symbolism of the *bilum* but especially of the fan. The fan has a dual purpose. Firstly, to keep ourselves cool from the heat. But the tassels on the fan were meant to drive away the mosquitoes since this area is prone to mosquitoes.

I could not help admiring the fan and appreciating the people for their ingenuity. This fan has left a lasting impression on me because in it I could feel the warmth of the people and above all their deep concern for our wellbeing.

Eric Ankamah PNG

FRAUD! FRAUD!

Be cautious of correspondence purporting to come from a confrere either via e-mail, special delivery or telephone or sms with requests for transfers of money.



Fr. Kyei (extreme right) with the bishop and other confreres

A YEAR OF GRACE IN THE MISSION

In April 2014, I safely landed on a new soil in the Central Province of Brazil. On my arrival, I was given a warm reception by two elderly confreres. Fortunately, my arrival coincided with the visit of the Superior General, Fr. Heinz Kulüke to the Province. I was happy to meet him once again, having met him for the first time in Kenya when he was on his way to South Sudan. Having exhausted my fallow days, "The Mission" was all set; first, with the study of Portuguese together with two other confreres – an OTP student from India and a priest from Indonesia.

After two months I was relocated to a parish in Sao Paulo, where I stayed with two other priests – a Dutch and an Indonesian for about eight months until my appointment to my present parish. During these eight months, I assisted in diverse ways in the weekends and went to school during the week. The first anniversary of my ordination was the day I celebrated the Holy Eucharist in Portuguese alone (for the first time).

At the moment I am fully working as an assistant parish priest in Saint Anthony's Parish in Juquia, in the state of São Paulo. The parish comprises 24 outstations. Saturdays and Sundays are the busiest days for us with a lot of parish activities. During the week I visit some nearby communities and some parishioners who live close by.

"Whenever you go into a town and the people welcome you, eat whatever they serve you" – Luke 10:8. This scripture verse has inspired me to eat with 'love and enthusiasm', rice & beans (not the 'wakye' we know of at home) with meat – the staple food in Brazil; and to bid farewell to 'fufu, banku and kenkey' – my ancestral foods.

I'm grateful to God for the blessings and favours I have enjoyed and continue to enjoy from Him. My appreciation also goes to all the confreres from the AFRAM Zone with whom I'm working for their help, guidance and support in the mission.

May God bless you all.

Clement Addae-Kyei, SVD.[BRC]

MAILS

Greeting from Korea!

How are you? Sorry that I haven't contacted you for a long time. I was busy doing pastoral work at the parish.

I am preparing now to join the retreat for ordination. So please pray for me. I'm very happy to inform you about my ordination schedule.

May God bless you and hope to see you soon!



Kim Nam Doo
John (SVD)

Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing.
Give thanks in everything. (1 Thess 5:16-18)

Ordination to the Priesthood

Sat. 11 July 2015

At Suwon Diocese Anyang
Chungang Catholic Church,
Korea.

First Assignment to
Ghana

Dear Confreres,

I would like to inform you that I was ordained Deacon together with my friends on 3rd June, 2015. There are 17 Deacons for this year. I will be in a parish for 3 months and after that I would be ordained as a priest on 1st October, 2015 in Timor Province.

I am ready to come and work happily as a missionary in Ghana. We pray that everything goes well. Remember me to all SVDs in Ghana.

I'll be happy to have some information from Ghana.

BinsasiEgidiusMelchides, SVD

Have you visited this SVD website?

www.witworld.org

Issued by the Communications Offices of CCEE and SECAM. Mumemo, Mozambique, May 31, 2015

FAMILY PASTORAL CARE

Bishops of Europe and Africa have pledged to redouble their evangelization efforts through a more focused family pastoral care in all their dioceses and instil the vision of the Christian family not only in their faithful, but also in every person of good will.

This was contained in a Final Message adopted at the end of a Seminar jointly organised by the Council of Episcopal Conferences of Europe (CCEE) and the Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar (SECAM) that took place in Mumemo, Mozambique from May 28-31, 2015.

The bishops expressed their desire to “let the light of Christ shine, by increasing our pastoral care of the family, by preparing our youth for Holy Matrimony, by accompanying our families with or without children, with spiritual support, by taking care of the elderly and not forgetting the divorced in whatever circumstances.”

During the three-day Seminar a number of topics including the following were presented by resources persons representing the two continents:

Anthropological, social and ecclesial challenges for the family: by Archbishop Benjamin Ramarosson, Archbishop of Farafangana, Madagascar and Most Rev. Ludwig Schick, Archbishop of Bamberg, Germany.

b) The Joys and Sufferings of the Family: Pastoral challenges; Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Olweny of Africa Family Life Federation (AFLF) in Kenya gave a Testimony of their family life; this was followed by presentations by Bishop Jose Caminatena Bissign, of Guinea Bissau and Bishop Anders Arborelius, of Stockholm, Sweden.

c) The Mission of the Bishop in proclaiming the Gospel of the Family: by Bishop Louis Portella Mbuyu, of Kinkala, Congo-Brazzaville and Archbishop François Granier, of Cambrai, France.

d) The role of the Church and the Bishops in dialogue with society and States in family matters: by Bishop Sithembele Sipuka of Mthatha, South Africa and Most Rev. Everard de Jong, Auxiliary Bishop of Roermond, Netherlands.

The Seminar was brought to an end with the Celebration of Mass in Maputo on the Feast of the Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity. It was presided over by Bishop Lucio Andrice Muandula, Xai-Xai and President of Episcopal Conference of Mozambique.

NB: All presentations that are for public consumption will be posted on the websites of CCEE and SECAM

Continue from page 11.

The Book of Exodus instructs us a lot, because it is all about the dark journey of Israel a phenomenon similar to Africa. Our journey as a continent is going through a dark period that is taking away the hopes of many and even leads to denial of God's presence. Thus, God has left us. However, the times many think that God has left or is no more present in our history, is the time when the historical God reveals himself. We can remember the cries of Israelites when under slavery in Egypt. This same cry is being cried by many Africans. It is time for us to celebrate the Passover of Africa. The Passover of our journeys, this should be the opening of a new era for many African countries. In what does this African Passover consist? Firstly, it is time for us to be awake and know that the time of our liberation is near. This is the time to act with courage and to reverse the current pattern of history that has kept us behind. This idea implies that the second meaning of the Passover, a new era of African liberation has to begin. A new page of our history has to be opened. The Passover for the Jewish marked the beginning of new journey toward their liberation.

It is good to note here that the beginning of any new project is a demanding enterprise. Unless we show our determination to the end we may not arrive. To arrive at our goal, we need many leaders who are ready to sacrifice themselves for the good of the people entrusted to them. Most often than not, the famous discourses that receive frenetic applause are the ones of promises, or the development without effort, the journey towards the promise land as it stands in the Book of Exodus was not a rosy way. The fulfilment of our objectives has much to do with sacrifices and pains but not despair and giving up. The last perspective and the most important is not to lose sight of God in our journey. He is always present and communicates with us at any stage. The love of God towards us is not merited and cannot be taken away by any circumstance.

The journey toward the promise land has to be an important aspect, since it is our journey of liberation. As it was with the Jews who needed Moses as their guide sent to rescue them. Today, we are conscious and aware that Africa is in need of rulers like Moses. Moses indeed was a great ruler. He accepted to leave the comfort he enjoyed from the Pharaoh's palace in order to serve his people. Unfortunately, Africa today seems not to have the "Moses" who are willing to serve freely. Our countries are torn by rulers with tribal interest, corruption and corrupt policies, and destructive ideas. The service is not toward the people but towards their interest and allies. They do not sacrifice for the people. This has become so common in the continent that it seems to be a pride and a rule. Nonetheless, we ought to acknowledge the presence of the scarce but genuine leaders who really give their lives as Moses did for his people. Frt. Bruno, Wensan'na.

Editors note: You and I can effect some changes on the continent by our way of life, witnessing to Christ.

WORTH REMEMBERING

July

01	Thierry BalondaKoula	Feastday
01	James Doerfler	+ 1992
03	Ireneus Boli Lolan	Birthday
03	Thomas D'Mello	Feastday
03	Thierry BalondaKoula	Birthday
03	Lawrence Aurbach	+ 2001
04	Stephen Dogodzi	Birthday
04	Anthony Dugay	Birthday
04	Julius Keeke	Birthday
06	Aures Da Silva	Birthday
06	Samuel Victor Kusaga	Feastday
06	Alonso Arockiadass	+ 1990
10	Hans-Gerber Agbenafa	Birthday
10	Alfred Ayem	Birthday
10	Roman Zbutowicz	+ 1994
11	Curtis Washington	+ 1985
13	Henry KwakuDuah	B & Feastday
13	Henry Noordermeer	Feastday
13	Yeremias Palur	+ 2002
14	Friedrich Hahn	+ 2006
17	Emmanuel Arthur	Birthday
18	Fred Timp	Feast day
19	Peter Kabutey	Birthday
19	Clement Hotze	+ 2001
23	Matthias King	Birthday
23	Willibald Regnath	+ 1989
25	James O. Amankwah	Feast day
25	Jacques Bidahou	Feastday
25	James Djadoo	Feastday
25	James Kimathi Mburugu	Feast day
25	Christophe Sekle	Feastday
26	Joachim Mika	Feastday
27	Rudolph Chamenyi	Feastday
28	Victor Leones	Feastday
30	Joachim Mika	Birthday

August

01	Alfons Amanor	B & Feastday
01	Anthony B. Amisah	Birthday
01	Alphonse Dungdung	Feast day
01	Alphonse D.K. Fahin	B & Feastday
02	Jean Marie Aluku	Birthday
04	Jean Marie Aluku	Feastday
04	John Duah Prempeh	Feast day
04	John Harpel	Birthday
05	Jean Chrysostome Rzaanimaro	Birthday

08	Dominic Asare	Feastday
08	Emmanuel Azure	Birthday
08	Paul Dogba	Birthday
09	Edmund Afagbegee	Birthday
11	Antonius Hibur	Birthday
12	Peter Accorley	Birthday
12	Julius Keeke	Feastday
14	Alfred Ayem	Feastday
14	Charles Erb	+ 2002
15	Anthony LawerDjimatey	Birthday
15	Joseph Sakite	Birthday
15	Tarcisus de Ruyter	Feast day
17	Charles Ashun	Birthday
17	Franz Huber	+1994
19	Augustine Amanor	Birthday
20	Bernard Adjei Appiah	Feastday
20	Gideon Apreku	Birthday
20	Bernard Assenyoh	Feastday
20	Germain Mukinisa	Birthday
20	Bernard Tang	Feastday
21	Samuel Aboo	Feastday
21	Pius Agyemang	Feast day
21	Victor Gbotso	Feast day
21	Pius Kamuti	Feastday
23	Patrick Kodom	Birthday
24	Apolonius Bria	Birthday
25	Apolonius Bria	Feastday
28	Hans-Gerber Agbenafa	Feast day
28	Wisdom Agbovi	Feastday
28	Gideon Apreku	Feast day
28	Emmanuel Arthur	Feastday
28	Emmanuel Makayie	Feast day
28	Augustin Mevor	Feast day
28	Erick Isabwa Okumu	Feastday
28	Richard Hajduk	+ 1993
29	Dominic Asare	Birthday
29	Josef Sprehe	Birthday
29	Thomas Leibold	+ 1993
31	Jan Urban	Birthday

September

01	Francis Koimb	Birthday
01	Kingsley Sagru-Larr	Birthday
01	Lucian Orians	+ 1979
02	Daniel Lenwah	Birthday
03	Samuel Yaw Adu	Feastday
03	Pius Agyemang	Birthday
03	Pius Oduro Owusu	Feastday