

MARCH 2016

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"Lenten practices of giving up pleasures are good reminders that the purpose of life is not pleasure."

*Fulton J. Sheen*

#### FROM THE PROVINCIAL'S DESK

Dear Confreres,

On Ash Wednesday we began the liturgical season of Lent, a special spiritual journey towards Holy Week and Easter. This year, the Lenten season has even a greater significance for us if we look at it in the context of the just ended Year of Consecrated Life and especially the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy, proclaimed by Pope Francis.

The Year of Consecrated Life challenged us to rediscover the mystery of our religious vocation, our specific SVD charism and our mission in the world.

The Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy as a time of grace and spiritual renewal is an opportunity for all of us to contemplate the mystery of God's mercy in our lives and actively practicing mercy towards others, especially in our communities. We should become instruments of mercy.

The Holy Father encourages us, that the season of Lent during this Jubilee Year should also be lived as privileged time to celebrate and experience God's mercy. The Scripture readings of Lent help us rediscover the merciful face of the Father and help us to be merciful towards others.

May this season of Lent and the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy help us to be truly reconciled with one another and with God our Merciful Father!

Many of us participated in our Provincial Lenten Recollections. We are very grateful to Br. Pius Agyemang, SVD for directing the Recollections. Brother's zeal in presenting liturgical celebrations during Lent and especially Holy Week has been of great inspiration to all of us.

We have celebrated our annual Family Feasts together with the SSpS Sisters. The first celebration took place at the SVD Novitiate in Nkwatia-Kwahu and the second at the SVD House in Kintampo. We are very grateful to the organizers and all participants, SVD and SSpS, for successful celebrations.

We also congratulate Sr. Dinah Ofosu, SSpS who was re-elected as Provincial and her new provincial team. The inauguration took place at the Sisters Provincial House.

Fr. Jean-Bertrand Tchekpi, SVD left Ghana for his mission in Liberia. He was privileged to be led to Liberia by the Superior General himself, who was visiting our confreres there, together with Fr. Joseph Kallanchira, SVD, the Zonal coordinator, after the 10<sup>th</sup> AFRAM zonal Assembly in Kenya.

Fr. Provincial is having a well-deserved leave in Kenya after the AFRAM meeting in Nairobi.

On behalf of Fr. Provincial and the Provincial Council, I wish you all a fruitful and fulfilling season of Lent and joyful celebration of Easter. May God bless you all!

Marek Dabrowski, SVD  
Vice-Provincial

## Arrivals

- Fr. Godwin Fiawoyi returned from Kenya after attending the 10<sup>th</sup> AFRAM zonal Assembly and Treasurer's meeting in Nairobi.
- Fr. Stephen Dogodzi, Bro. Emmanuel Affum and Sr. Adeline SSpS arrived after attending a six-week 'Directors of 30-Day' retreat workshop in Steyl. *You are welcome to contact them for your spiritual needs.*
- Frt. Sebastian Batista da Silva from Brazil arrived for OTP; he is currently doing English language course.
- Bro. Guy Mazola a General Councillor arrives for a meeting in Tamale on the evaluation of the Common Formation Centre (CFC) programme.

## Departure

- Fr. George Angmor left for Kenya to attend the 10<sup>th</sup> AFRAM zonal Assembly and to take his well deserved vacation.
- Fr. Godwin Fiawoyi left for Kenya to attend the Treasurer's meeting in Nairobi.
- Frt. Abraham Djibitor departs on the 15<sup>th</sup> March for BRC to continue his OTP after a long waiting to obtain his visa.
- Frt. Paul Meng returns to his home province on the 17<sup>th</sup> March to continue his formation after completing the OTP.

## Confreres Approved for further studies

- Fr. Godwin Fiawoyi has been approved to do a one-year Post-Graduate diploma in Business Administration in GIMPA
- Bro. Miller Hernandez has been approved to do African Studies at the Institute of African Studies in Legon for two years.
- Fr. Peter Kabutey is approved to study Peace and Development.

## Pray for our dead

- Ex SVD Brother Simon Nkansah died in Hohoe and a Mass would be celebrated for him at the St. Theresa's Training College, Hohoe on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> March and then the body transferred to Amankwahkrom in the Afram Plains for final funeral rites and burial. He would be buried with his mother who also died meanwhile.
- Mr. Jim Myers, a one-time friend of the SVD in Tamale and friend of some of the confreres died on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> February at St. Dominic Hospital, Akwatia. Funeral and burial would take place on the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> at Akyem Oda.
- Madam Akos Homadzi, mother of one of our SVD philosophy seminarians Enoch EdemTorbi, a parishioner of Blessed Clementina Parish, Middle-East, Ashairman. Funeral and burial would take place at Wlity-Sakpakukofe near Akatsi in the Volta Region on the 12<sup>th</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup> of February.
- The maternal grandmother of Rev. Emmanuel Kwame Makayie, SVD (In Theology 4 seminarian at CFC Tamale) Augustina Akosua-Kumah who died on 14th December 2015 at Mem-Chemfre in the Afram Plains. She was 104 years old. She was buried on the 6<sup>th</sup> of February at Mem-Chemfre.

*Our Condolences to the various Families. May their souls rest in peace*

Fr. General and the AFRAM Zonal coordinator visit our confreres in Liberia.



R-L Jean Bertrand, Joseph & Heinz

Right after the AFRAM Zonal Assembly in Kenya, Fr. Heinz Kulúke, SVD Sup. General accompanied by Fr. Joseph Kallanchira, AFRAM Zonal Coordinator visited our team in Zwedru, Liberia. They were joined on the same flight by Fr. Jean Bertrand Tchekpi, the last member of the 'Liberia Team'. They were welcomed by Fr. Joseph Mazur, the leader of the team. We hope to get more stories on this visit in the next issue of the Newsletter.



Fr. General with the community of an outstation



## Family Feast celebrations 2016

The annual Arnoldus Family Feast of the Ghana Province has taken place this year in January in the Southern sector and in February in the Northern Zone. The feast brought together our SVD confreres and SSpS sisters working in the various missions in the country. It was a unique moment of joy and sharing of experiences, entertainment and agape as usual. During both feast a special attention was given to confreres and sisters celebrating a milestone in their religious journey. Here is a report from the two sectors.

### Southern sector

The 2016 Family Feast in the southern sector took the Arnoldus family members working in the southern part of Ghana to the premises of the Divine Word Novitiate at St. Peter's in Nkwatia Kwahu. The events marking the celebration began on the 28<sup>th</sup> of January. By three in the afternoon, confreres and sisters gathered in the open compound of the novitiate, ready to begin the celebration in honour of our two great saints, Arnold and Joseph. They were warmly welcomed by Fr. Andrews Obeng, the Novice Master and entertained with heart-warming melodies by the SVD novices. Notable among those present were Fr. George Clement Angmor, SVD Provincial, Sr. Dinah Ofosu, the SSpS Provincial Leader, Bishop Gabriel Kumordji, SVD of Donkorkrom Vicariate and representatives of the Friends of the SVD.

After a brief opening ceremony moderated by Fr. Bernard Appiah, curate of St Margaret Mary Parish, Dansoman and Sr. Esther Kuubaea of the Holy Family SSpS community of Nkawkaw, the Family Feast kicked off with various sporting activities including volley ball, table tennis, sack race, tug of peace, leisure games. All present were grouped into four teams namely Arnold Janssen Merciful Stars, Joseph Freinademetz Consecrated Fans, Mother Helena Jubilee Club, and Blessed Josefa Dynamic Players. During the competitive volley ball matches, most confreres and sisters exhibited their hidden talents in volley ball and won a lot of cheers from their fans and supporters. The overall winner of all the games was the J.F Consecrated Fans.

After the games, the confreres and sisters gathered for a solemn vespers projected on power point in the novitiate chapel. A sumptuous dinner was prepared to console the weak and exhausted bodies. For the evening relaxation, there was a line up of displays and performances by SVD and SSpS novices, the SSpS postulants, individuals or groups of confreres and sisters in the inner court of the novitiate. The performances included various choreographies, novitiate



*The teams doing the 'tug of peace'.*



*The acapella group performing*



*The free-style dancing competition*

acapella group, jokes and a number of interesting stories and tales which took everyone deep into the night without realising it.

The climax of the Family Feast came off on the 29<sup>th</sup> January. The Eucharistic celebration to mark the day was presided over by Fr. Rex A. Vegbey who celebrates his silver jubilee as a priest this year. It was concelebrated by Frs. George Angmor, Marek Dabrowsky, Andrews Anumu Quaye-Foli, John Straathof, Bertrand Tchekpi Eugene Asante and others. Fr. Rex (as he is commonly called) based his homily on the theme "Proclaiming the word of Mercy in the power of the spirit in our communities". He said from his 25 years experience as a priest and over 30 years with the SVD, he is convinced that there is a cause for the proclamation of mercy among us. According to him, "one of the major causes of displeasure among us is our shortfalls in communicating properly with one another. This has often caused resentment among us". He noted that he had witnessed cases where resentment was triggered right from the start of formation and got maturing till it is now a full blown adult. Fr. Rex concluded that in the Jubilee Year of Mercy our prayer should be: "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us".



*Group photo with concelebrants*

All those celebrating various anniversaries were acknowledged and honoured. The agape feast took place in the open compound of the novitiate. After a good meal, it was time to enjoy some latest 'Azonto music' in town where confreres and sisters took to the floor to do the Azonto dance. Gifts were presented to the Jubilarians. The Province is grateful to the celebration committee, the St. Peter's and the novitiate communities for the wonderful reception accorded to all and the beautiful programme put up for the Family Feast 2016.

### *Northern sector*

The Northern sector brings together all confreres and sisters ministering in Brong Ahafo, Tamale, Yendi and Wiaga and the two formation houses. To celebrate their Family Feast this year, they gathered at Kintampo in the Brong Ahafo region on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> February. The programme started at 9:30 am with a Holy Mass presided over by Fr. Bere Blolong Bernardus, SVD, the curate of St. Joseph's Parish, Kitampo and concelebrated by his Parish Priest, Fr. Ignatius Ayivor, SVD and Fr. Francis Prescott, SVD, the curate of the Holy Family Parish, New Longoro.



*Doing the Borborbor dance on the feast day*

At the beginning of the Mass Fr. Ignatius Ayivor, SVD, the District Superior of BrongAhafo SVD District, gave a warm welcome to all the members of the Arnoldus Family including the Friends of the SVD in the BrongAhafo District and a representative of the Bishop of Techiman. The homilist was Fr. Francis Koimb, SVD. He said "the task of the missionary is to bring the light of Christ and to proclaim the marvellous deeds of God among the People". He added that: "this is the time we must preach the gospel of God and we have to wake up to the work that God needs us to fulfil".

At the end of the Mass Bro. Jerome Agbeko SVD gave an

opportunity to Bishop's representative Rev. Fr. Paul Ameyaw, the Chancellor of the Catholic Diocese of Techiman, to deliver the Bishop's message. Rev. Fr. Ameyaw paid glowing tributes to the SVDs for playing a major role in spreading the good news of salvation within the Techiman Diocese. After Mass, the assembly moved to the Hill Top for the rest of the programme and the mega agape feast. There were various games and a volley ball match between team A (St. Joseph Freineidmetz and Blessed Maria Helena) and team B (St. Arnold Janssen and Blessed Josephat). The Feast was very successful and all returned to their communities safe, sound and happy.

### **Like an Oasis in the Desert – SVD Spirit in Namoo**

Anybody who knows the North of Ghana will testify the scarcity of good educational infrastructure especially at the tertiary level. The consequence of this phenomenon is that the youth are obliged to travel to the South of the country where such amenities exist, irrespective of the price they have to pay for this special good called good education. Only God knows whether they all get their dreams fulfilled.

A proper use of the JPIC methods and criteria would demand a radical response to such a situation to help alleviate the poverty of the people through the daily wages that would be gotten through work on the buildings and through multiplier effects ensuing from the establishment of such an institution. It is a way of solving the problem from the roots proactively rather than being reactionary which could later on be very expensive.



Many of you might have heard by now of the establishment of Regentropfen College of Applied Sciences, ReCAS ([www.recas-ghana.com](http://www.recas-ghana.com)) with the involvement of Moses Asaah Awinongya SVD as Founder through the Regentropfen Education Foundation (Ghana) and through the great works of Br. Lambert Azieve SVD, in his capacity as Intern and head of Facility Management and Procurement Department. He is using the project as practical field for his Master Studies at KNUST and ReCAS benefits from his knowledge.

**Phase one:** The following programs have been submitted for accreditation:

Dip/B.Sc. in Business Administration (BBA)

Dip/B.Sc. in Accounting

Dip/B.Ed (Basic Education)

Dip/B. Sc. Computer Science and Information Technology

Dip/B. Sc. Agriculture for Social Change



*Some of the structures*



*A new hostel under construction*

We are hoping that our BA and MA programs in Cross Cultural Ethics and Sustainable Development will also get accreditation soon.

We are grateful to the Provincial, Fr. George Clement Angmor SVD and his council for the tremendous interest and moral support of this project. We are to serve God's people, who under normal



*Bro. Lambert, Construction Projects Manager*

circumstances would not have received any help from any organisation and who now get an oasis in the educational desert of Upper East Region. May God bless our efforts.

*Moses Asaah Awinongya SVD and Lambert Azieve SVD*

## **ST. VINCENT COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, YENDI BEGINS**

Two hundred students out of the 400 plus candidates who sat for the College's admission entrance exams have been given admission to begin the trial Semester of the St. Vincent College of Education, Yendi, on Thursday, the 31st of March 2016. The college was established by the Yendi Diocese under the able direction of our confrere Fr. Erasmus Norviewu-Mortty.

Only, those students who, would have passed all units after the Trial Semester Exams at the end of June and early July 2016 would be allowed to commence the three-year Diploma in Basic Education programme (General Option) of the University of Cape Coast in September, 2016.

Academic work and other school activities would take place concurrently on both the Permanent campus at Gamanzi, Yendi and at the Temporary campus (at the Assemblies of God BUMCO, Yendi premises).

Presently, St Vincent College of Education, whose strenuous efforts to take off were recently acknowledged by the President of Ghana in his State of the Nation address, boasts of 75 staff, comprising 37 teaching and 38 non-teaching staff.

Besides, the now fully and beautifully completed ultra-modern block of classrooms and offices, sponsored by the Australian friends of Bishop Boi-Nai and Fr. Erasmus there are plans for the commencement of new buildings for the

Principal's accommodation, the Administration and for the students' accommodation. The Principal believes at the current pace of development, the College will operate fully from its permanent site within two years.

On Saturday, the 2<sup>nd</sup> of April, 2016 the whole of Dagbon will gather to celebrate the formal Inauguration and Dedication of the St Vincent College of Education, Yendi by our confrere Most Rev. Vincent Sowah BOI-NAI, the Bishop of Yendi.

In attendance will be at least four Honourable Ministers of State, Dagbon Traditional Chiefs and Elders and many education giants from Ghana and our own SVDS working in the Yendi Diocese and other priests and religious. You are all invited to support the college by donating to their appeal for fund to purchase kitchen/dining and office equipment. You may do so through the SVD Provincial Treasurer.

### OPTION FOR THE MARGINALIZED: CARING FOR LEPERS AT WEIJA

As part of the 2015 Christmas apostolate, I was assigned to the *Weija Leprosarium* to minister to the Lepers. Fr. Andrew Campbell, SVD who is actively involved and in charge of this apostolate introduced me to the 30 inmates and the staff of the Leprosarium at Weija. With Father's benediction and together with Mr. George Quansah, the one in charge of the Lepers, we planned the following activities to be carried out throughout the Christmas season:

- Communion service with the few catholic communicants on a daily basis.
- An excursion to Tema Naval base on the 30<sup>th</sup> December 2015.
- Lepers Home visitation every day after communion service.
- A talk on Hygiene and sanitation by a nurse.
- Spending some time and sharing jokes with them in order to bring them hope and joy.



*Fr. Andy Campbell sharing with the lepers*

All started on Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> December 2015. Lepers from Accra and Ho gathered at Christ the King Parish, to celebrate and thank God for the 45 years of the priesthood of Fr. Andrew Campbell, SVD. That was the first time in my life to come in contact with lepers, to shake hands with them and to interact with them during lunch. I was impressed, indeed deeply touched, at the love and concern shown them by Fr. Campbell, SVD, as he fed some of them, encouraged them, shared jokes with them, danced with them, thus making them feel happy, respected, loved and accepted in the society. The whole celebration which started with a well-attended Eucharistic celebration was an occasion of joy for both the Lepers and those who look after them. In my interactions with some of them, I admired their courage, positive thinking and ability to cope with their situation.

The daily communion service with a few of them was a great moment of prayer, of encounter with Christ and of faith sharing experience. My main message to them focused on God's love for them despite their physical condition, emphasizing that God is with us in every situation, making our burdens lighter. God's love is manifested through all the people who care and provide medical assistance, food, moral and spiritual support and also in the healing process.

My presence among them in my white cassock was appreciated by all as they were happy to see me and interact with me. Through jokes and home visitation, I tried to bring a smile to their faces and to give them hope and joy, despite



*An excursion at Tema Naval Base*



the challenge of not being able to speak fluently the local language. With the help of Fr. Campbell, Madam Lucy a nurse and parishioner of Christ the King Parish gave them an input on Hygiene and sanitation to help them keep themselves, their rooms and their compound clean. It was much appreciated and they asked a lot of important questions for clarification.

On 30<sup>th</sup> December 2015 we made an excursion to Tema Naval Base. This was a great moment of joy, relaxation and discovery of new insights. The Lepers had the opportunity to see the Tema fishing Harbour, the power badge for electricity, the Fuel reservoir or the tanker, the cement factory (Ghacem), and the main Harbour.



*Fr. Alfred sharing with some of the lepers*

While sharing some food and drinks with them at the end of the excursion, they all expressed joy for such an outing because it broke the routine of their daily life and helped them to relax and free their mind.

I pray for God's blessings for Fr. Andrew Campbell, SVD and all the people who contribute generously to help improve the life condition of the Lepers. I believe that they also deserve the dignity of every human being and with respect and love they can be well integrated into the society. At the end of my apostolate, they asked me whether someone else was coming to continue with this apostolate. I answered them that God would provide at the appropriate time.

Rev. Alfred MBALANDA SHINDA, SVD, CFC, Tamale

#### **FREINADEMETZ HOUSE CELEBRATES FEAST DAY**

The feast of St Joseph Freinademetz, the Patron saint of our Philosophy House in Tamale, has been solemnly marked with various spiritual activities as it is done every year. Postulants and the formators took active part in the various activities outlined for the feast. These include a triduum during which some inspirational writings of St. Freinademetz were read for reflection and meditation, a candle light procession from the chapel to the bust of the saint located at the entrance of the formation house where intercessory prayers were said for the entire Society and its members all over the world and a time for praises, worship and adoration.

On the 29<sup>th</sup> of January, Fr. Alex Chandy, SVD Praeses of the St Joseph Freinademetz Philosophy House celebrated a solemn Mass to climax the celebration. He challenged all postulants to strive to be good missionaries in future by

imitating some of the values of St. Joseph Freinademetz who stood for such virtues as love, kindness, truthfulness among others. He noted that "most times his [St. Freinademetz] eyes were shown with attractive kindness which made the people of China trust him". According to Fr. Alex, even when there was the need for St. Freinademetz to reprimand, he did so with kindness because the hand of the priest, he would say, is to bless. He observed that Freinademetz was a noble man who worked tirelessly and selflessly to serve the people of China. He exhorted us to remain focused because we are all full of goodness which God our creator expects us to share with others and all creation. "To refuse nothing for others and demand nothing for oneself is the philosophy that shaped and guided the life of St. Joseph Freinademetz," Fr. Alex concluded. The mass was concelebrated by Rev. Fr. John Dorborkoe, SVD, the Prefect of the Philosophy House.

*By Anthony Larweh, Philosophy three*

*An effective communicator is the one who first finds out why people do or say things the way they do or say them before judging. We should not be fast in drawing conclusions on people; always find out.*

*Rex A. Yeabeu, SVD*

## FREINADEMETZ MARIAN GROTTTO NEEDS SUPPORT



*The Marian Grotto at Freinademetz House*

It was a joyful celebration for postulants of the St. Joseph Freinademetz House, Tamale when they held the first Mass at the Marian shrine which is under construction. The mass was celebrated by Rev Fr. John Dorborkoe, SVD, Prefect and concelebrated by Fr. Antonius Hibur, SVD, the former Praeses of the House (This was before he left). The grotto, which is near completion, started few years ago by the postulants as an initiative by some members of the Legion of Mary under the supervision of their formators, Frs. Cyprian Kuupol, SVD and Phaniel Myers Agudu, SVD, the Praeses and Prefect respectively.

The project was mainly financed through fund raising by postulants and formators and contributions from some SVD confreres abroad. Postulants have also worked assiduously sacrificing their siestas and free days to serve as labourers in order to cut down cost. Indeed the hard work and commitment to the project by postulants and the formators are yielding impressive results.

We remain indebted to parishioners of postulants, societies and organisations, family members, confreres both home and abroad especially Frs. Cyprian Kuupol, SVD and Phaniel Myers Agudu, SVD who donated the seed money to start the project. We salute you for your sacrifices, commitment and supervisory roles played in ensuring that the project becomes a reality in the SVD Formation House. Again, the House would like to express its profound gratitude to all and sundry for their donations and contributions to support the construction of the Grotto. We also thank Fr. Anthony Ataamine Anala, SVD and Fr. Peter Loan, SVD and our current formators.

Though the project has come a long way, there is still much to be done and funds are still needed to furnish the grotto with all the 14 Stations of the Cross and decorations of the entire grotto. We are glad some few individuals have volunteered to sponsor some of the Stations and we are appealing to our confreres to come to our aid to sponsor the remaining stations and painting to enable us have a befitting Grotto for inauguration and dedication.

The grotto when completed will serve the spiritual needs of the community as well as groups and individuals looking for a serene atmosphere for retreat in Tamale.

Donations could be made through the House account GN Bank : SVD formation House –Tamale Account No : 10011100072 or by contacting the house bursar Rev. Fr. Samuel Adu, SVD on +233 503 096 810 or through the Provincial Treasurer.

*By Paul Amuzu and Thomas Asamane*

## CFC TAMALE @ 20

The Theologians House of the Society of the Divine Word (SVD) Ghana Province known as the Common Formation Centre (CFC), Tamale, has launched its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of establishment with a call on priests and Seminarians of the Formation House to be prophetic missionaries in the world.

The theme chosen for the celebration is “*Honouring our past, we celebrate the present and look hopefully into the future*”. Launching the anniversary on behalf of the Provincial, Rev. Fr. Jacobson Dey, SVD, Rector of the CFC said the essence of celebrating 20 years of the establishment of the CFC is to first of all thank God for how far he has brought CFC Ghana and to also reflect on the present and chart new path for the future.

Giving a brief historical background, aims and objectives of the CFC, Fr. Jacobson said the CFC was established in 1996 as the third CFC of the AFRAM Zone after CFC Nairobi, Kenya and CFC Kinshasa, DR. Congo for the purpose of forming SVD seminarians and brothers from Africa and Madagascar and even from outside Africa in intercultural living for mission in the Church. It is therefore a theology formation house which admits those who have successfully completed their Philosophical and Novitiate years. CFC Tamale currently has candidates from Ghana, Kenya, D.R Congo and Togo who have completed their Philosophical and Novitiate years. CFC Tamale currently has candidates from Ghana, Kenya, D.R Congo, Togo, Benin and Madagascar.

Fr. Jacobson praised the founding fathers who saw the need for a CFC in Ghana and was grateful to all who have contributed in diverse ways in bringing the CFC to its current status as well as all alumni of CFC Ghana on mission in various parts of the world.





*Seminarians and formators of CFC Tamale*

The launching took place during a solemn Mass presided over by Fr Jacobson and concelebrated by Frs. Benedictus Bau, SVD Bursar of the CFC and Alex Chandy, SVD Praeses of the St. Fienademetz Philosophy House with Rev Sabastian Sob, SVD as the ministering deacon. Also in attendance were some SVD priests and brothers in Tamale, the fraters in theology, SVD philosophy students as well as friends and partners of the CFC community.

There was unveiling and blessing of the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary

monument by Fr. Benediktus. It was designed by Rev. Augustine Amanor, SVD and the unveiling of the banner for the celebration which presents a pictorial account of CFC, by Revs. Augustine Amanor, and Alfred Mbalanda, the Dean and the Secretary of the CFC respectively. Various activities have been earmarked for the anniversary celebration which would be climaxed on the 8<sup>th</sup> of September, 2016 at the CFC.

### *Meaning of the anniversary Logo*

The SVD logo symbolizes the world which is the parish of the SVDs. Inside the logo is the SVD Trinitarian Mission Spirituality; the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit and Bible which is the Divine Word which is the identity the SVDs and the Word becomes the foundation of the 20 years of existence of the CFC Ghana. Beneath the logo is the motto of CFC Ghana Faith Formation in Intercultural living for Mission (F.I.M)

*Paul Amuzu, Freinademetz House, Tamale*

## **WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM THE YEAR OF CONSECRATED LIFE?**

In an era when the world has focused so much on the scandals of the Church, there appears a unique event that seems to contradict these views. This event is the Year of Consecrated Life which has been an occasion for the Church and individuals to reflect on the call of Jesus. The renewal brought by this year raised plethora of interrogations that stand the test of time. Some of the interrogations are: what is the meaning of our call? What is religious life? Cognate to these questions is the fundamental question of the relevance of religious life in our modern world when everything about God seems to be fading out.

The call of Pope Francis during the Year of Consecrated Life is very pressing, "Wake up the World". It is

It is not only a call of the Pope but an insistent call of our master Jesus whose call for us is to be salt and light for the world. Each of us, from our vocational journey, can trace the positive values that attracted us to join the religious life, even sometimes against the will of some people. What we are called to, is a life of witnessing to the world as the Pope rightly puts it, "you should be real witness of the world by acting differently." In order to achieve this, I propose two main ideals on which one can build his life.

The first ideal is being a witness. Two-fold dimension are to be considered here: what I call a self-centered witnessing and the others-centered witnessing. On one hand, being witness on a self-centered level advocates a personal conversion. For a long time, witnessing was regarded as an activity directed to others just as evangelisation. Our daily life is indeed a

call to witness to die to self. This will not manifest in our life unless we are grounded in solid prayer life and personal encounter with God's word. "To be witness does not consist in engaging in propaganda, nor even in stirring people up, but in being a living mystery. It means to live in such a way that one's life would not make sense if God did not exist" as Madelaine L'Engle puts it in *Walking on Water: reflections on Faith and Art*. On the other hand our life has to speak to others starting from our brothers with whom we live in communities. The world has to feel our presence as consecrated men and women. We have to do this in all the areas we find ourselves.

The second ideal is the creativity and openness to the signs of the times. Many religious try to refer people to what was done 30years

back. In fact it is a good idea, because the past can be a stepping stone for the present and future. But to remain stuck to the past can be a sign of immaturity or deception. The paradigms that were relevant 30 or 20 years back may be completely out of time. Thomas Samuel Kuhn, a British philosopher, talks of paradigm shift. The paradigm at a certain time of history cannot stand the test of the time leading to crisis. The crisis leads immediately to the foundation of a new paradigm. The same applies to the religious life. The paradigm that has been in vigour ought to be changed when they become obsolete. A tangible illustration is the use of the Mass Media. Their use is no more a choice but a necessity if we want to win many to Christ.

We have to look at the past with gratitude, to live the present with passion and the future with hope. These are very appealing words from Pope Francis that I think each and every one should carry in his or her daily programme and let them shape us.

*Fr. Bruno Wensan'na, CFC, Tamale*

## On the road of the Year of Mercy

With the successful climax of the Year of Consecrated Life in Kumasi, the road to the Year of Mercy has been widely opened in our religious communities. I wish to embark on this delicate journey with a bullet in my pocket, the bullet of Compassion. I came across a quotation that reads '*we will not be remembered by our words but by our kind deeds.*' In other words the measure of our life is not by the many words we can say to the suffering but by concrete acts of kindness. 'Compassion' from its Greek etymology means to feel from inside one's self. It is therefore an act of the inner self; the sharing of an inner love with a neighbour. Again, the word from its Latin root, compassion means 'to suffer with', sharing in the suffering of those in pain, be it spiritual, emotional or physical.

Jesus Christ, our foremost example, was a man of compassion. He shared in the sufferings of the sick and the rejected and offered them hope by healing and sharing his life with them. Many times in the Scriptures he rebuked the Pharisees and the Jewish leaders not because they were outlaws but because they allowed the meticulous observation of the Law to cloud their very sense of compassion. Our world today is in dying need of compassionate people. Many are those who are suffering from all forms of injustices and discriminations. The call for us, as Christians, especially in this Jubilee Year of Mercy, is to learn to radiate this virtue of compassion to others. Our God is a compassionate God. In fact, the very act of salvation initiated and completed by the Triune God is an act springing forth from the bountiful wells of God's compassion. We would have remained a lost generation if not for the compassionate love of God. During this Jubilee Year of Mercy, to be compassionate also means to endeavour not to be quick to judge or condemn others. This is nicely captured by Thomas A' Kempis in his book '*The Imitation of Christ*' when he said 'should you see another person openly doing evil or carrying out a wicked purpose, do not on that account consider yourself better than him, for you cannot tell how long you will remain in a state of grace. We are all frail; consider none frailer than yourself'. The ball is now in our court and as always the choice is ours to make.

*Fabian Cofie*

*Divine Word Novitiate, Nkwatia*



*The rectory*

Our Lady of Good Counsel Parish, Kwahu Tafo was affected by a rain storm. Some roofs in the mission were ripped off. See the images. The confreres are happy to receive your donations of roofing sheets and funds to restore the structure.



*The roof of sitting room upstairs ripped off*



## ***Dei Verbum Ghana 2016***

**An intensive 40 days course in Biblical Pastoral Ministry**

**Venue: Divine Word Catholic Conference Centre, Adoagyiri-Nsawam**

**Date: 1<sup>st</sup> August - 10<sup>th</sup> September 2016**

**Theme: "DO WHATEVER HE TELLS YOU". (John 2:5)**

The Divine Word Missionaries, Ghana Province, are happy to announce the 8<sup>th</sup> course in Biblical Pastoral Ministry (BPM) from the **1<sup>st</sup> August - 10<sup>th</sup> September 2016**. The venue for the course is the Divine Word Catholic Conference Centre (DWCCC) Nsawam. We run this course in close collaboration with the Catholic Biblical Federation (CBF), Biblical Centre for Africa and Madagascar (BICAM) and the National Catholic Secretariat's office of the Pastoral Care.

**This is an excellent formation course for catechists, school chaplains, Sunday school teachers, Catholic teachers and for anybody involved in Biblical Pastoral Ministry, male or female, lay, religious or priest.**

### **Why is this course offered?**

This course is offered because of the great need of solid formation for ministers of the Word of God who are immersed in the Scriptures.

"The faithful should be taught how to pray the Bible and live it, and not merely read it or discuss it. As far as possible the faithful should be introduced to the correct principles for interpreting the Bible to forestall the danger of fundamentalism and each member interpreting the Bible in his/her own way." (Pastoral guidelines, Ghana National Pastoral Congress, 1997 page 3)

### **There are three major objectives of this course:**

- Interiorization of the Word of God.
- Study of Scriptures for better understanding.
- Communication of the Word of God.

### **For whom is this course intended?**

The course is intended for anyone who is involved in the biblical apostolate or biblical pastoral ministry - men and women, priests, religious, and lay people. Some previous involvement in Biblical Ministry is preferred but not required. It is expected that participation in this course will lead to future involvement in Biblical Pastoral Ministry.

**One week refresher course after one year:** This is a special feature of this course. During their 40 days course the participants work out a Biblical Pastoral Project, which they are to implement in their respective local church. After one year the participants come back for a one week refresher course to share a project report and they will be given an additional input.

**Some of the resource persons:**

**Topics**

❖ Fr. Dr. Moses Awinoga, SVD (Germany)	The Kingdom of God
❖ Fr. Francis Mastan, SVD	The Kerygma of the Word
❖ Br. McDaniel Acquah SVD	Prayerful reading of the Bible (Lectio Divina)
❖ Fr. Alex Awuah-Osei SVD	Bible as a tool for Community building
❖ Mr. Charles Mensah	Biblical Pastoral Ministry
❖ Fr. Matthew Tekkeyil, SVD (Congo)	Basic Bible Seminar
❖ Fr. Andrew Obeng SVD	Dei Verbum Documents/Women in the Bible
❖ Mrs Mary AsigbetseAdugu,	Scripture in Use
❖ Fr. Gabriel Afagbadgee, SVD	Care for Creation/Lumko
❖ Fr. Alex Awuah-Osei, SVD	Fundamentalism
❖ Bishop Emmanuel Fianu, SVD	Attentive Reading of the Bible

The Guidelines of the 2nd National Pastoral Congress requires the use of the Biblical Apostolate for the building of Small Christian Communities.

Dei Verbum course promotes the building of Christian Communities around the Word of God among participants during the 40 day encounter with God's Word in Sacred Scripture and will help the Church in Ghana to implement the Guidelines of the 2nd National Pastoral Congress

**Criteria for participation**

- A good command of English.
- A willingness to contribute constructively to the course.
- Some previous involvement in Biblical Ministry is preferred. It is expected that participation in this course will lead to future involvement in Biblical Pastoral Ministry.
- The course is open to Priests, religious and the laity.
- Those younger than 55 will have preference.
- A recommendation from a Bishop, Parish Priest, or Religious Superior is required.

Course fee for the 40 days residential course: 450.00 Ghana Cedis

The number of course participants is limited to 30 people. Please, register before the 30th June 2016 using the attached Application Form. More Application Forms are available at SVD Guest House Accra, the Catholic Book Centre Accra, and NCS office of the Laity

Address your application to:

Rev. Br. McDaniel Acquah SVD  
(BPM Coordinator SVD, Ghana Province)  
Divine Word Missionaries  
P. O. Box GP 3285 Accra

Note: Successful applicants will receive a letter of acceptance and will be contacted by phone or e-mail.

Download the application form from [www.svdghana.org](http://www.svdghana.org)



**COMMUNICATION MINISTRY      Coordinator: Fr. Rex A. Vegbey, SVD**
***Communication Course at the Novitiate***

In fulfilment of the SVD Policy on Communication and AFRAM Communication action plan the novices were taken through the rudiments of communication from the 5<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> January at the Novitiate by the Province Communication Coordinator. Among the Topics treated included: Introduction to Communication, The Church and Communication, SVD and Communication from the time of the founder- Chapters, Constitution, the SVD policy on Communication, Journalistic Practice, Writing to deliver and delivering on camera.

Above all, the novices were taken through Communication in Community and were given the tools to have effective communication among us as confreres in Community. Once communication in community breaks down, there is bound to be trouble in the community and this would largely affect the larger community in diverse ways.

In their evaluation of the course, the Novices expressed their appreciation for the insight that was given them. According to some of the evaluations, they have realized that Communication is at the heart of being an effective Religious-Missionary.

***Workshop for lay Speakers***

The SVD Ghana Communication ministry held a day's seminar for lay people in the Accra Archdiocese captioned **DEVELOPING RELEVANT CONTENT FOR EFFECTIVE AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT** in other words, preparing and delivering talks for your audience to understand. Although only 17 participated, their evaluation of the programme called for a repetition of the programme for all those who did not have the opportunity. Above all, the participants called for such a seminar to be organised for the priests in the Archdiocese.

***Hymns of Praise TV Show launched***

To promote Hymns singing in our Churches which seem to be dwindling in Ghana, the Communication office embarked on the production of a TV Show 'Hymns of Praise' which started to air on national television (GTV) from the 14<sup>th</sup> February. The feedback from those who have watched the Show is very positive but getting sponsorship for production and airtime is a big challenge. It is unlikely that the programme would be sustained if no sponsors come on board by the close of the season in May. You may watch the show online: <http://www.ghanalive.tv/gtv/> on Sunday at 15.30 GMT.

***I believe videos***

Three categories of videos have been produced and are available for use: Catholic Answers featuring a panel of priests answering the common questions that Catholics are confronted with; 30-minute videos on Catholic teachings; Human/Youth developmental topics on video.

**JPIC**
**Coordinator: Peter Kabutey, SVD**

I was part of the Annual General Meeting of JPIC coordinators of the various congregations in Ghana which was held in Navrongo from 25<sup>th</sup> -28<sup>th</sup> February. About 21 congregations were represented. This year's theme was on 'Laudato Si' which was presented by Fr. Malachy, M.Afr. In his presentation he showed a video of how human beings are contributing to the destruction of mother earth. The group discussions that followed led to some concrete actions to be taken by religious congregations in the country. Among the action plan is the education on pollution targeting school children. It was proposed that we make use of the 'abor week' initiated by the Ghana Catholic Bishops Conference to embark on this exercise.

In this education driven exercise we are to teach the school children the hazards in littering around. To curb the situation of littering around with empty water sachet some of the sisters like the RVM have started buying the littered rubbers from the children who collect them and they recycle them.

The Province coordinators also met to look at our project for 2016. This year being an election year, our main task would be to educate people especially the youth to vote peacefully. Some workshops for the youth are scheduled to take place in SVD managed parishes in Accra, Tema Battor, Koforidua, Afram Plains and Yendi Districts. The parishes in the deaneries would be invited to participate in the seminars.



## MAILS

Dear Friends,

This is the seventeenth time that I am packing my things to change my place of living. My new home is called Goldegg, region of Salzburg in Austria. If statistics tell the truth, the village has 2500 inhabitants and the church there counts 2171 Catholics.

I wish you all God's blessing and any good thing thinkable for the year.

OtmarAuinger, SVD [OES]

Dear The Editorial Team,

I love reading from you. May the Lord increase your wisdom and your strength in the years to come. During this time the Tchokossi greet: "Nyeme ma yafofofore" which is to say, May the Lord grant us another year. Until we meet again.

MathiasYaadar, SVD [TOGO-BENIN]

Dear Fr. Provincial & Confreres:

I'm sorry for writing late. I want to thank you for being there with me in various ways during the death of my mother Theresa Yaa Donkor. Without your prayers, presence, and generosity my mother's funeral could have been different. However, the funeral was well received. I returned to the mission with renewed hope and gratitude to God and to you my confreres. God bless you.

Fr. Francis Damoah, SVD [USS]

## WORTH REMEMBERING

### March 2016

01	Vitus Hartberger	+2015
02	Hilarius Dogbe	+2012
03	Stephen Ayisu	Birthday
04	Kossie Bokovi	Feastday
05	McDaniel Acquaaah	Birthday
05	Edward Asafu-Adjaye	+ 2006
06	Rene Derinck	+ 1965
07	William Kane	+ 2001
08	Anastasius Osei	Birthday
11	Phanuel Agudu	Birthday
11	Thomas Motzko	+ 2009
12	Kossi Bokovi	Birthday
15	Gideon Davordzie	Birthday
17	Patrick Kodom	Feastday
17	Patrick Moroney	Feastday
17	Owusu Pius Oduro	Birthday
17	Patrick Ofori	Feast day
17	Bernard Rackers	+2014
18	Alex Powathu Chandy	Feastday
18	Thomas Halleran	+ 2004

19	Joseph Youta Djiba	Feastday
19	Jozef Mazur	Feastday
17	Patrick Moroney	Feastday
19	Joseph Panabang	Feast day
19	Joseph Sakite	Feastday
19	Joseph Sprehe	Feastday
21	Benjamin Adusei-Poku	Feast day
21	Charles Johnston	Birthday
21	Paul Tawiah-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	Boleslaw Gielata	+ 2008
25	Acquaah, McDaniel	Feastday
27	Andrew Campbell	Birthday
27	Theodore Smeets	+ 1998
28	Gregorius Boss	Birthday
28	Henry Noordermeer	Birthday
31	Benjamin Asare	Feastday



## **April**

03	Wumborti Bakilatob	Birthday
03	Patrick Moroney	Birthday
04	Ronald Aming'a	Birthday
07	Hugo Huber	+2014
07	Dominic Minggu	+2014
09	Andrews Obeng-Aboagye	Birthday
09	Charles Kporfor	Birthday
09	Theodore v. Eijndthoven	+ 2000
10	Marek Dabrowski	Birthday
13	Bawerima Bruno Wensan'na	Birthday
15	Archbishop A. Noser	+ 1981
15	Jean Michel Randriambololona	Birthday
17	Stephen Osei Asante	Birthday
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	McDaniel Acquaaah	Feast day
25	Emmanuel Anyomi	Birthday
25	Marek Dabrowski	Feastday
25	Marcus Hipólito	Feastday
26	David K. Tengey	Birthday
26	Joseph Skorupka	+ 1982
29	Thomas D'Mello	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
05	Simon Vire	Birthday
08	Samuel Doe	Birthday
08	Stanislaw Gergont	Feast day
09	Samuel Aboo	Birthday
09	Józef Pieczykolan	+2014

## **May**

10	Samuel Yaw Adu	Birthday
10	Bruno Yirzie	Birthday
10	Jacques Nyssen	+2015
11	Fabian Cofie	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
15	Marcel Danyo	Birthday
16	Déomba Honoré Karo	Feastday
17	Paul Ayitey	Birthday
18	Mariusz Pacula	Birthday
19	Joseph Youta Djiba	Birthday
19	Paul Agbeyome	+2014
20	Bernard Assenyoh	Birthday
21	John Ohene Akuffo	Birthday
21	Charles S. MacCarthy	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	Charles Kporfor	Feastday
31	Maxwell Wullar	Birthday
31	Alphonse Elsbernd	+ 1997
31	Patrick Murphy	+ 2011

**Pray for our novices who  
begin their 30-day retreat  
from the  
10<sup>th</sup> April till the 10<sup>th</sup> May.  
During this time the novitiate  
would be closed to visitors**