

The SVD education ministry: an essential and integral part of our missionary engagements

WORD FROM THE LEADERSHIP TEAM

Education ministry in our Society has always been an essential, indispensable, and integral part of our missionary engagements. Our Founder, St. Arnold Janssen, a mathematics and science teacher, had a deep appreciation for education and genuine concern for the students. When the Divine Word Missionaries were sent to South America, Fr. Arnold Janssen wrote to the superior, "We can no longer save the world with sermons and liturgy alone" (1894, Alt, 535). We are to be innovative and creative in our ministries. Then, just six months before his death, he again underlined the importance of education. "Education is one of the most important activities in the missions," he told the new priests in St. Gabriel's on June 22, 1908, "this has been proved in the past... those who receive a higher education are called to exercise a good influence on their contemporaries." (Alt, 993).

Despite the pressing need for personnel in the missions, in November 1902, the Founder agreed that the SVD take over the running of the Teachers' Training College in Vienna. "I am of the opinion that at present, Vienna is one of the first and most important mission territories that the Catholic Church currently has," he explained on that occasion (Alt, 910). Thus, from the beginning, education is given due importance.

According to Bertrand Russel (1872-1969), a British Philosopher, "Education helps a child acquire intellectual virtue, curiosity, open-mindedness, patience, concentration, exactness, and perseverance." A well-known Indian poet, Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941), said, "Education includes physical, mental, moral and spiritual developments and faculty

enhancement in the students." Education outlines the overall development of the students. The ideals of the philosophers on education have been made real by our Founder. In many ways, St. Arnold Janssen was a man ahead of his time!

Today most of our educational institutions are in the ASPAC Zone (72%), followed by PANAM (19%), AFRAM (5%), and EUROPA (4%) – (Cat. 2021). All six Society-administered universities are in the ASPAC Zone. It implies that our involvement at the tertiary and primary, and secondary stages of edu-

cation is mainly limited to a particular geographical area. Apart from these, BRN has two 'faculdades' (Institutions for Higher Studies): UniAcademia (offers 21 courses) and Faculdade Arnaldo (offers 14 courses), administered by the SVD. Besides, our confreres are also engaged in diocesan education institutions and secular universities (in India/Ghana). We also

have schools in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, and Ghana.

Now, most of our educational institutions are in India, Indonesia, Japan, and Taiwan - where Christians constitute a minuscule minority with religious and cultural pluralism. At times we face religious fundamentalism too. This invites us to further our reflections on the missionary nature and religious dimension of the education ministry. We echo our present-day understanding of education, integrating the gospel values with our SVD vision of mission as 'prophetic dialogue' and 'characteristic dimensions'.

The characteristic dimensions are our identity and are essential to our missionary life and service. They characterize the way we do mission and live the reli-



gious life. They are part of the curricular and extra-curricular activities of the students in our schools. It means a sense of mission, a rootedness in the Bible, learning skills for communicating the Good News, and a commitment to justice, peace, and the integrity of creation. Just as we consider these characteristic dimensions to be our "family traits", we pass these traits to the staff and students of our schools.

After having been with us in our educational institutions for several years, we pass on to the students something of the SVD traits and make them distinguishable marks of our training. Considering the local situations, we organize seminars and introduce St. Arnold Janssen's spirituality and spiritual heritage. We pray the Quarter Hour prayer and pray for the missionaries. We pass on some elements of the SVD identity and the spiritual legacy. Our intercultural/international communities can become a powerful witness to the values of universal brotherhood, inclusivism, and acceptance of diversity. These values are gifts of God and our way of life. In the process, some of our students may get attracted to our way of life.

In the past, we had schools to prepare young boys to become missionaries. For example, the Arnold-Janssen Gymnasium, part of the Mission House of St. Wendel's in Saar, in the southwest of Germany, was founded in 1898 as a traditional minor seminary. There are approximately 600 missionaries who received their high school education at St. Wendel. Until 2002, several confreres were teaching various subjects in the school. Similar mission expansion was St. Rupert's, Bischofshofen in Salzburg, Austria, in 1904. Of course, today, the situations are different! Can some of our schools be springs of vocation promotion, wherever possible?

In our education ministry, we promote those principles that support universal fraternity and social friendship. We help the students realize the dignity and value of everyone in society and view the 'other' and treat them non-teleologically and in a non-utilitarian manner. Our students are helped to realize that all resources are relational. There is richness in unity in diversity. In this context, the geometrical image of a polyhedron is appropriate. As each of them has a unique face, surface, angle yet they together form a unity. We are to embrace and respect everyone and teach the same to our students.

As educators, we cultivate our students' art and architecture of peace and harmony, the sacredness

of life, respect for the dignity and freedom of all. We help them to be agents of social change and development and assist them in nation-building. Care must be taken to advocate effective and full use of our facilities with creative and innovative activities outside the school hours.

Currently, we live in the post-modern era. We find our millennials talented and excel in many fields but controlled by certain limitations and negative influences. World-changing trends like globalization, secularization, migration, relativism, and urbanization affect the mindset of the students. Uses of drugs, promiscuous sexuality, misuse of social media, and post-modern tendencies have led to a decline in moral values.

At this juncture, we continue to encourage and educate the students with courses on ethics, religions, and human values. We are to create a genuine platform to live and practice human values - solidarity, universal brotherhood/sisterhood, honesty, simplicity, perseverance, persistence, and the joy of living a healthy life.

In addition to the traditional education ministry, many confreres are engaged in various agricultural, vocational, and technical schools. Many catechetical, missiological, anthropological, philosophical, theological, biblical, and language institutes continue to contribute to the missions with qualified confreres. We encourage more confreres to undertake serious research in these areas of mission studies.

As educators, together with quality education, we also try to create alternative education models. They are essential for those who find it challenging to participate in traditional classroom education due to poverty, discrimination, or social marginalization. A strong sense of solidarity with the poor is an integral part of our education ministry. In many of the PRM, our schools are a significant source of self-reliance. But at the same time, care must be taken to strike a balance between service and self-reliance.

COVID-19 has posed many challenges. At the same time, it offers us opportunities. We continue to enhance the quality of the life of our students through constant accompaniment. We bring an authentic SVD flavor to our schools through our life of witness and form genuine partnerships with the laity and other mission collaborators. May the vision of St. Arnold Janssen guide and inspire our efforts!

Fr. Paulus Budi Kleden and the Leadership

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GENERALATE NEWS

Nemi Courses for 2022-2023

Fr. Superior General and his Council officially announced the schedule of the Nemi Courses planned for the years 2022-2023 at the Centro Ad Genes. The schedule is as follows:

15 February to 13 April 2022
SVD Formators and Vocation Promotors Course in English

02 May to 18 August 2022
SVD Tertiate Renewal Course in English

22 September to 18 November 2022
SVD Formators and Vocation Promotors Course in Spanish/Portuguese

13 February to 14 May 2023
SSpS-SVD Joint Tertiate Renewal Course in Spanish and Portuguese

03 August to 24 November 2023
SVD Tertiate Renewal Course in English

10 October to 25 November 2023
SVD Third Age Course in Spanish/Portuguese

04 July to 31 August 2023
Dei Verbum Course in English

The details of above schedule are contained in the April 23, 2021

circular sent to the PRM Superiors. The said circular can also be viewed at www.svdcuria.org

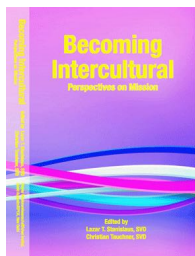
We need to ensure that our renewal and formation programs continue during these extraordinary times. Let us hope that the COVID-19 situation will normalize in the coming months so that we can proceed with these courses.

For more information contact:
Fr. Kulandasamy (Samy) for Nemi Courses: nemi.

coursedirector@gmail.com

Fr. Marek Vanus for Dei Verbum Course: bible@svdcuria.org

Book Launch and Talks



A new book titled *Becoming Intercultural: Perspectives on Mission*, edited by Lazar T. Stanislaus, SVD and Christian Tauchner, SVD was released on April 30, 2021 in virtual platform. This book is due to the inspiration from the SVD General Chapters. Intercultural living is a witness to the kingdom of God. We build the intercultural communities moved by the Spirit.

The book launch session together with talks was organized by SVD, UISG and USG in the virtual platform, thus many could participate in this event. The book was formally launched by Fr. Paulus Budi Kleden, SVD, Superior General. He gave a short message on the importance of interculturality and the relevance of the book.

Lazar T. Stanislaus gave a short presentation of the book and then introduced three speakers who have written articles in this book – Stephen Bevans, SVD, Judette Gallares, RC and Patricia Murray, IBVM. They gave a very deep insightful presentation on the topics that they have written. It was followed with questions and conversation. Christian Tauchner handled this session.

The book and its Kindle version is available in www.amazon.com.

Pandemic and Prophetic Dialogue

The pandemic has exposed the truth and the vulnerabilities of the society. It has pervaded into every nation and all types of people; this does not discriminate anyone. The effect of this pandemic in the world is disastrous and has affected every sector of the society. Human beings are humbled and everyone is searching for ways to be safe and to have good health. Amidst this context, we are trying to reflect what is at stake for us as Divine Word missionaries.

Thus, a webinar on “Pandemic and Prophetic Dialogue” was organized on April 23-24, 2021 by the Generalate Mission Secretary, Fr. Stanislaus Lazar with the help of other members in the Generalate. There were 6 speakers on the first day and 10 speakers on the second day. It was wonderful to see approximately 300 participants – nearly 150 confreres with direct link and nearly 150 theology students in small groups in their formation houses. They were from Ledalero, Indonesia; Malang, Indonesia; Common formation houses in Ghana and Kenya; from Chicago theologate house and a few others from other formation houses.

We thank all the speakers for their wonderful presentation, and the participants for their involvement in raising questions and giving comments in the Chat Box. This event was recorded and soon they will be published in the website.

Arrivederci Fr. Fritz!

You enjoyed every moment that you can help someone.



Father Norbert Wilhelm Förster, fondly known as Father Fritz, formally bid goodbye to the members of the Collegio del Verbo Divino (CVD). He said in jest, ***"It is time to move on, and aspirins do not work for me anymore."***

A well-received joke was an expression of a very graceful acceptance of Father Fritz stepping up to an important transition in his life. He confessed that it was getting more difficult for him to move around. His eyesight and his hearing are causing him some issues. He is ready to move on. Fr. Fritz is grateful for the privilege of rendering service in the CVD for the past 40 years.

Since 1980, upon the invitation of Fr. Superior General Heinrich Heekeren SVD, Fr. Fritz joined the CVD. He was asked to set up the system for the newly delivered computer. He created terminals for the General Council and a terminal for the students.

The computer system developed rapidly, and he supervised and managed a more powerful computer system equipped with more terminals. He also was behind the purchase of the first laser printer, which he believes was the first of its kind used in Rome, perhaps in a religious congregation. He remembers with a pleasant grin the arrival of the first photocopy machine. He recalls the ohs and the ahs of the members of the Generalate when the first fax was put to use. He saw and witnessed how technology accompanied the Generalate and made the work a lot easier.

When another confrere took over the management of the computer system in the Collegio, personal computers entered. Fr. Fritz started to diversify his responsibilities. He did a lot of technical things for the house and the Generalate members. He also replaced the organist who was transferred. Since then, he played the organ and prepared booklets for novenas, special prayers, and feasts.

Fr. Fritz always enjoyed every moment that he can help someone. It satisfied him to see a confrere more relaxed after solving a technical issue. He said, "I take

a job as it comes." No wonder and no surprise, one can find Fr. Fritz in every corner of the house. He confessed that he has information on the CVD that probably very few would know. When one of the rare earthquakes happened in Rome, several cracks were observed in the church's apse. He looked over the archives and found out that the church's apse enjoys a foundation of ten meters deep. Without saying it, no worries.

On a more serious note, he shared about a spiritual resurgence that he experienced. Ten years ago, in an encounter with a group of laypeople, he was introduced to the spirituality of God the Creator. Fritz began to embrace the significance of the doxology in a more meaningful way through Him, with Him, and in Him. In a particular manner, this embraced spirituality gave him motivation and meaning every time he reaches out to others to create something for someone.

A man who moves around, doing this, fixing something, purchasing a replacement for a machine is indeed a busy body. But according to Fr. Fritz, he has been gifted with the value of personal prayer. At the end of the day, before going to bed, this is no time to think about what has been done or still to be done, to look forward to what is to be taken care of the following day. For Fr. Fritz, the evening is all for God, personal communication with Him, and nothing else.

Fr. Superior General Budi Kleden and the Rector of the CVD, Fr. Wladyslaw Madziar, thanked Fr. Fritz for all the services he rendered to the community. For those who have known him during their sojourn in CVD Fr. Fritz's image, a true frontliner will never fade. Not in a jestful way, for forty years, Fr. Fritz has become like aspirin for many. He relieved the confreres of their headaches over technical matters that made work difficult or daily needs limited.

Father Fritz's aspirin worked for the past forty years.

--- Taken from an interview with Fr. Fritz

AFRAM NEWS

Mozambique Region (MOZ):

25 years of evangelization in Mozambique



In Beira, began the inaugural ceremony with the planting of plants.

The jubilee year in a congregation is a time of restoration and opening a new story of God's love for its members and people. It is an excellent time to celebrate the wonders the Lord has already done in the history of a congregation. It is a time of forgiveness, renewal of bonds of friendship and fraternity. It is a new covenant between members of the congregation and the people of a community.

For Missionaries of the Divine Word in Mozambique, the year 2021-2022 is the silver jubilee of the second coming. The 1st batch of SVDs arrived in Mozambique in 1911 and then 1997. From this year on, the missionary work of the Congregation of the Divine Word initiated by Saint Arnold Janssen continues to be present among the people in Mozambique. The faithful are called to know and love the Incarnate Word to give glory to his name and participate in his salvation.

All of us know that Mozambique now lives in times of trials and tribulations. Cyclones in the Centre in recent months have affected the everyday life of the people. There are also pandemic restrictions and the terrorist attack in the North, especially in the province of Cabo Delgado. People in this area were running away and leaving their native places and their goods and looking for shelter in other regions.

In this situation, we SVDs began our jubilee year on March 25, 2021, with the motto In Communion of Life with the Incarnate Word: 25 Years at the Service of Evangelization in Mozambique. The organizing committee has prepared all the programs for the whole year's jubilee celebration. Every SVD community in MOZ had its way of inaugural ceremony because of the COVID-19 restrictions.

One of our communities, particularly in Beira, began the inaugural ceremony with the planting of plants. Observing and respecting all preventing measures of COVID-19 in MOZ, the Bible pilgrimage is conducted throughout the SVD based parishes in this year and the year 2021-2022. The year of reading and reflecting the Sacred Scriptures more memorably by all SVD confreres in the region.

We believe that this jubilee year will bring us joy, hope, and reconciliation between God and his people in MOZ. We continue to pray for peace in the entire world, in particular the province of Cabo Delgado.

--- Fr. Joseph Sahayaraj SVD
Organizing Committee

Region of Mozambique

A Jubilee Message

Fr. Jonhson Furtado, SVD, the Regional of Mozambique Region, issued the following message on the occasion of the opening of the Jubilee Year. The following are some excerpts of his statement.

The purpose of this Jubilee is to thank God for all the blessings that the Lord has granted us in these twenty-five years. It is an opportunity to become

attentive to what God wants from us and assume a listening posture to accomplish God's will in our lives and our missionary action. The Jubilee will be celebrated over a year, beginning March 25, 2021, to March 25, 2022, in all the parishes and communities where we are working.

Accompanying this Jubilee journey, we are all in-

vited to reflect on this motto: "In the communion of life with the Incarnate Word". We recognize that the Divine Word always guides and accompanies us in these 25 years of the mission. He molds us according to His will and gives us grace upon grace. We are invited together with our parishioners to read and meditate the word of God daily and to pray for vocations to missionary and religious life.

To the dear Christians, this is the time to be missionaries in our families and communities, sharing our faith and living fraternity. We are invited to help



families in danger of separation or who are already separated, bring them together again, and reconcile them. It is also time to support young people to make the right choice in building their future.

We remember and thank the missionaries of the first arrival and the first four missionaries of the second arrival at this time of

thanksgiving. They laid the strong foundation, where today we live and continue to serve God in the Mozambican people.

--- Fr. Johnson Furtado, SVD

Province of Ghana (GHA):

JPIC outreach programs

As part of JPIC activities, some donations in goods and provisions were made at Ankaful (Elmina) and Yendi prison on the 15th and 20th February 2021, respectively. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, there was not much interaction with the inmates. Fr. Peter Kwablah Kabutey SVD, the immediate past Coordinator, used to donate to Nsawam prisons.

A group spearheaded by Fr. Courage Mawuenyega Eric Nordor SVD and our lay partner Margaret and Martin visited the prison in Ankaful – Elmina. Fr. Julius Tapera SVD (JPIC Coordinator for Zimbabwe mission), currently having a course at Institute for Continuous Formation (ICF), joined the group. Fr. Gregory Dery (Diocesan Priest), the Chaplain of the Yendi prison, facilitated the handing over of the donation. Present at that visit was the Yendi District Superior Fr. Benedictus Bau SVD.

At both prisons, the inmates and prison commanders were overwhelmed with our kind gestures. This also allowed us to say a prayer with them and educate them about who we are as SVD and JPIC.

A special appreciation to the Provincial and his Councilors, confreres in Accra, Tema-Bator and Yendi Districts, Lay Partners of the SVD for their support.

--- GHA Newsletter

Lusaka (ZAM):

One Heart Many Faces – Our Academic and Formation Life

On the chapel's wooden door in the philosophy House in Lusaka bears the engraving: One heart, many faces. Flipping down through the pages of the semesters our philosophy students have been through, it has been as though the inscription has come to fruition. It is not anymore a slogan or a cliché, but a lived encounter and happening.

Life in these semesters was like a panorama which is filled with many vicissitudes. Episodes of sadness and happiness indeed come in life. It has been a mingling life with different people of various nationalities and diverse congregations at the College. We have enjoyed associating, socializing, and mixing as this widened our horizons immeasurably.



Philosophy students in an outing.

We made friends, and we are still journeying as brothers on this pilgrim's journey. However, as life is known to be full of opposites, our spirituality as SVDs seems to be diluted on occasions. Most of the time, things tend to be Franciscanized. That, too, is a challenge to us as SVDs. We articulate for ourselves what it means to be an SVD, missionary, Religious priest/brother, our specific identity, and charism, especially in these perplexing and puzzling times.

The COVID-19 pandemic has caught us all unaware. While we try to cope with its all-around consequences, our learning system has been affected in the academic year 2020-21. Fortunately, we have by now learned to dance according to the tune of the new normal. Our semesters have been prolific and exhilarating, at times, with community outings and fun. We thank God for His blessings and thank one another for our life and gift of each other.

--- Oscar Saimon, II Year Philosophy Student

Kabwe (ZAM):**The SVD Novitiate's three-year journey**

Our novices working on their spiritual growth.

The Novitiate is an essential formation program in the congregation. It has been a long-term plan that the Novitiate should be erected in Zambia since the interest of the young people to join religious congregation is pretty high. A request to establish a Novitiate was made to the Superior General and his Council through the AFRAM Zone. The reasons were the growth of the number of the young men who are to join us, and the Ghana Novitiate could not accommodate more novices beyond their capacity.

The SVD Novitiate program in Kabwe began humbly with a simple facility. The building was initially built for the Propaedeutic program, which had been accommodating the candidates from Zambia and those from Zimbabwe Region. The Novitiate program began in July 2018, and Fr. Martin Kawana, SVD, was the Novice Director.

The first intake was six Novices: three Malagasy, one Kenyan, one Zimbabwean, and one Zambian. But in a short time, the Zambian decided to leave the congregation. The second group was six Novices as well: three Zambians, two Tanzanians, and one Kenyan. The current group of Novices is two Zambians and two Zimbabweans. The Novice Director is Fr. Theophan Misengo, SVD, and Bro. Ferdi Selan, SVD, the treasurer of the house.

The Novices are practically doing most of the work helping an employed gardener and cook. They do manual labor in the vegetable garden and poultry. Sports activities have been part of the schedule in the house. They used to play football or volleyball with the youth at St. Charles Lwanga Parish. Because of the pandemic, sport is only played in the formation house.

A thirty-day retreat was offered to the novices. The first two retreats were conducted by Fr. Andrew Obeng, SVD from Ghana, and Fr. Gabriel Sosu, SVD from Zimbabwe Region. The Jesuit priests conducted the third retreat. Apart from the 30-days retreat, they get

the opportunity to have regular recollections.

Within Kabwe town, there are several Novitiates of different congregations, which they have been taking part in the inter-novitiate program. Mainly they join other novitiate congregation for seminars and workshops and occasionally social interaction or work. The conference and workshop have been part of their academic program, studying at the formation house every morning.

The Novitiate for the past three years is going on well. These young men have been trying their best to work on their spiritual growth and their desire to be missionaries in the future. --- Bro. Ferdi Selan, SVD

Cafunfo, Lunda Norte (ANG):**SVD Bishop Chindecasse denounced the killings of protesters**

Bishop Estanislau Marques Chindecasse, SVD.

Several Angolan Catholic bishops denounced what they consider to have been a "serious massacre" of protesters in Cafunfo, Lunda Norte. The protesters belong to the Movement of the Portuguese Protectorate of Lunda Tchokwe (MPPLT). On social networks, several Angolan

Catholic bishops who are members of the Episcopal Conference of Angola and Sao Tome (CEAST) also condemned the deaths.

The police authorities claim that they killed six protesters who tried to invade a police station in Cafunfo. The MPPLT contradicts this version, accusing the Angolan forces of having fired indiscriminately against unarmed citizens, causing 15 deaths and ten wounded.

The bishop of Dundo, Estanislau Marques Chindecasse, SVD, criticized the violence and recalled that the protest is rooted in severe unresolved problems. "It is worrying. When there are losses of human lives, we worry and regret it, but the fundamental issue is not this. It is simply a manifestation of a deeper reality," he said.

Lunda Norte is an area where traditional authorities have a significant presence. There has been constant tension between them and the central government in Luanda. Bishop Chindecasse, who oversees the region, defended "dialogue as the fundamental principle" for the resolution of problems, noting that after April 4, 2002 (Peace and Reconciliation Day in Angola), "no Angolan would die anymore because of his ideas.

According to Estanislau Marques Chindecasse, the issue in that region of eastern Angola "is much more complex," and a demonstration "cannot be solved with violence from one side or the other."

-- RTP Noticias

Ambodinato (MAD):**A church in construction**

Fr. Tai Peter Nguyen, our Vietnamese confrere working in Paroisse St. Pierre et Paul in Vohilava, shared about the construction work of the chapel of the Queen of the Holy Rosary of Pompeii in Ambodinato village. The construction started on April 14, 2021. The

road to the town is appalling. What makes the building complicated is that the construction materials have to be bought from Mananjary, the nearest town. It's about 60 kilometers away and a journey of 5 hours.

Generous benefactors from Hong Kong are supporting the construction.

--- SVD Brothers International

Kabwe (ZAM):**St. Charles Lwanga, a thriving parish**

Fr. Borges working in construction with a young man.



We offer quality education and based on Christian values.

St. Charles Lwanga Chindwin Parish is located in Kabwe, the capital of the Central Province. The Parish is near the Zambian Army barracks. Most of the people who congregate at this parish are civilians and the active and retired Army. The population of Catholics is about 2,000. It is commonly known as Chindwin Parish because the Church building is near the Chindwin Barrack.

Two young SVDs are working in this parish namely Fr. Silvio de Jesus Borges, SVD, the parish priest and Fr. Antonius Doni, SVD, his assistant. They are working very well with the young people who are the majority congregants at the parish. There are four significant ministries; school ministry, youth ministry, lay organization group, and catechetical training.

School ministry

There are two schools, one at the central parish and the other at a sub-station. The School at the central parish is for small children, grade one and two classes. At the substation St. Elizabeth – Kamunchanga, there is a grade one class. The two schools offer quality education and based on Christian values.

Youth Ministry

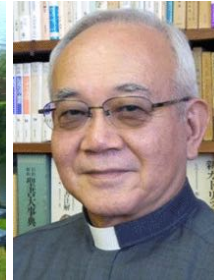
Many of the young people in this parish have potentials and are talented. We provide the tuition. We offer lessons on the basic use of computer. The youths are well organized and quite active in many parish activities, such as singing in liturgy, especially during feast days. The youth are engaged in social activities such as collecting second-hand clothes and distributing them to people in need. They also distributed food to the families in need, mainly in the sub-station. We are happy and determined to motivate the young people to be more responsible and independent in society.

Lay organizations

The parish has several lay organizations, namely, the Catholic Women's League (CWL), St. Joachim and St. Anne, St. Francis Organization (SFO), etc. These lay Organizations carry different services according to their constitutions and charism, in line with the need of the parish. Generally, they take care of the Priests and Brothers' upkeep. We only need to accompany them to do more for the parish as well on the diocese level.

--- Fr. Antonius Doni, SVD

ASPAC NEWS

*Province of Japan (JPN):***Honoring our forebears and their legacies***Tajimi Cemetery**Fr. Lucas Moriyama Katsufumi, SVD.*

Fr. Lucas Moriyama Katsufumi, SVD, a former Provincial of Japan Province(JPN), retired in 2020 after working in parishes. He presently resides in Tajimi. Living in a place so close to the cemetery has also given him much to reflect on. This is his reflection.

Every morning, as I leave my room to go to Morning Prayer and Mass, the first thing that strikes my eyes is the hedge of the SVD cemetery across an open field. When I see the graveyard, I recall the many confreres who have dedicated their lives to missionary and pastoral work in Japan. As I look at the cemetery, the faces of many of the confreres now resting in their graves come to mind, and I recall their activities.

After World War II, I recall the confreres who built minor and significant seminaries and devoted themselves to the formation of SVD missionaries. In the period before and after the war, Tajimi was a house of formation for Brothers and the place where confreres were sent out to work in the parishes. The main house in Tajimi was built in 1930 and marked 90 years in 2020.

After the war, a major and a minor seminary were established at Takigawachō in Nagoya for formation. Many confreres who lived together with the seminarians devoted themselves zealously to the formation of missionaries, religious, and priests. The confreres from that era are also now resting in the Tajimi cemetery.

As for confreres who worked in the schools, there is something truly inspiring. They worked so hard to lay the foundations of the Nanzan School Corporation, bringing together and encouraging many talented laypeople to collaborate with them in the educational apostolate. The confreres involved in moving the original campus of Nanzan University from Irinaka to its present location at Yagumo-chō are now resting here in the Tajimi cemetery.

Confreres worked in the parishes, scattered along the Japan Sea coast from the Hokuriku region to the Akita area. They took great pride in their missionary and pastoral work and brought together many laities to work with them. Among these forebears were many who helped expand the SVD missionary apostolate to the Tōkai region and lay the foundations of the Nagoya Diocese.

Many of them were buried where they had worked. But now, all of the remains have been moved to the Tajimi cemetery. They lay in rest with the other confreres. Living here in Tajimi, every morning as I gaze at the SVD cemetery, I recall the faces—smiling faces as well as serious faces—of the confreres buried here.

At the same time, I imagine that they left this world knowing that as Divine Word Missionaries, they had worked hard to lay the foundations of the SVDs missionary work in Japan. They had entrusted it with confidence to the confreres who came after them.

Those of us alive now need to ask ourselves how do we continue and develop the missionary activities left behind by those confreres who have gone before us. May our deceased confreres continue to remind us of our forebears and their actions and our commitment to carry on the missionary apostolate in Japan.

--- SVD Province News JPN February/March 2021

India Central Province (INC):**"Saint Arnold Janssen:****A Prophet and A Sage for our times"**

Archbishop Leo Cornelio SVD presented a book titled "Saint Arnold Janssen A Prophet and A Sage for our times" by Fr. Clarence Srambical SVD on the first day of the Provincial Chapter, February 13, 2011. Present for the occasion were SVD Bishops and Provincials and observers from the India Sub-Zone.

The book published by Sat Prachar Press carries five chapters: Chapter 1: Saint Arnold Janssen, "A fool or a saint" – biography of the founder; Chapter 2: Vision of the Founder and the Society of the Divine Word; Chapter 3: The Quarter Hour Prayer; Chapter 4: Reflection on the Society of the Divine Word, the name and its implications, and Chapter 5: Saint Arnold Janssen: Radiating Self- Giving-Love through the Print Media. It will be a valuable book to promote devotion to Saint Arnold Janssen among our students and friends.

--- INC Newsletter

Ambassa (ING):**The miracle of participatory effort**

A new Catholic Community is added to the Ambassa Holy Spirit Parish on April 4, 2021. It was Easter Sunday when the Dumjakrai Village community experienced the light of Risen Christ in a particular way. More than 400 people gathered to witness the inauguration and blessing of the new village Chapel. The patron saint of the chapel is St. John Paul II.

In the morning, the parishioners gathered around the village Chapel. The parish priest, Fr. Ivan D'Silva SVD, inaugurated the chapel with the ribbon cutting and blessing. During the Holy Eucharist, 20 members of the Reang tribe were baptized. The village Chapel is erected with a mud wall, bamboo railing, and bamboo ceiling. The parishioners from different substations offered voluntary services. The new village chapel is a work of love wherein the members of the small Christian communities pitched in what they can. This is the miracle of participatory effort.

--- Ivan D'Silva, SVD

Khurda (INC):**A journey with the Lord**

One month Canonical Arnold Janssen Spirituality retreat is the most significant event of the SVD novitiate, Khurda, India. It's a time to decide about one's vocation through prayer, reflections, reading the Word of God, contemplation, and through a professional discernment process. The first phase started from the Holy Trinity Grotto with a pilgrim dance to the chapel. During this phase, we focused on "The Trinitarian Origin and Foundation". Sr. Florentina Xess SSpS was the resource person.

The second phase focused on "Incarnation and the Public Ministry of Jesus". The animator of this phase was Fr. Charles Pinto SVD. During this phase, we were drawn to the person of Jesus. By taking a human form, he showed the life of salvation and mercy through the ministry of love and compassion. The third phase started with the theme "Following the Lord on the Way of the Cross". During this phase, our prime focus was on discernment. With the help of Fr. Emmanuel Varghese SVD, the Novice Master, we could discern the will of God for us and come to a clear-cut decision to follow Christ and his way of life.

The fourth and final phase was animated by Fr. Gregory Arockiam SVD and Sr. Vimala Jacob SSpS. During this phase, we meditated upon "The Resurrection of Jesus and the Importance of Mission and Being Sent as Missionaries". This phase helped us get into the core of our hearts and understand the mission's essence with concrete examples of the missionaries.

This one-month retreat helped us to fall in love with the Word and Society.

--- Fr. Emmanuel Varghese SVD

Pune (INM):**The newly formed
SVD Lay Mission Partners group**

The newly formed SVD Lay Mission Partners group in Pune was christened as 'Disciples of the Divine Word (DDW) – Pune' on March 7, 2021. We were blessed to have the presence of the Provincial and Councilors of India-Mumbai Province, who took out time from their busy schedule to interact with the group. Fr. Richard Mathias SVD, the Provincial Superior, explained that Lay Mission Partner Groups are an integral pillar of the SVD family. He underscored its mission to follow the mandate of Jesus to the cry of the neighbors in need.

Fr. Tomy Thomas Perumprayil SVD, the Vice Provincial, in his sharing, stressed collaboration to spread the Word in other parishes and communities so that DDW – Pune grows in strength. The other members of the Provincial administration, Frs. Richard Quadros SVD, Nicolau Dionizio D'Costa SVD, and Michael Sebastian Maria, SVD greatly appreciated the generous commitment of the DDW members. He acknowledged that the SVD Lay Mission Partners' Group is a great asset to the Society of the Divine Word and the Universal Church.

The group then got down to work and elected its office bearers. The group also decided to embark on the 'Feed the Hungry' project. The entire process for planning the first 'Feed the Hungry' day was coordinated by our Spiritual Director - Fr. Gregory Arockiam SVD, and some DDW members.

On March 13, 2021, the team embarked on the first 'Feed the Hungry' distribution drive with a prayer service. Members volunteered to cook food, create packets for distribution, and drive around the locality to distribute the food packets.

DDW-Pune continues to grow in strength with God's blessings. With five new members joining the group in March, we are growing in power to serve the poor and needy in our community.

--- INM Newsletter

Chittagong (BGD):

The new parish Magazine "Bondon"



The parish magazine in distribution.

It was and is still a trying time for all of us in Jamal Khan Parish, Chittagong, Bangladesh. We were not sure what is it all about; wearing a mask, cleaning hands, sanitizing, maintaining social distance, etc. The schools were closed, churches were empty, all-around restrictions, many lost their jobs, and many commercial establishments were open and closed now. And then what comes next? We were prepared for a long haul.

Our Parish Pastoral Council met regularly to take account of the situation. With the generous help of our

benefactors, we did quite a bit to help the needy, especially people at the periphery. Among others, children and youth were of particular concern to us.

After much discussion and shared ideas, we concluded that we should keep our youth and children occupied and animated. A proposal was accepted to publish a parish magazine in which many can take part in various capacities. An editorial board representing different sections of the parish was formed. Subcommittees were created, and all worked united.

Some collected different materials for printing from the parishioners, articles, memoirs, poems, pictures, etc. Some were engaged in financial matters. Deadlines were fixed, announcements were made in the church, and low and behold, the magazine was ready on Easter Sunday. The name of the magazine is "Bondon" in Bangla, meaning "Nexus" in English (fastening or binding). It was a great effort by our youth, and we now have a parish magazine in every Catholic house.

We also involved our neighbors and friends, especially our parishioners who are abroad, in collecting funds. We even have sent a few copies to Fr. Mariusz Pacula SVD, our former assistant Parish priest. He had to leave Bangladesh and go back to his home country Poland for not getting a visa.

The virus is spreading fast and wide, taking its toll, but we are a parish now more united than before.

--- Fr. Cyprian Pinto, SVD

Madang (PNG):

Unity walk honoring Sir Michael Somare

On March 1, 2021, Divine Word University led the "Unity Walk" for the late Grand Chief Sir Michael Thomas Somare. It was initiated by the East Sepik Students of the DWU. It was supported by all the provincial clubs in the University as well as other peers from other colleges in Madang.

Students from DWU walked from their campus to the Madang Provincial Government Headquarters. They met students from Madang Teachers College and other colleges. They then walked downtown to the Haus Krai gathering at Laiwaden Oval.

The same night there was a tribute done in the JPII Hall of the University. The Hall was fully packed and even graced by the presence of Sir Peter Barter himself. The opening and closing prayers were done by Fr. Vincent Agbeyome Akpah, SVD— Chaplain of the University. Fr. Philip Gibbs, SVD, gave the opening speech, followed by Mr. Franz Heminie.

The PGIR students made a video, and the SRC led the candle lighting. Then songs were each performed by students groups (Sepik Students Association, ENB Students Association, and Morobe Students Association). Miss Philie Julai gave the closing speech.

--- PNG Newsletter

SVDs on mission outreach to aid victims of cyclone

Catholics and Christians celebrate the resurrection of the Lord, singing hallelujah and praising the Lord. However, this time it was not an opportune time to be joyful for East Nusa Tenggara Province. That very early Easter Sunday, around 03.00 AM, the SEROJA cyclone blasted with howling winds and torrential rains every corner of Timor, Rote, Sabu, Sumba, and Flores island. Adonara and Lembata Island experienced floods (Banjir Bandang) and landslides.

According to the data released by the local government, there were 175 deaths, 74 missing, and 300 people injured. Aside from families affected, there were houses damaged and public facilities in significant numbers.

The SVD Ruteng Province and other Provinces immediately took concrete action by opening an aid post led by the Province JPIC coordinator, Fr. Simon Suban Tukan SVD. He appealed to every province to contribute whatever they have like money, essential commodities, rice, clothes, soap, cooking oil, kerosene, noodles, and the like. He also asked donations from

confreres' families and friends to donate goods. The response was very positive.

St. Arnold Janssen Tambolaka Parish in Sumba District, under the coordination of the parish priest, Fr. Ferdinandus Ganti, SVD, and Fr. Vinsensius Ferer Dede, SVD opened an aid post. The parishioners contributed some food, rice, and a lot of other materials. The parish

youth asked help from the people for the victims in Sumba Island. A lot of good people shared their goods and donated many things.

On April 16, 2021, the JPIC coordinator with his collaborators started to distribute the donation to Sumba

island, Adonara and Lembata. The SVD Ruteng Province focused on helping the victims of these three islands because there are already many donations for the people in Kupang, Alor, Rote, and Sabu.

We to continue to pray for those who are affected by the storm, floods, and landslides. Many are still coping with the loss of their family members, houses, and belongings. Many are traumatized, and they need time to recover.

--- Fr. Vitalis Hiburdin, SVD



SVDs on mission outreach.

EUROPA NEWS

Bicske (HUN):

A new beginning in a new parish



Fr. Burbela and Fr. Bonaventura with the ecclesial ministers.



Our SVD confreres with a family.

Fr. Burbela Gergely SVD from Poland has been working as a missionary in the Hungary Province (HUN) for the last twenty years. In August 2020, he was assigned as the parish priest of our new SVD parish of The Holy Trinity and Fr. Bonaventura Ngara Wula Laba SVD from Indonesia. The parish belongs to the diocese of Székesfehérvár.

There are few priests in this diocese, but they have many lay ministers who help. Administering this parish is a challenge. It is also an opportunity for us as missionaries to establish good collaboration with the laity in various pastoral ministries. We have seven lay ministers who help out in the service of the Church.

The Holy Trinity Parish has seven mission stations. There are many opportunities for evangelization, community building, dialogue, and mission collaboration. There are many young couples, families, youth, and children. The parish school has 232 children, and we give them a Catholic education. We attend to young couples and the gypsy community responding to our priorities as a Province. The parish ministry helps us to be close to the people.

Despite difficulties brought by the pandemic, we are preparing a pastoral and mission program for our parish. Currently, many people died because of COVID-19, and we try in many different ways to accompany the families

who lost their loved ones.

We hope that our presence as missionaries will promote a sense of universal Church in this parish and the diocese of Székesfehérvár. Our international community is appreciated and accepted by the local community.

In HUN, currently, we are working in three parishes

Bischofshofen (ECP):

Reinforcements for SVD pastoral service team

At the beginning of April, two additional confreres will join the SVD pastoral team working in the pastoral unit of Bischofshofen in the Pongau area of the Salzburg mountains. They are Fr. Francis Bakilatob SVD (33), a young confrere from Ghana, and Fr. Klaus Laireiter SVD (71), an Austrian confrere.

Fr. Bakilatob will work as an assistant parish priest in the pastoral unit of Bischofshofen-Mühlbach. Fr. Klaus Laireiter will stay in the parish house of Pfarrwerfen and provide priestly services in that pastoral unit. Both are no strangers to the area. As a seminarian, Fr. Francis completed a pastoral internship in the parish of Bischofshofen five years ago. Fr. Klaus Laireiter is a native of the Pongau area. He spent many years in St. Rupert, Mission House. He did a three-year stint in Bolivia and, most recently, served as parish priest in Wels, diocese of Linz.

They will reinforce the current team. It consists of Fr. Edwin Reyes SVD as the parish priest and the assistants Fr. Richard Cardozo SVD, Bro. Georg Lichtenberger SVD and Seminarian Adrianus Dini SVD who is doing his OTP. Starting in the coming working year, Fr. Cardozo concentrates on youth work in the St. Rupert high school and the youth center "Steyl Welt" (steep world). The six confreres from six different countries (Philippines, India, Indonesia, Ghana, and Austria) form a small international community center in Bischofshofen.

For the SVD, Bischofshofen is a place steeped in its history. Arnold Janssen founded the St. Rupert mission house here in 1904 as a high school level minor seminary. In 2018, the St. Rupert High School was transferred to the sponsorship of the Association of Religious Schools of Austria.

www.steyler.eu

Text: Ursula Mauritz

Köröm (HUN):

The experience of mission in Hungary

Fr. James Jimson is doing his OTP experience in Köröm, Hungary. He arrived in Hungary on October 8, 2019. He describes his Overseas Training Program as meaningful and enriching. Here is his story.

It was not so easy for me to decide to move to a dif-

ferent part of the world as a seminarian, yet I believed in the grace of God that He would take care of me in this mission. In the first year of my OTP program, I had the language course for two semesters. The Hungarian language is one of the most challenging languages to learn. In the beginning, I had a complex time understanding and replying to people, even in

--- Fr. Burbela Gergely SVD



Fr. James Jimson SVD

simple conversations.

As the days passed by, I could experience the complexity of the language. I had the possibility of getting help from the Fathers and Brothers who would happily and patiently listen to me and correct me as I was progressing in my language learning. Another significant change was to accept a new culture and a new form of lifestyle, especially with food, clothing, weather, etc.

The inculturation program and my language studies helped me learn more about the history of Hungary and the origin of their culture. The unexpected coronavirus pandemic has also partially affected my OTP program. However, I am still grateful to God for protecting and keeping me safe. Initially, it was not easy to adjust to the food. I also had the unforgettable experience of my first winter with snow. It was cold weather.

Now I am in our parish in Köröm doing my ministry. The people over here are very welcoming and generous in their approach to missionaries. I am taking part in all the parish activities, and I render my help in our ministries.

After being in Hungary for the last one and half years, I decided to continue my theological studies to experience Hungarian life and culture profoundly. The zeal and spirit of Society always inspire me. I give the best out of me for the interest of our mission.

--- Fr. James Jimson SVD

Berlin (GER):

"One lives for the other

Pastoral care for the elderly and sick

After World War II, there was a significant shortage of many things that devastated Berlin, including treatment options for so-called geriatric and chronically ill patients. To remedy this shortage, plans

were made at the beginning of the 1960s to establish a clinic for chronically and long-term ill patients under Catholic sponsorship.



The retirement home is connected to the parish of Heilig Geist in Bayernallee.

The Malteser Hospital, located in our parish area, was created and currently has 187 beds. The geriatric department of the Malteser Hospital is probably the oldest in Germany. It started its operation in 1967 and will soon celebrate its 55th anniversary.

Since November 2000, the Steyler Missionaries, together with the Salvatorian Sisters, have taken over the hospital and nursing home chaplaincy. From May 2005, the SVDs were solely doing chaplaincy. Since 2006, a home for the elderly with 82 places, the Malta House, has also been attached to the hospital.

The goals and principles formulated at that time between the Steylers and the hospital management still apply today. According to these, the hospital and the retirement home are to be connected to the parish of Heilig Geist in Bayernallee.

The Steyl missionaries are pastors for the sick and the elderly and accompany the dying and their relatives. They are also available to the hospital staff and offer services in cooperation with the pastoral care working group of the Archdiocese of Berlin.

Brother Theo Becker works as a hospital chaplain, a challenging task. One does not look at the clock when patients or relatives need support. Despite many worries and hardships, at the moment, primarily due to the restrictions caused by the Corona pandemic, he remembers many pleasant experiences.

For example, when relatives get back in touch with their spiritual roots at the funeral service and feel that "one lives for the other." Brother Theo also enjoys the trusting collaboration with the palliative care team. To bring about good together with relatives, nurses and doctors are worth all the effort for Brother Theo.

--- Text and photo: Brother Bruno Rehm SVD

Germany

Week for Life on end-of-life care

Germany's Christian Churches held their annual Week for Life on 17-24 April. Entitled "Life in Dying," the week was organized by the Catholic Bishops Conference and the Evangelical Church of Germany.

The focus of the Week for Life was on assistance to the terminally ill and the dying through palliative care and pastoral support. The event opened on April 17 with an ecumenical service in Augsburg Cathedral.

Following the celebration was an online discussion about the ethical and pastoral implications of end of life would begin. There was the participation of Church and civil society representatives, including the auxiliary bishop of Augsburg, Anton Losinger, who is a member of the Bavarian Ethical Council and Protestant Theologian Traugott Roser of the University of Münster.

The ecumenical Week for Life was first launched in 1994 to raise awareness in the Church and larger Society on the dignity of every human life, from conception to natural death.

--- Lisa Zengarini
Vatican News

St. Gabriel (ECP):

Transforming the Mission House St. Gabriel



Brother Bela Lanyi, SVD.

Brother Bela Lanyi SVD of San Carlos University presented a study on "A Future for Large SVD Houses? Adaptive Reuse of St. Gabriel Mission House, Austria". This study was published in *Verbum SVD* (fasciculus 2-3, volume 61, 2020) to open the eyes for big but empty heritage buildings of SVD Provinces in Western and Central

Europe.

Bro. Bela wrote this because he appreciated the spiritual, technical, and financial process that Mission House St. Gabriel (Mödling, Austria) ventured into. Other ecclesiastic building administrators still hesitated.

Bro. Bela says, "In my scholarly article, I present a successful solution realized in St. Gabriel. It considered many factors and conscious planning. As a result, it managed to transform two uninhabited building wings into an elegant hotel. Many thoughts came together in this work: an imaginatively novel method of property management, an excellent architectural design, and spiritual processing within the community."

Bro. Bela adds, "Most scholarly references of adaptive reuse of religious houses handle only segments of the problematic: the spiritual, the technical, or the fi-

nancial (management) aspects. I strived after integrating all these aspects and pointed out the peculiarity of the situation when a flexible (missionary) community lives in a heritage-listed (thus not flexible) building. May this example inspire the owners of other massive, depopulated mission houses.

The SVD mission is challenged not only by spiritual tasks but also by real estate management. Suppose we respond to this challenge with expertise and professional skills. In that case, it will also create an opportunity for the original task of the missionary congregation, the dissemination of faith".



St. Gabriel transformed a building into a hotel.

PANAM NEWS

Sao Paulo (BRC):

An SVD missionary's concern over the pandemic



The dangerous parties and funk dances.



Fr. Joseph Dillon, SVD



There are no restrictions and no masks for these young people.

Fr. Joseph Dillon SVD, our Irish confrere, has worked in several parishes. He recently moved to the parish of Saint Mark in Sao Paulo. Since the beginning of the pandemic, Joseph sees the evolution and progress of this catastrophic event as a challenge. He describes here some of his observations and reflections.

Fr. Joseph recalls the celebration of Palm Sunday in the parish. The Churches were empty, and only one mass was celebrated. On top of that, there was no procession of palms, just a virtual one. The restrictions are justifiable, and the death rate has risen to 3000 a day in Brazil.

Then Fr. Joseph begins to express his dissatisfaction with how the pandemic is being handled. Lockdown was never practiced in more than one city. At the start of the pandemic, the President would not accept the necessity of buying vaccines and closing the commercial side of life.

The lack of vaccines holds up the vaccination rate. Brazil, before this government, was a country renowned for its campaigns on vaccination. It's lamentable that we have sunk to such a low category in less than two years because of the president's incompetence and his ministers.

Then Fr. Joseph expressed his frustration and concern on some parties and clandestine funk dances. The police cannot go to certain areas because of the danger

of deaths that may occur. The only way that the police can stop funk dances, which happen in the streets, is to get there before the crowds arrive. The leaders of these funk dances organized their events through social media.

Of course, at these dances, like the ones held at Paraísopolis, there are no restrictions, no mask or alcohol gel. The young participants drink and take drugs. These funk dances start from 2:00 a.m. aided by a deafening music.

Fr. Joseph, amid the negative situations, shares a hopeful action, "In the parish where I worked, a group of people in one of the communities meets every week to produce 280 dinners for the poor. With so many mouths to feed, the problems are only starting."

Fr. Joseph adds, "We can't go back to everyday living. I have seen so much generosity in the Church groups led by ordinary simple people. They are considered heroes by the way they help their fellow men in the face of challenges. Life is too short; I need another 20 years to start to do something worthwhile for others."

--- Adopted from the sharing of
Fr. Joseph Dillon, SVD

Saint Louis, Missouri (USC):

Auctioning a miniature model of the Church of the Resurrection



The auction item was genuinely unique.

Fr. Chinh Quang Joseph Tran SVD, the Associate Pastor at the Parish of Resurrection of our Lord in St. Louis, Missouri, had used his pandemic lockdown free time to construct a miniature model of the parish church. Relying on his degree in engineering, obtained in Vietnam before his ordination and assignment to the Chicago Province, he set to work with the simplest of items. This is his remarkable story.

In the local Wal-Mart Fr. Chinh purchased ten packets of bamboo-skewers (thin sticks made from fast-growing bamboo). From Walgreens pharmacy, he obtained inexpensive sticks of super-glue. In all, the construction material cost him less than \$20.

With a mini-saw, Chinh began to work on a fabulous, inexpensive model of Resurrection Church. A 24 x 21-inch board became the foundation for the construction upon which the church edifice, including its grand steeple, inner stairway, and sanctuary cross, was deftly constructed—skewer glued to skewer.

On Easter Sunday, the Resurrection of the Lord Parish celebrated its titular feast as the Vietnamese community of St. Louis (USA) gathered for worship. Despite the ever-present concern about COVID-19, the gathering in the parish church was near capacity. After the Easter liturgy, the community gathered in the parish hall. Each one was gifted with a ready-to-eat box lunch. In all, 550 enjoyed the mid-day repast. After the table fellowship, a one-of-a-kind auction was held, with bidding open to all present.

The auction item was genuinely unique. The beauty of the miniature construction attracted the attention of many serious bidders. The first bid of \$100 quickly escalated to \$1,000, then \$2,000, then...! In a short time, it was given to a parishioner who had bid \$4,100! The

pastor, Fr. Khien Luu SVD, announced that all proceeds would go to the parish. Fr. Chinh asked nothing for his considerable pandemic investment of time and talent.

This was not Fr. Chinh Tran's first bamboo skewers construction. He has worked on several others over the years. For example, he modeled a village house in Vietnam called the "Anna House" and a chapel that belongs to the Holy Cross's Lovers—the community of Sisters who minister at Resurrection Parish. These models were not put up for bid. Wait for the 2022 Easter auction at Resurrection! --- USC Southern District News

Juiz de Fora (BRN):

Colégio Academia celebrates 130 years

On March 30, 2021, the Academia School celebrated 130 years of history. More than a century ago, at the top of Rua Halfeld, at the foot of the Morro do Imperador, our school was born. To our friends, simply Academia.

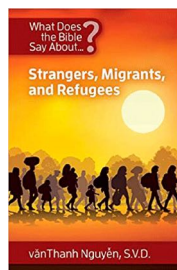
In all these years, our mission has been education as a principle of transformation. This means educating children and young people to act in the world as upright citizens, future competent professionals, and transforming agents of contemporary reality. The Academia School encourages dreams!

The Academia tradition is a reference in Juiz de Fora and the region. It is allied to excellence in educational practice and supported by the Word of God. Through human-social improvement, our school contributes to the formation of each individual, preparing him/her for the world's challenges. It also offers quality infrastructure and the support of educators who are aware of their role as educators and in tune with the ideals of the Divine Word Congregation. Congratulations.

--- BRN Newsletter

Chicago Province (USC):

What Does the Bible Say About Strangers, Migrants, and Refugees?



Fr. vãnThanh Nguyễn, SVD (STD, Pontifical Gregorian University, Rome) is a Professor of New Testament Studies and the holder of the Francis X. Ford, M.M., Chair of Catholic Missiology at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago, U.S.A. He has authored the book, *What Does the Bible Say About Strangers, Migrants, and Refugees?*

Migration is a global phenomenon growing in scope and complexity, affecting almost every aspect of human life. What does the Bible say about this pressing issue and an unrelenting crisis of our time? The Bible is a tapestry woven together from the stories of one gigantic migrant family.

Since it was written by, for, and about strangers, migrants, and refugees, the Bible is essentially pro-immigrant. The Scriptures have a lot to say about many issues related to migration, for example, human trafficking, refugees and asylum seekers, victims of war and violence, women and children, climate change and natural disasters, walls and borders, legal and illegal immigrants, and mission.

In times like these, when anti-immigrant sentiments and racial tensions rear their ugly head, how should Christians respond? This book shows the way—with mercy and charity.

The book is published by New City Press (www.newcitypress.com). You can also acquire a copy through Amazon and Kindle. Please click the links:

<https://www.newcitypress.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-strangers-migrants-and-refugees.html>

https://www.amazon.com/Bible-About-Strangers-MigrantsRefugees/dp/1565483766/ref=sr_1_4?dchild=1&keywords=strangers+migrants+and+refugees&qid=1616520788&sr=8-4

Brasilia (BRN):

Divine Word Parish celebrates jubilee year

The celebration of the opening of the Jubilee Year would have been on March 25, the Feast of the Annunciation. This is also the day when the parish celebrates the Divine Word, their patronal feast. This year, however, our parish transferred the celebration to the first week after Easter. This celebration also marks the opening of the Parish Jubilee Year. This is the 50th anniversary of the creation of the parish as promulgated in a decree. The Jubilee Year will end on February 2, 2022.

The Eucharist was presided by Archbishop, Dom Paulo Cezar Costa, and concelebrated by Fr. Djalma Antônio da Silva, SVD, Director of the Missionary Cultural Center of the CNBB, the parish priest, Fr. Vagner Apolinário, SVD, and the vicar, Fr. Carlos Kelalu, SVD.

At the beginning of his homily, Dom Paulo expressed his joy in celebrating the opening of the Jubilee Year. It is a beautiful moment and a rich moment in the life of the parish. To celebrate this jubilee is to renew the missionary commitment that goes beyond the territorial space. The community here feel that they are a family gathered around the Word of God.

paroquiadoverbodivino.com

Maipu (CHI):

SVD assumes a new parish in the Metropolitan Region

On April 16, at 7:00 p.m., the Province of CHI formally assumed the Maria Misionera Parish located in the commune of Maipu in the Metropoli-



Maria Misionera Parish.

tan Region. The ceremony was presided over by Mons. Cristian Roncagliolo, auxiliary bishop and vicar general of the Archdiocese of Santiago. Fr. Claude Dilayen Kibala SVD, from Congo, was installed as the parish priest. Our Chilean confrere, Fr. Enrique Vallejos SVD, serves as the assistant parish priest.

We pray for this new missionary challenge that the Church entrusts to our Congregation and the path we take together with our brothers and sisters of Maipu. The event was broadcast live on the Facebook account of the parish.

--- Facebook Province of Chile

USA-Western Province (USW):

Lay partners participate in an International Missiology Course

As of January 2021, the Misioneros Laicos del Verbo Divino (MLVD) members have been participating in an International Missiology Course: "The Mission of the Laity in the Church within the Magisterium of Pope Francis" by Fr. Miguel Ruiz, SVD, a Missiology graduate of the Pontifical Gregorian University. The course is being offered through Zoom with an average of 150 participants from the USA, Argentina, Peru, Ecuador, Brazil, and Paraguay.

It has been a very enriching experience in many ways. The presentations have been great, and it has been delightful to interact with the laity from the other ends of the earth and share our different testimonies of mission, which gives us a different perspective other than what we are accustomed to. The themes that have been shared are so relevant to our times. They greatly help move forward as partners in mission and leaders within our local communities and beyond.

--- Gabriel Flores

SVD Lay Partners Newsletter

Palpala, Jujuy (ARS):

Navigating in virtuality



Faced with the COVID-19 situation, the Church felt the need to navigate the territory of virtuality. For this reason, the San Cayetano Parish of Palpala, Jujuy wanted to reach the faithful through a pleasant and creative proposal. The parish felt the need of offering relief and welfare in this time of uncertainty.

The website was officially launched on October 8, 2020. The objectives that guided the way were: To be at

the service of truth and goodness, to be a channel for information and to promote an evangelizing action for the community.

Taking into account the Communication dimension of the Congregation, we consider that every community needs means of evangelization. In the 21st century, where globalization has united the confines of the world and where everything is mediatized, the reality of the Church cannot be exempt.

Some of the activities of the website are the publication of liturgical activities, posting the Diocesan content- SVD-EWTN-Sumo Pontifice, information on the activities of each of the parish pastoral group, and the promotion publication of allusive or emerging activities. It should be noted that, from the beginning to date, the number of followers of the website has increased considerably. Fathers Sanjeev Kumar, SVD and Gustavo Aguilera, SVD administer the website.

--- Silvia Montaña

Parish Communication Team

OUR DEPARTED

SVD

Name	Province	+ Date-Death	Age	Vows	Year of Orders
Fr. Subhaga, Servatius	IDJ	05.04.2021	83	58	52
Fr. Rzepka, Slawomir	BRC	09.04.2021	54	35	27
Bro. Fan-Chiang, Chi-Hsiung Raphael	SIN	12.04.2021	79	45	**
Fr. Außersteiner, Anton	ECP	13.04.2021	82	59	53
Fr. Beki Kedang, Antonius	MAG	15.04.2021	78	56	43
Fr. Klose, Roland	POL	16.04.2021	58	38	31
Fr. Chinnappan, Rayappan	INC	17.04.2021	63	39	33
Fr. Akkara, Thomas	INH	20.04.2021	88	62	55
Bishop Palang, Antonio	PHC	21.04.2021	75	55	49
Bro. Kerketta, Pius	INC	22.04.2021	89	60	**
Fr. Bukubala Kewuta, Yosef	IDJ	27.04.2021	64	41	35

SSpS

Sister: Rel. Name and Family Name	Prov/Reg	Date-Death	Age	Yrs. in Vows
Sr. Othona, Ingrid Kastenbein	GER	31.03.2021	86	60
Sr. Bárbara Banachak	BRS	06.04.2021	64	29
Sr. Maria Katharina, Meliana Bitá	TIM	08.04.2021	74	49
Sr. Theclana, Katharina Dudziak	GER	09.04.2021	95	71
Sr. Mansuetis, Edmée Santanna	BRN	12.04.2021	93	63
Sr. Rosil Ferreira Bueno	BRS	17.04.2021	60	31

SS pSAp

Rel. Name and Family Name	Convent	Date-Death	Age	Yrs. in Vows
Sr. Mary Angeles, Natividad Galsim	Immaculata Adoration Convent Aklan	22.03.2021	99	40
Sr. Maria Mechtilde, Romanie Kotulla	Anbetungskloster St. Gabriel Berlin	13.03.2021	88	61

OBITUARIES

Bishop Antonio Palang (PHC)**21-04-2021; 46-64-66-72-72**

Antonio Palang, or simply Bishop Tony, was born on June 13, 1946, in Consolacion, Cebu. He entered the seminary in Cebu City on June 8, 1958. He began his novitiate in Quezon City on June 21, 1964. He professed his first vows in Quezon City on June 29, 1966.

He continued his philosophy and theology at the Divine Word Seminary in Tagaytay City. He professed his final vows on June 28, 1972. He was ordained to the priesthood together with sixteen others on July 8, 1972.

After ordination, he got his first assignment as the Parochial Vicar at Bongabong, Oriental Mindoro, from 1973 to 1974. Next, he was assigned as the Prefect of the seminarians and later as Spiritual Director at the Diocesan Saint Augustine Minor Seminary (SASMI) until 1984. Then he was appointed as Parish Priest at the newly established community at the resettlement area at Bulihan, Silang, Cavite, where he endured all the deprivations of a ministry to the poor.

In 1987, he got a new assignment as Prefect at the newly established diocesan minor seminary in San Jose, Occidental Mindoro. In 1995, he was transferred to the Divine Word Seminary in Tagaytay City, where he functioned as Spiritual Director. In 1998, he returned to Occidental Mindoro. Then-Bishop Vicente Manuel SVD gave him the position of Vicar General.

In the year 2000, Bishop Manuel relinquished his post as Vicar Apostolic of San Jose to move to Cebu to oversee the preparations for the International Mission Congress. Fr. Tony Palang was appointed as Apostolic Administrator of San Jose while a new bishop was awaited. In 2002, Pope John Paul II appointed him to be the Vicar Apostolic of San Jose. He accepted the position and became the second bishop of the Apostolic Vicariate of San Jose. He was consecrated bishop on May 31, 2002, and was immediately installed.

In 2018, at the age of 71, citing health concerns, he tendered his resignation. Bishop William David Antonio, then Auxiliary Bishop of Vigan, Ilocos Sur, was appointed as Apostolic Administrator. Now Emeritus, Bishop Tony would be dividing his time between Mindoro and Cebu, where he would be attended for his medical needs. In the afternoon of April 21, 2021, he suffered a heart attack after undergoing dialysis. He breathed his last as his siblings and relatives gathered in prayer around his death bed.

One lingering memory of Bishop Tony was his deep spirituality marked by a singular devotion to the Blessed Mother. In his free times, he would invariably be seen making rosaries to give away to his visitors. He would often spend long hours in silent meditation before the

Blessed Sacrament in his prayer room. A man of prayer, we can now count on him to pray and intercede for us as he enjoys his eternal reward in the heavenly kingdom. May he rest in peace.

Fr. Thomas Akkara (INH)**20-04-2021; 33-57-59-64-66**

Thomas Akkara was born on July 4, 1933, in Elangulan, India. He entered the seminary in Palda on June 27, 1954. He started his novitiate in Khurda on May 31, 1957. He professed his first vows in Khurda on May 31, 1959. After his philosophical studies in Pune,

he was chosen along with a few more companions to pursue his theological studies in Rome in an international setup. He completed his licentiate and doctorate in systematic theology. He declared his perpetual vows in Rome on July 5, 1964. He was ordained a priest in Nemi on February 20, 1966.

He was then assigned to INS. He taught theology for a year in Pune and a year in Trichy. In 1973 he moved to Andhra Pradesh. He spent a year in Alirajpet learning Telugu. A few substations were divided, and he chose Bayyaram as its new parish headquarters. He worked there for five years developing the parish by building the Church, the girls' hostel at Gajwel and looking after the other substations.

In 1980, he was appointed parish priest at St. John's Church, R. C. Puram. In 1983 he received an offer to teach theology at Tagaytay in the Philippines. After teaching for four years, he returned to Andhra Pradesh. He continued to teach theology as a visiting professor at St. John's Regional Seminary at Ramanthapur, Hyderabad.

His love for pioneering new missions took him to develop Siddipet. He remained there for 12 long years, building the presbytery, Convent, and the Church. He firmly believed in primary evangelization and moved to another remote area in Medak district. He stayed at Narayankhed and explored the possibilities for the next four years.

In 2005 he moved to Chintalcheru as its parish priest. After that, he served for a couple of years in Divine Mercy Center, Habsiguda. He also did a term in Jyothi Niketan as its Spiritual Director. Age was catching upon him, but he still wanted to be at the service of God. He remained in Divine Word Centre, Muthangi from 2012.

On April 20, 2021, Fr. Thomas Akkara passed away to eternity. He was earlier diagnosed with COVID-19, which was later confirmed negative. Fr. Thomas lived faithfully as a religious for sixty-two years and a priest for 55 years.

Fr. Thomas Akkara was a man of significant convictions, quite traditional and orthodox in his thinking

and living. He believed in direct evangelization, even in difficult and hostile situations. He was a man of prayer. In the missions and parishes, he never believed in doling out sops. He encouraged the parishioners to stand on their legs and support the priests, looking after their spiritual needs.

Fr. Anton Außersteiner (ECP)

13-04-2021; 39-60-62-67-68



Anton Außersteiner, affectionately called Father Toni by many, was born on January 3, 1939, in Oberdrum near Lienz in East Tyrol, diocese of Innsbruck, Austria. Like his older brother Gabriel, he joined the seminary in St. Rupert on September 10, 1951. He began his novitiate in St. Gabriel on September 8, 1960. He professed his first vows in St. Gabriel on September 8, 1962.

In St. Gabriel, he also did his theological studies. He did a year of practical training as an assistant prefect at the SVD boarding school in Tirschenreuth (Bavaria, Germany). His perpetual vows were held on September 30, 1967, in St. Gabriel. He was ordained a priest in St. Gabriel on May 18, 1968. His first mission assignment was the then Austria Province (OES).

He was an educator in the boarding school and religion teacher in the high school of the "beautiful place" St. Rupert. The mission house of St. Rupert became his home. From 1968 until the takeover of the school by the Association of Religious Schools of Austria in 2018, he lived and worked there. In Munich, he did his catechetical and homiletical studies from 1972 to 1975. There he also completed media training.

In St. Rupert, Fr. Außersteiner was for 17 years an educator and religious education teacher at the junior high school level, rector of the house for nine years, and later praeses. During this time, he generously welcomed refugees and paid much attention to the lay teachers. For six years, he was a member of the Provincial Council. Because of his talent in media work, he was editor of several publications. For 28 years, he was responsible for the Michael Calendar and the Children's Calendar for ten years. From 1992, as editor of the Austrian Province newsletter, he promoted communication within the province and with confreres overseas.

Fr. Toni dedicated much of his heart and religious commitment to the small parish of Pöham. He was in charge from 1992, in addition to all his other activities and obligations. He continued to look after this parish when he moved out of St. Rupert and lived first in Pfarrwerfen and then in Bischofshofen. In 2020 he moved to St. Gabriel for his retirement.

Fr. Toni could talk with his hands and feet, captivate the congregation with his vivid sermons, and make a whole provincial assembly laugh with picturesque ex-

pressions and comparisons. He had a simple faith that was a strong foundation for him. When he became seriously ill with cancer, he accepted the news with composure. Complaining was foreign to him. He continued to transmit the joy of life and was attentive to all who visited him. He was very grateful for attention and care.

Around noon on April 13, 2021, Fr. Toni passed away with the prayers and songs of those who had accompanied him. The Resurrection Mass was celebrated on April 23 in the Holy Spirit Church of St. Gabriel. Afterward, the community accompanied him to his last resting place in the local SVD cemetery.

Fr. Slawomir Rzepka (BRC)

09-04-2021; 67-85-86-93-94



Slawomir Rzepka was born on August 26, 1967, in Koscian, belonging to Poznan, Poland. He began his novitiate in Chludowo on September 1, 1985. He professed his first vows in Nysa on September 8, 1986. In 1989, after finishing two years of Theology, he came to Brazil for his OTP experience, returning to his studies in Poland in 1991. On September 8, 1993, he professed his perpetual vows in Pieniezno. He was ordained a priest in Pieniezno on May 22, 1994. After his ordination, he worked until the end of 1995 in the Czech Republic.

His first mission assignment was Brazil-Central Province (BRC). He arrived in Brazil in 1995, where he accompanied Theology students until the end of 1996, in the Formation House Fr. Josimo Tavares, Jardim Miriam SP.

From 1997 to the beginning of 2000, he was the parish priest of Santo Antonio Parish in Juquiá SP. From 2000 to 2004 he worked as the pastor of Nossa Senhora da Penha Parish in Alta Floresta D'Oeste RO. In the same year of 2004, he returned to Poland in Nysa, where he was chaplain of the sisters of the Elizabethan Congregation.

In 2006 he returned to Brazil. From 2007 to 2009, he worked as pastor and rector of the Sanctuary of Senhor Bom Jesus de Iguape SP. During this time in which he worked in Iguape, he started a center of Fazenda da Esperança for the care of chemical dependents, where he accompanied and animated this rehabilitation house.

From 2010 to 2012, he acted as pastor of Santana Parish in Iporanga SP. In 2012 the province took on new missionary work in Humaitá AM, where he was part of the team, until 2016, working first in Humaitá and then in Manicoré AM. Arriving for our provincial assembly in October 2016, he suffered a heart attack. He was asked to stay in the state of São Paulo on account of his delicate health condition.

In 2017 he began his work as parish priest at Estrela do Mar Parish in Ilha Comprida SP, staying until 2020.

At the beginning of 2021, he was assigned to the Nossa Senhora da Penha Parish in Alta Floresta D'Oeste, where he had already worked.

Fr. Slawomir Rzepka passed away suddenly on April 9 due to a massive heart attack. His body was transferred to São Paulo, where he was buried in the Getsemani Cemetery on April 12, 2021.

Fr. Servatius Subhaga (IDJ)
05-04-2021; 38-61-63-68-69



Servatius Subhaga was born on March 23, 1938, in Tuka, belonging to Denpasar, Indonesia. Servas was increasingly stable in his choice of life. He chose to join the SVD. He started the Novitiate in Ledalero on August 15, 1961. He pronounced his first vows in

Ledalero on August 22, 1963. He pronounced his perpetual vows in Ledalero on August 15, 1968. He was ordained a priest in Babakan (Bali) on July 9, 1969, in Babakan Holy Spirit Church, Bali, by Most Rev. Dr. Paulus Sani Kleden, SVD, Bishop of Denpasar.

Fr. Subhaga only worked and served on the island of Bali. From 1970-1973, he served as Assistant Parish Priest at the Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish in Palasari, West Bali. In 1973-1976, he was asked to pursue further studies in catechetics at the Pradnya Widya Catechetical College, Yogyakarta, Central Java. During his studies, he helped at the Kidul Loji Parish in Yogyakarta while learning the parochial pastoral system from the Society of Jesus. After completing his tasks, Fr. Subhaga served in the St. Yosef Denpasar from 1976-2021.

The Parish of St. Yosef covers an extensive area along with East Bali. Over time, under the service of Fr. Subhaga and his fellow priests, this parish blossomed into the Denpasar Cathedral Parish, the Kuta Parish, the Monang-Maning Parish, the Gianyar Parish, the Klungkung Outstation, and the Amlapura Outstation. Fr. Subhaga was very instrumental in building the people's faith and in the physical construction of the church building. He spilled Balinese culture's power and artistic style, combined with the rich history of the Catholic faith in the Scriptures.

Fr. Subhaga built Jesus, the Good Shepherd church building, and the Griya Bhakti Pastoral building in Ubung, Denpasar, Bali. The Balinese architectural style is very evident in the church and rectory buildings. Fr. Subhaga had made a considerable contribution and left Balinese architectural legacies for the people of Denpasar Diocese.

On March 16, 2021, Fr. Subhaga received the COVID-19 vaccine. He felt tired and weak because of the vaccine. On March 22, he started coughing, had a fever, and could not sleep. On March 23, he celebrated his 83rd birthday but didn't want any celebrations. His nephew strongly advised him to be hospitalized at Pri-

ma Medika Hospital. His Rapid Antigen test result was negative at that time. He agreed to be hospitalized but only lasted half a day.

The cough didn't stop. Occasionally he was given oxygen when he felt short of breath. Finally, he was asked for a COVID-19 PCR test. On March 25, the results came out, and he tested positive. Officers picked him up for isolation at Wangaya Hospital, Denpasar, Bali. He was brought into the intensive care unit. On April 5, 2021, Fr. Subhaga returned to his Creator.

Fr. Subhaga was buried at the Religious Cemetery, Palasari, West Bali, following health protocols. The people of Bali lost their eldest and senior priest. May he rest in peace

Fr. Joseph Sathiyaseelan (INH)
30-03-2021; 52-71-73-80-81



Joseph Sathiyaseelan was born on May 28, 1952, in Golden Rock, belonging to Tiruchirapalli, India. He entered the minor seminary in Trichy in 1965. He began his novitiate on June 16, 1971, in Khurda. He pronounced his first vows in Poona on June 9, 1973.

He professed his perpetual vows in Poona on June 15, 1980. He was ordained a priest in Kattoor on May 15, 1981.

He was assigned to India East Province. He spent a year as an assistant priest at Holy Family Church, Titlagarh. In 1982 he was appointed the secretary of High School at Kusumdegi, Orissa. In 1984 he was appointed the regional Youth Chaplain in Rourkela Diocese for two years. He was elevated to be the CBCI Secretary of the Youth Commission and worked tirelessly for eight years in Delhi.

In 1994 he went for the renewal course in Nemi, Italy. After that, for the next 25 years, he worked in Italy as Chaplain for the Immigrants of Asia and Africa. He also did prison ministry and was Chaplain for the nomads. Due to failing health, he returned to India in 2019 and began to have his treatment in Chennai. He was appointed Spiritual Director at DWC, Chennai, till October 2020. He then was shifted to Dindigul to have better care and medical facilities and was attached to Arnold Amaidhiagam, Vadipatti.

After spending a year and a half in Chennai, he was shifted to Dindigul for better care and treatment. Last month he tested Positive for Corona and then tested negative after ten days. He also had a heart attack and was placed another stent in one valve at Apollo Hospitals in Madurai. After his recovery, he was brought to St. Joseph's Hospital, Dindigul. On March 2, he needed oxygen frequently and so was taken to a high dependency unit. On March 28, his health condition further deteriorated, and he was kept on a ventilator. He breathed his last on March 30 at around 8. 15 PM.

Fr. Satya, as he was fondly called, was full of joy and exuberance. He had a particular liking for Youth and their welfare. He spent most of his time with this ministry both in India and abroad. He also had a special love for the poor and downtrodden and would go all out to help them seeking help from the well to do. He was by nature generous and hospitable. He was amiable and could establish wide contacts and maintain them. He helped the SVDs and many other religious men and women by recommending projects and saying a good word about them to the donors.

He was a happy-go-lucky person and found joy in doing his ministry entrusted to him. He had been a blessing to the universal Church. The SVDs and many other friends of Fr. Satya will miss him. He was an excellent religious for 49 years and a devout priest for forty years. May the good Lord who called him and showered him with special blessings and whom Fr. Satya reciprocated in the full measure will greatly reward him.

Fr. Valentino Darunday (PHC)

29-03-2021; 32-50-52-58-58



Valentino Darunday was born on July 16, 1932, in Albuquerque, Bohol, Philippines. He entered Christ the King Mission Seminary (CKMS) in Quezon City on June 26, 1949. He began his novitiate on June 29, 1950, in CKMS. Two years later, on June 29, 1952, he professed his first vows in CKMS. On June 29, 1958, he professed his final vows in CKMS. He was ordained a priest in Manila on December 20, 1958.

His mission assignments were mainly in the educational institutions of the SVD. One of his first assignments was to teach at the Boys High of the University of San Carlos in Cebu City (USC). During that time, one of his students wrote about him: "what I remember most about Fr. Valentino Darunday was his sunny disposition, eloquence, and flair for drama."

He was at the University of San Carlos from 1959 to 1973, where he held different positions: Director of the Boys' High School Department, Prefect of the SVD Seminary, which was also located in the compound of the University; Head of the Department of Athletics and Physical Education, and Head of the Department of Speech and Drama.

After his stint at the USC, he was appointed to the Divine Word College of Legazpi in the province of Albay as its 3rd president from 1973 to 1979. This school was the former Liceo de Albay, a diocesan school in the Diocese of Nueva Caceres. In 1952, Liceo de Albay was struck by Typhoon Trix, jeopardizing its operation. This dire situation prompted then Bishop Flaviano B. Ariola to offer the school to the SVD in 1958. In 1963, it was renamed the Divine Word High School. In 1965 it expanded to become the Divine Word College of Le-

gazpi.

From 1979 to 1987, he was at Catholic Trade Manila, where he was the Rector of the community and manager of the store of religious goods. He also managed the Catechetical Media Center.

In 1987 he was assigned at the St. Therese of the Child Jesus Parish in UP Los Baños as a campus minister and parish priest. He was also the Praeses of the nearby Verbum House of Studies, which was the residence of priests studying at the University of the Philippines. He would stay here until 1996, when he returned to Catholic Trade Manila, where he was involved in the Retreat Apostolate and the Charismatic Movement.

In 2004 health challenges forced him to transfer residence to the SVD Retirement House of Villa Cristo Rey (VCR) in Christ the King Seminary compound in Quezon City.

Fr. Val is remembered by confreres for his jovial personality and booming voice to greet everyone he meets. He is also well recognized in the small chapels in the neighborhood of Catholic Trade Manila for his consistent apostolate of celebrating masses for the simple people.

In March 2021, the dreaded pandemic of the Coronavirus struck the retirement home, infecting four health workers and three priests, Fr. Val among them. He was then confined in Lourdes Hospital. Finally, at 1:59 AM on March 29, 2021, Holy Monday, Fr. Val breathed his last. He would have been 89 in July. He was an SVD priest for 63 years. He has gone now to his eternal reward. May he rest in peace

Fr. Gerard van der Heijdt (NEB)

20-03-2021; 25-45-47-51-51



Gerard Josephus Maria van der Heijdt was born on March 4, 1925 in Breda in the Netherlands. After elementary school in Breda, Gerard went to the SVD mission house St. Willibrord in Uden on May 4, 1938, for his secondary schooling. In connection with World War II (1939-45), the German army invaded the Netherlands. At first, the seminarians were sent home temporarily. However, they later had to leave mission house Uden and move to a factory building in Veghel.

Winter 1944-45, which Gerard spent in The Hague, was most difficult. Gerard experienced hunger, going into hiding, the loss of his father, who died on February 7, 1945, and his mother's prolonged illness. But after liberation, he went back to the seminary for the last school year. On September 4, 1945, he entered the novitiate in Helvoirt, where he also took his first vows on September 8, 1947. This was followed by theology in Teteringen. He pronounced his perpetual vows on May 13, 1951. On August 19, 1951, he was ordained a priest.

He received a mission appointment for the Kwan-go Mission in what was then the Belgian Congo. In November 1952, the pioneers (he and three more confreres) went to the new mission, which they took over from the Jesuits. In the early years, he worked as a "bush missionary," alternating between visiting the outstations and stay at the central station. On return from his first home leave In 1960, he became superior to the Beno Mission for two years. Here he witnessed the Congo's independence, built a school for the deaf-mute, and taught religion in schools. Next, he moved to Bandundu, teaching at the technical and the pedagogical school. After another home leave, Gerard ended up in the Christus King Parish in Kinshasa.

In 1974, Gerard and another confrere were sent to Togo to make a new start there. Gerard became pastor in the mission of Guerin Kouka. When he suddenly became seriously ill, he went to Europe for treatment. He returned to Togo, where he helped set up the Cebilo Bible Center in the capital Lome. After two years, he became ill again and returned permanently to the Netherlands in 1979, after 28 years in Africa.

Gerard ended up in Steyl. There he came into contact with Vietnamese refugees. Recovered in 1981, he wanted to go back to Togo. However, he was told to continue his pastoral-social work among Vietnamese refugees. Through his many visits to Western Europe and the photographs he took, he was able to bring families together that had been separated while fleeing. He had an eye for "hidden or stranded vocations" among the refugees. He also wrote about fate and the future of the 'boatpeople'.

In 1997, because of his age, he asked for a transfer to Teteringen. For his golden jubilee of priesthood on July 1, 2001, the Vietnamese community organized a big celebration in Steyl. On November 18, 2002, he suffered a stroke during a visit to refugees, which left him half-paralyzed. With great determination, he underwent rehabilitation and, on February 29, 2003, could go on foot. With an adapted car, he took to the road once again. His bond with the Vietnamese was solid. His work was appreciated.

In 2009 he received the Dutch royal decoration of 'Knight of the Order of Oranje Nassau'. Sometimes Gerard had trouble with himself and with the confreres. But he could also be very amiable. He had a solid memory which made him a walking archive for the Vietnamese community. For a long time, his health was fragile, but time and again, he recovered.

On March 12, 2021, he became bedridden, and his strength diminished. On March 20, he gave his life back to his Creator, aged 96. The Lord will say to him: "I was a refugee, and you gave me a new home; Gerard, enter into the joy of the Lord". The requiem for him was held on March 27. He was laid to rest in the SVD cemetery in Teteringen.

Fr. Piet van Oostrum (NEB)

18-03-2021; 24-43-45-49-49



Piet van Oostrum was born on September 6, 1924 in Baarn, diocese of Utrecht, Netherlands. Already at his young age, he felt the vocation to become a missionary. At the age of 12, he entered the SVD minor seminary St. Jan in Soesterberg, where he had his secondary schooling. Subsequently, he began his novitiate in Helvoirt on September 8, 1943. He pronounced his first vows on September 8, 1945, in Helvoirt. He had his theological studies in the SVD major seminary in Teteringen.

Because he got tuberculosis, he had to interrupt his studies and spend one and a half years in Davos, Switzerland, for recuperation. As a result of the medicines, he became hard of hearing throughout life. He professed his perpetual vows in Teteringen on June 5, 1949. He was finally ordained a priest on October 30, 1949. Because of his health, he was kept in the Dutch province and worked as a teacher in Soesterberg, where his biology classes were highly appreciated.

In 1961 he did get a mission appointment to New Guinea, to the Apostolic Vicariate of Goroka in the Highlands. There he found his new home among people living in close contact with the beautiful nature surrounding them. He worked there for 40 years till 2001. In the first nine years, he served mainly as treasurer, later as parish priest. He also engaged in an ecumenical activity, above all with Lutherans.

In 1999, on the occasion of his golden jubilee of priestly ordination, he received an extraordinary gift, an authentic icon of the Holy Trinity by Andrei Rublev. This icon would inspire him for the rest of his life. In his parish, in Yomba, a large reproduction of this icon hang above the tabernacle.

In his retirement in the mission house in Teteringen, he received good care. But his deafness became an ever-heavier burden. So he would regularly go outside, into the "cathedral of the Creator," feeling one with nature. Because of his love for nature, he liked to call himself the "green Piet." This has undoubtedly made his last silent years of life more bearable.

As he advanced in years and his strength waned, he felt a growing longing for the new life. In mid-March 2021, he became bedridden. But it still took a bit of time before the longed-for end came. In the early morning of March 18, at the age of 96, he closed his eyes to this world to eventually open them to see the countenance of the mystery that we call God. This is so splendidly represented in his icon.

On March 24, the confreres bade him goodbye in the celebration of the Eucharist. They laid him to rest in the cemetery of the SVD mission house in Teteringen.

APPOINTMENTS AND TRANSFERS**Appointments**

28.01.2021	Fr. Burt, William	AUS mag/nov	
31.03.2021	Fr. Seda Lado, Benyamin	PNG coord/com	aft

Transfers

16.04.2021	Fr. Fallarme, Dindo Anthony	TOG/PHS
20.04.2021	Fr. Arokiam, Amrithraj Charles	SVK/INC
27.04.2021	Fr. Ramamisoa, Robert Bellarmin	TCD/MAD

