

Divine Word Missionaries' Commitment to Integral Ecology

WORD FROM THE LEADERSHIP TEAM

Over the last several years, the world and its inhabitants have witnessed several ecological disasters and crises, from raging wildfires in California, Greece, and Australia to unprecedented flooding in Germany and Belgium. Climate scientists do not see these incidents as isolated events but rather as part of Earth's response to years and years of pollution, mining, and the contamination of our natural resources. The list is exhaustive.

Rather than wallowing in the hopelessness of our ecological crisis, we can begin to focus on the solutions. One such solution is the **Laudato Si Action Platform (LSAP)**, an initiative developed by the Dicastery for Human Development at the Vatican. The following paragraphs will further describe the LSAP and discuss how religious communities can participate in this platform. It explores the unique perspective SVDs can have in this initiative and how we can contribute to it.

The Laudato Si Action Platform comprises seven distinct goals, one for each year of the journey. These goals are as follows: the response to the cry of the Earth, the response to the cry of the poor, ecological economics, adoption of a sustainable lifestyle, ecological education, ecological spirituality, and community

engagement and participatory action. The response to the cry of the Earth is a call to educate ourselves on the crisis. For example, are we aware of the enormous loss of biodiversity throughout the world, or have we discussed ways to collaborate with others on how to protect our common home?

Another goal is the response to the cry of the poor. For this goal, we are encouraged to promote eco-justice, which explores the relationships between the systemic challenges faced by communities living in poverty and the natural world. The poor and disenfranchised are frequently forced to live in places rife with biohazards. Each goal of the seven-year journey is intended to rebuild or reshape our relationships with our common home.

The LSAP is intended for seven sectors within Church and society, including families, parishes and dioceses, educational institutions, healthcare institutions, organizations and groups, religious orders, and the economic sector. Religious congregations, in particular, are encouraged to take part in this ecological conversion, developing their process within the general framework.

In the first year, for instance, Catholic congregations are encouraged to design and implement action



plans that respond to the alarming loss of biodiversity worldwide or creatively devise ways to protect our common home. The central idea is that each religious community should come up with an action plan, one that is achievable, given the congregation's size and capabilities.

The Divine Word Missionaries have the opportunity to contribute our unique perspective to the LSAP. As we respond to the cries of the poor and the cries of the Earth, we collaborate with other faith-based communities and organizations in the Laudato Si Action Platform. We plan to achieve this goal through four pillars:

- ▷ Prayer- both personal and communal
- ▷ Education- ongoing education on the ecological crisis and efforts toward finding solutions
- ▷ Actions- a set of activities that create a sustainable lifestyle and ecological justice
- ▷ Advocacy- public efforts to promote systemic change

Each local community can design and implement initiatives that focus on the four pillars. For example, a community might develop a prayer service that focuses on God's love for and care of all creation or use a prayer that has already been used elsewhere. Another idea might be to invite a speaker to talk about

sustainability and how the community can begin a recycling program. These are a few possible ideas, but each community will be encouraged to be as creative as possible with these four pillars.

We highly encourage all SVDs and local communities to collaborate with our lay partners on these initiatives. Parishes, for instance, can become leaders in carrying out the four pillars. Parishioners can collaborate in advocacy efforts that promote sustainability. Local politicians and government leaders need

to listen to the concerns of their citizens. We must make our voice heard on ecological issues. Divine Word Missionaries worldwide can make a big difference in committing the Encyclical Laudato Si to action.

We embark on this journey towards ecological conversion together. The LSAP will serve as a tool to help us in the process of responding to the cries of the Earth and the cries of the poor. We encourage all SVDs and lay partners to design and implement a seven-year action plan that will achieve the goals of the Encyclical Laudato Si. The Leadership Team will provide the PRMs a framework and other resources to help each local community develop its action plan.

Fr. Paulus Budi Kleden and the Leadership Team

**The
response to
the cry of the
Earth is a call to
educate our-
selves on the
crisis.**

Generalate News



General Visitations



General Visitations: Mission Accomplished

General Councilors Fr. José Antunes da Silva and Bro. Guy Mazola accomplished their General Visitations in the URAL Region and Slovakia Province that includes the Czech Republic. Here is an overview of those visits. In the November 2021 issue of Arnoldus Nota, both visitators will be sharing their insights and reflections.

Ural Region (Belarus, Russia)

Fr. José Antunes da Silva, SVD, the Vice Superior General, visited the Region from September 2-20. He went to see the parishes, stretching thousands of kilometers away from each other. He got acquainted with both the culture and traditions of the Ural Region and with the confreres. He also had a meeting with the bishops in Russia and took part at

the SVD Assembly. Different topics and challenges of the Region were tackled and discussed. Fr. José personally talked with each confrere. He met our active lay mission partners. The confreres of the Region are grateful for the visit. Fr. José lauds the commitment and dedication of our confreres.

--- Fr. Anatoly Gamza, SVD
Mission Secretary Ural Region

Slovakia Province (Slovakia, Czech Rep.)

Bro. Guy Mazola, SVD, conducted the visitation of Slovak Province from August 31 to September 16. The General Visitor met all the Divine Word missionaries in Slovakia and Czech Republic in their different places of work. Before meeting the confreres individually, Bro. Guy met the Provincial Council and thanked them for accepting the responsibility of leading the Province. He also met the SVD lay partners and bishops to commend their collaborations with the SVD. Bro. Guy sincerely appreciates the dedication of the SVD members in Slovakia Province to their respective ministries.



GENERAL VISITATIONS

The following are the scheduled General Visitations:

10-31 October General Visitor:	Argentina Eastern Province (ARE) Fr. Eryk Koppa, SVD
10-31 October General Visitors:	Argentina Southern Province (ARS) Fr. Raymund Festin, SVD Fr. Modeste Munimi, SVD General Coordinator Communications
10-31 October General Visitor:	Paraguay Province Fr. Xavier Thirukudumbam, SVD

Ongoing General Visitations

The General Visitors in the Provinces of Hungary, Italy, Portugal, and Spain are still making their rounds visiting confreres in their places of mission. They will wrap up all their programmed visits with an assembly. Fr. Peter Dusicka SVD is the visitor of HUN, while Fr. Timothy Norton SVD is the visitor of ESP. Fr. Thanuzraj Stanislaus Lazar SVD is the visitor of the Italian Province (ITA), and Fr. Anselmo Ribeiro SVD is the visitor of Portugal Province (POR).

September 2021 Distribution

The General Council gathered at the end of September to discuss and allocate funds for the September distribution. This distribution is the allocation of funds among SVD PRMs and those local churches where we have a notable presence and are presently in need of financial assistance.

Vivat Deus Website is collecting Prayers

The editorial team of the Vivat Deus Spirituality website is looking for prayers, celebrations, and meditations related to our spirituality and missionary

life for publication. The Arnoldus Family and laypeople are invited to contribute by sending texts of their authorship to editors@vivatdeus.org. The team will select those that are suitable for publication and include them in the annual program of the website.

French Bishop met with Superior General and Council



On September 23, Bishop Pascal Michel Ghislain Delannoy, the current Bishop of Saint-Denis in France, met privately with Father Superior General Budi Kleden. He also had conversations with the members of the General Council. Bishop Pascal joins the first batch of French bishops for their ad limina visit in Rome. The Church pastoral units in Rosny-sous-Bois

and Noisy-le-Grand where our confreres do religious services are part of his diocese. This pastoral collaboration with the SVDs prompted the affable Bishop to visit the SVDs. The Bishop also joined the Collegio community for supper.

The Roman Catholic Diocese of Saint-Denis in France was erected in 1966. The diocese was split off from Saint-Denis. Our confreres started serving in Rosny-sous-Bois in 1989. In 2017, another SVD community started their pastoral work in Noisy-le-Grand. Five confreres are working in these two pastoral units, and they form the District of Paris of the Europe Central Province.

Deaths in the SVD Family

The coronavirus has taken a heavy toll among Roman Catholic priests and religious worldwide, killing hundreds of them in a handful of the hardest-hit countries alone. The impact is harsh for some SVD provinces in India, Indonesia, and Brazil who have lost several of their confreres. The sad thing is that many of them are young and holding key positions in different ministries and leadership positions.

According to our latest count, this unfinished year 2021 alone has 106 confreres who have passed away. Forty-eight confreres lost their lives to the pandemic. In 2020, eighty-nine confreres lost their lives. Before that year, 83 confreres passed away.

Arnoldus Nota News Service in video, just a click away

The Arnoldus Nota Video News Service (ANS) gives a preview of what to expect from the PDF version of Arnoldus Nota. In short and concise video presentations, ANS presents the headlines and top stories. Since the presentation of the news is limited, further information can be read from the PDF version.

An insight and perspective of the SVDs in Papua New Guinea

--- By Father Paulus Budi Kleden



The Superior General with the confreres during the provincial assembly.



Fr. Budi with the students of Divine Word Seminary in Bonama.

Father Paulus Budi Kleden, our General Superior, reflects on his visit to Papua New Guinea. The highlight of his three weeks stay (August 1-23) was to participate in all the events related to the celebration of the 125th anniversary of the presence of the Divine Word Missionaries in PNG. After all the visits, encounters, celebrations, and meetings, the Superior General offers some insights and observations on the Province's *ad intra* and *ad extra* situations and projections.

The confreres generally maintain a smooth and a healthy working relationship. Intercultural competence is continuously promoted. The local vocations are growing in number, however, the Province is in dire

need of more confreres. A promising note is that our younger confreres are entrusted with leadership positions at different levels.

At present, three postulants are preparing themselves to go to Bomana for philosophy on the formation level. Then, after two years of philosophy, the students go to Calapan, Philippines, for the novitiate. In these last two years, eight of these young confreres remained in the Philippines to pursue their theology at Divine Word Seminary-Tagaytay.

Do you know that 28% of our confreres are working in the parish ministry? Except for a few parishes in the urban area, most of our parishes are rural, covering

several communities with long distances. The profile of the parishes entrusted to the SVD has to be promoted.

The SVDs in parish work are valued and needed because of the lack of priests in the country. During one of the celebrations, several bishops came with the requests to send more missionaries to their dioceses.

We highlight the specialized ministries focusing on three institutes, namely Melanesian Institute (MI), Catholic Theological Institute (CTI), and Divine Word University (DWU). The province needs more confreres to work in these institutes.

MI (Melanesian Institute): The institute is a joint initiative of several congregations and Churches. It has been instrumental in organizing research and publication on the Melanesian culture to help the Churches, the government agencies, and the local communities. The present President is Brother Martin Tnines, SVD.

CTI (Catholic Theological Institute), Bomana: This is the most prominent institute of philosophy and theology. The dioceses, as well as the religious congregations, send their candidates to study at CTI. The biggest group is that of the diocesan seminarians, with around 50 candidates. The present President of the CTI is an Australian Dominican. He expressed his gratitude to the SVD for providing confreres to teach at the insti-

tute. The Rector of the Collegio Verbo Divino -Rome, Fr. Wladyslaw Madziar SVD, is presently teaching in this institute.

DWU (Divine Word University): The university has a long history. It started as a high school. Then it became an institute, and later it was approved as a university by the PNG national government twenty-five years ago. Around 30% of the students identify themselves as Catholic. The present President is Fr. Phillip Gibbs SVD.

Some years ago, the university started the faculty of medicine. But according to the country's norms, only the national university has the monopoly on having such a faculty. On August 20 this year, just a day before the foundation, the national parliament has approved to change that. It gives way to DWU having its faculty of medicine approved.

Father Paulus Budi Kleden has embarked on a hectic program of different activities during his visit. He is grateful for the opportunity to be with our confreres. He knows how each confrere contributes to our mission in PNG in their best of ways. One hundred twenty-five years provided so many options for many missionaries to serve in different capacities.

Father Superior General visits Switzerland, France, and Belgium (September 4-13)

--- By Father Paulus Budi Kleden



Our confreres in Paris with Fr. Superior General.



Centennial celebration in Steinhausen.

From September 4-13, 2021, Father Paulus Budi Kleden visited Switzerland and France in the Europe Central Province (ECP). He also visited Belgium, and from there, he flew back to Rome. The Superior General provides us with some information and the significance of these visits.

The centennial celebration of the SVD presence in Steinhausen was held on Sunday, September 5. Almost all confreres in Switzerland joined the celebration that was in the open air. Besides the confreres from ECP, the provincial/vice provincial of ITA and GER were also present.

Bishop Markus Büchel, Bishop of Sankt Gallen and a former student of our school in Marienburg, attended the mass and the following feast. A big crowd from the parish of Steinhausen and other parishes where confreres are working, the families of confreres, the former confreres, and SVD lay partners participated in the celebration.

In these 100 years, responding to the actual situation, the confreres have to close specific ministries and sell some properties to open new ministries. In 2012 the decision was taken to close the school in Marienburg. The property was sold in 2016, but the confreres could

stay there in the last six years. At the time of the visit, five confreres were still living in the community. By the end of October this year, they will leave the house in Marienburg as the new owner will start the new construction. With this also the presence of the SVD in Marienburg terminates. The final mass is scheduled for October 24. After that, confreres will move to different places.

While in Switzerland, Fr. Budi also paid a visit to Andrzej Owca, a Spiritan missionary holding the VI-VAT Office in Geneva. Fr. Owca started his service here in 2015 and will finish it in January 2023.

There was also an opportunity for a short meeting with the young missionaries (under 5) from the ECP and GER. They had their annual workshop in Baar, near Steinhausen. Sixteen young missionaries, eight

from each province, participated in the workshop.

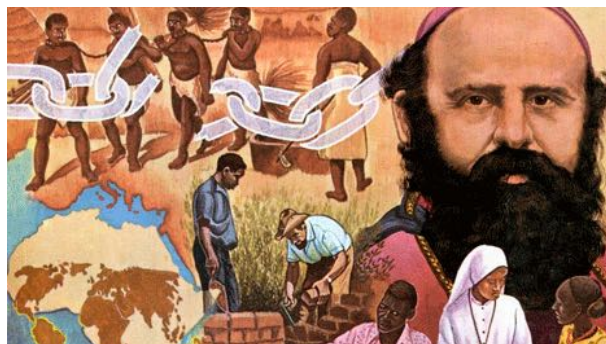
From Switzerland Fr. Budi went to France to visit the confreres there for two days. Five confreres are working in two parish units: Rosny sous Bois with three communities and Noisy le Grande with six communities. Fr. Budi met all the confreres in the parish of Saint Sulpice, Noisy le Grande, and had the opportunity to visit all the communities.

For a one-day visit, Fr. Budi took the train to travel from Paris to Leuven, Belgium. The SVD house in Leuven has been sold, and the two confreres from IDE who are still doing their studies have moved to other facilities since July this year.

Fr. Budi expresses his thanks to the ECP Provincial, Fr. Stephan Dähler SVD, and the confreres for cordially welcoming him to their respective places.

Thoughts and Reflections

The Missionary Friends of the Sacred Heart: Arnold Janssen and Daniele Comboni



This article traces and explores the relationship between Arnold Janssen and Daniele Comboni, the founders of two missionary congregations. The latter is an Italian missionary from Limone on Lake Garda, a grand champion of the Africa mission. The author outlines how the two met and got to know each other. In what way, this passionate Italian missionary born only 11 kilometers from our house in Varone influenced the growth and development of the congregation Founded by Arnold Janssen?

Who is Daniele Comboni?

By the time Steyl was founded in 1875, Daniele Comboni was known throughout Europe as the grand champion of the Africa Mission. He committed his mission with “Africa or Death” and “Saving Africa through Africa”? He joined the missionary Institute of Don Mazza in Verona, where his passion and love for the Black continent grew. He consecrated himself to Central Africa, especially to the suffering men of the Black continent, inflicted by the wound of slavery. Unfortunately, his first missionary expedition to Africa

was a failure. Due to sickness, he was forced to return to Verona in 1859. Seven more times, he will cross the desert, witnessing the premature death of his many companions.

These early missionary experiences contributed to his Plan for the Regeneration of Africa by Africans. It solicited a genuinely African Apostolate of the entire Church, based on the integral promotion of the Africans by development and education. It envisioned the preparation of indigenous workers and evangelizers for the African interior. He firmly believed that “The hour of Africa has now come. Christ is about to dispel the darkness in which the continent has been sitting, the Heart of Jesus wants to draw the people of Africa to himself”.

Consequently, Comboni promoted his plan across Europe, searching for international support, and advocated it as “Postulatum” at the First Vatican Council. He founded the Missionary Institutes for Africa, known as the Comboni Missionaries (1867), and the Devout Mothers of Africa (Missionary Sisters in 1872). He also set up two colleges in Cairo and commissioned a multi-

national missionary team to Africa in 1879. As Bishop, he continued his work in Sudan with relentless vigor until his death resulting from exhaustion and fever in 1881. He was fifty years old.

Arnold Janssen's initial encounters with Daniele Comboni

Arnold probably heard about Comboni during his apostolic trips in Germany since 1867, propagating the Apostleship of Prayer and must have met him as a speaker at the Congress of German Catholics in Mainz in 1871. On this occasion, Comboni launched his motto, "Africa or Death." Their earliest brief contacts are attested in the first of four Arnold's letters to Comboni from 18 February 1875, followed by three letters of Comboni between 1875-1879.

Fr. Arnold wrote to Comboni for the first time from Kempen. Arnold was collecting alms for Comboni's mission in Central Africa to ransom the pagan children. He wrote, "About two years ago, you or Father Carcereri will have received a sum of ca. 2000 francs to ransom about ten black boys in El Obeid through the mediation of Pastor Nöcker, but I did not receive any confirmation as asked by and promised to donors. In reply from Khartoum in April 1875, Comboni praised in high-minded words the pious benefactors as well as the courageous bishops and priests of Germany, including Arnold. Comboni wrote, "Your example fortifies our spirit and encourages us to bear the major sufferings for the salvation and redemption of the people of Central Africa." Comboni excused the lack of confirmation due to the negligence of Fr. Carcereri, his former Vicar General.

In May of 1875, Arnold sent Comboni the names to be given to the ransomed children with his wish that one child would bear the name Arnold. He advised Comboni to acquire a camera to take photos of the lucky children. These photos are to be sent to the donors.

The visit of Daniele Comboni to St. Michael Mission House in Steyl

After two years since the foundation of the Mission House (1877), Fr. Arnold invited Daniele Comboni, the Pro-vicar of Central Africa, to Steyl. Comboni confirmed his arrival on October 1, 1877: "Please wait for me. I'll arrive in Steyl in 14 days. I will fulfill your wish to bless the House along with the chapel. We will also have time to discuss all orally".

The Little Messenger of the Sacred Heart reported on the event "On November 5 and 6 we were honored by the visit of the Most Reverend Daniele Comboni, Vicar Apostolic of Central Africa who had been ordained bishop in Rome on August 15 of this year. Comboni is known almost all over Europe as a zealous missionary; a striking and strong figure, he has an unassuming,

modest character and a marvelously fiery spirit."

Comboni impressed the students with his magnificent mission sermon in Latin during that visit, as reported Fr. Nicholas Blume twenty-five years later. Bishop Comboni and his companions were greatly astonished at the enormous development experienced by the holy work of our house in the short period of two years. He told Fr. Arnold: "It is not a small or mediocre blessing that you have received from God, but a very great blessing; believe me, I know about such things."

Arnold Janssen's impression and regard for Daniele Comboni

Fr. Arnold considered Bishop Comboni as a highly competent person. He reported on Comboni's work several times in the Little Messenger. During the visit to Steyl, Comboni encouraged our Founder to set up a Sister's Institute. Arnold recalled, He "firmly advised [me] to found [my] own institute. I could not make up my mind to make a start, however, until I had clearer signs from God".

Two years after this visit. Comboni asked our Founder to send him as many missionaries as possible. Comboni wrote, "I am ready to accept priests, teachers, and craftsmen immediately." But at that stage, Arnold Janssen had to say no! He wrote to Comboni, "I regret that at the moment I can send you neither priests nor brothers, neither clerics nor sisters. [...] We do indeed have seventy students. However, only six are doing theological studies, and of these six, only one will be ordained this year. [...] Why did Your Excellency not open a school for the humanities? We started on a modest scale, and now we have all classes up to philosophy and theology, eleven teachers and a large number of candidates".

Arnold maintained contact with the Comboni Institute

Contact with Verona was maintained. When coming back from Rome in 1878, Arnold stayed at the African College in Verona. Arnold wrote from Brixen: "Sunday morning, I left the train where I headed for the Africa College. Rector Rossi, who has visited us with Bishop Comboni last winter, joyfully clapped his hands when he saw me, so happy were his memories of the visit with us in Steyl".

In 1892, Missionaries of Steyl joined the apostolic vineyard in Africa, opening their mission in Togo. Thus, after one century, Africa became a missionary priority in the Society. Interestingly, Arnold Janssen and Daniele Comboni drew on the same inspiration by contemplating the desires of the Sacred Heart. However, they diverged in their mission preferences: Daniele Comboni focused on Africa, whereas Arnold Janssen mainly on China.

The bearded and muscular Comboni and the slender

and short Janssen (165 cm.) tried relentlessly and faithfully to recognize and fulfill the will of God, facing courageously many trials and challenges. Who would ever have thought that the passionate missionary from Limone and the mathematician priest from Goch would be essential and visionary platforms for missionary work all over the world that continue to this day?

The great zeal and significance for mission of these two friends of the Sacred Heart found the universal recognition of the missionary Church as exemplified by their raising to the altars of Sainthood on the same day, on October 5, 2003.

--- Fr. Andrzej Miotk, SVD
Generalate SVD Historian

A Special Report

Fr. Paulo Jorge Ribeiro da Silva SVD: Reminiscing my time in Afghanistan



Fr. Paulo Jorge Ribeiro da Silva SVD, worked in Afghanistan as a military chaplain of the Portuguese army contingent. He was assigned separately three times in a period of six months each. The unexpected fall of the Afghan government to the Taliban caught him by surprise. He shares his reminiscences about his work and life in Afghanistan. Undoubtedly, he believes that his presence as a military chaplain was essential, especially inside the camp. He graciously answers the questions posed to him by the Arnoldus Nota Editor.

When did you work in Afghanistan, and what was your responsibility?

With the Portuguese military, I was in Afghanistan for 18 months. First, I was there for six months in the year 2006 (from February to August). Then, in 2008, I was also there for six months. (from February to August). Finally, my third time in Afghanistan was from October 2010 to April 2011.

My responsibility was to be with the military of my country, Portugal. During these 18 months, I was on ground contact with civilians only once. Of course, the contact was calculated correctly and under close surveillance. It was a civil-military operation, which consisted in helping people in a small village. We handed clothes, shoes, among others. The goods came from Portugal. Chaplaincy is very important.

We were also in contact with the Apostolic Administrator in Afghanistan, who was Italian and living in the Italian Embassy in Kabul. Here we celebrated some religious events, and also, through the Apostolic Administrator, we got some money to the Sisters of Charity. They were doing work at that time. Their mission covered training and family management like hygiene, among others.

Since the war was a reality, my presence was essential to be with my men "at home," meaning, inside the military camp. Going out on the streets was risky for everyone. And can you imagine I was not trained to engage in war?

With the Portuguese soldiers, we celebrated various religious events. The military personnel could participate in catechesis, baptism, First Communion, and Confirmation, including choirs for masses. Soldiers from other countries who live in the camp also participated in bilingual liturgies.

Whenever possible, we also celebrated some critical religious moments with the other chaplains and their military. This standard service we took to heart. It was also a time for us chaplains to share our experiences.

Besides these moments of a more Christian nature, of course, there was another aspect that we couldn't neglect: our military's moral support and welfare. I was with them, twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. I got to know the soldiers and they got to know their chaplain, six months each time.

As I mentioned, six months means so much for each military personnel away from the family, country, friends, girlfriend/wife, and children. In this period, a

lot happens. A military person can go through experiences; therefore, our presence and proximity to each other have to be effective. Of course, these soldiers are very well trained. I was with the commanders. We know that they are also human beings. I spent many hours listening and being listened to. How I miss those moments with them.

During your stay in Afghanistan, what are your main impressions of the country, its people, and culture?

My contact with the non-military world was minimal. When I left, except for one moment or another, I always went to another military camp and was always in an army column.

Regarding my impression of the country, Afghanistan, I must say it is an impoverished country. For example, it impacted me that it is an arid country, inhospitable. I would say I mainly lived in Kabul, except for a 43-day "stay" in the Kandahar area, in a Forward Observation Base. There are sweltering summers and cold winters with snow.

Then, of course, the country. The country has beautiful flowers like poppies, and all that means! With this climate, I remember asking myself, how is it possible for people to live, given the housing, etc. I don't remember seeing a water well. It's also true that I wasn't there for a walk.

Anyway, these are some of the first impressions I had when I was in Afghanistan. Regarding the culture, I must say that being a country with an ancient cultural background, one can notice the presence of Islam in the daily life of the people. I would say that some remnants of this same religion perdured even in the absence of the Taliban in the years that I was there.

Were you surprised that this unexpected fall of the Afghan government could happen soon after the US army left the country? Why?

I dare say I was stunned! I say this because I never really thought that the US Army and other countries would quickly leave the Afghan soil. I am neither political nor have any interest in whatever is on Afghan soil. I am even more surprised at the easiness of the entry of the Taliban into the capital.

And we know what it means to take over the worth of a country knowing the military equipment that the Afghan Armed Forces had in their possession. Not to mention their training from foreign military personnel.

With the Taliban government back in power, what are your concerns and fears, knowing the experience in Afghanistan personally?

But to answer it briefly and quickly, I don't think mindsets will change. Of course, in the last 20 years, those born and raised will undoubtedly have a different view of reality, maybe so. However, we know that

mentalities don't change "overnight" (and what are 20 years?), regardless of the culture. And culture also has its specificity, great weight in society.

Have you heard from your colleagues who are still in Afghanistan? How about some Afghan friends or families that you know? How are they doing, and what kind of help do they need?

We have been there with colleagues, and when we meet, essentially, we remember our adventures. These events marked us in one way or another. But, of course, we do not forget that country, but that's about it!

As for Afghan friends or relatives, the only native people I came in contact with were the very few Afghans employed by and worked for the Portuguese. Of course, there was contact with them, but we also had to be very careful. We didn't know for sure who was on the other side and who was our interlocutor! So a certain amount of restraint was called for.

What do you think is the role of the Church facing this crisis in Afghanistan? In what way can the Church worldwide come up with concrete actions?

With the Taliban being radical individuals, it will be difficult for the Church to do anything significant as a Church. However, as already mentioned, there is (or was) a female religious congregation, the Sisters of Charity, which did a great deal of work in Afghanistan. I mean Afghanistan, which was not under the Taliban.

The Sisters directed the work to a large scale of women. We know the relationship of the Taliban with these same women. Now, what will happen? We recently saw on the news how women were forbidden, for example, to teach. With the Taliban in power, I don't know to what extent the Church can enter that country. Can the Church do what it has always done, care for the human beings? I have many doubts. I am not pessimistic by nature.

Concrete actions of the Church, if possible, would have to be to invest in education, promotion of the human being (women par excellence), education, health, and housing. There is so much need that requires much work to be done! Then, of course, there is also the reconstruction of churches and places of worship.

AFRAM NEWS

Vohilava (MAD):

Choristers' Congress



The youth showcasing their talent in a musical concert.

Over seventy youth belonging to the choir groups of the various outstations of Our Lady of the Holy Rosary, Vohilava, in the diocese of Mananjary, had their annual camp meeting from September 8-13, 2021, in the central parish, Vohilava. It was a time for the perfection of voices through voice training, learning new songs, and new techniques regarding the Catholic faith and liturgy. However, the most striking aspect was the eagerness and readiness the youth exhibited in learning and rehearsing.

It is worth noting that most of these youth had to walk for hours and some even for two days to get to the central parish. Apart from the music practice, a singing competition and musical concert were organized. The youth with the new momentum from their training sang on the theme song: "You are the Christ, the son of the Living God." In addition, prizes in the form of Hymnbooks were given to deserving choir groups.

--- Fr. Anyomi Emmanuel Mawuli SVD

AFRAM Zone

Zonal Assembly on Brothers' Vocation via Zoom

On August 1-3, 2021, a zoom meeting was held tackling the essential issue of the Brothers' vocation. Brothers from the different PRMs of the AFRAM Zone participated actively in the event. The organizing committee, with their tireless effort, planned the program. However, they faced the challenges of the pandemic and the inability to come together physically for the assembly.

Bro. Samuel Elorm Dagadu SVD, the AFRAM Zonal Contact for the Brothers, and Fr. Willibrord Bhia Kamion SVD, the AFRAM Zonal Coordinator, opened the three-day meeting with their introduction and message, respectively. Fr. Raymond Festin SVD, General Councilor, spoke on behalf of the Superior General. He shared about the steps one has to follow to be spiritually renewed. Fr. Kamion read a few thoughts from Bro. Guy Mazola SVD. He said what matters in responding to God's mission is recognizing that His life is our life.

The three-day event included a report from the PRMs and also from the ASPAC and EUROPE Zones. Bro. Carlos Ferrada Montero SVD, the then General Assistant for Brothers' Formation, shared a reflection on the Brothers' Vocation in the Society. Fr. Andrews Aboagye Obeng SVD, the GHA Vice Provincial, delivered a talk on Renewal and Transformation. Bro. Stephen Domslevo SVD, spoke on the Identity and Role of the Brother in the SVD Mission.

The participants came up with actions plans: to be visible where ever we find ourselves, train brothers to hold leadership positions in our parishes and institution, take an action plan as to when to give a particular program to our brothers, involve brothers in vocation promotion, among others.

--- Bro. Samuel Elorm Dagadu SVD

Viana (ANG):

SVD parish pays homage to the elderly and sick



One hundred twenty seven people were medically attended, primarily women.

July 25, 2021, is the day proclaimed by Pope Francis as the Day of grandparents and the elderly. The Divine Word Parish in Viana did not miss this day without giving the well-deserved honor and respect to the grandparents and elderly of the Parish. The Caritas and Health commission organized a special event on July 21, 2021.

Caritas members visited more than 1300 elderly, sick, and disabled people with the collaboration of eleven communities of the Parish. They first started to make the grandparents and elderly aware of their day. After that, everyone made an effort to bring the grandparents and the elderly to the Parish. They organized the Eucharist, the medical consultation, and lunch.

On this day, 127 people were medically attended, primarily women. Eighty-seven people suffer from severe hypertension and very high blood, perhaps due to lack of food. Others because of follow-up. Malaria rapid tests were done.

The parish priest, Fr. Jaianxiong Luke Duan SVD, spearheaded this activity. The elderly in our Angolan land are despised. Some refer to the elders and elderly women with doctors. Because of the lack of employment for children, many cannot support their parents. In addition, the war that ravaged the country has hurt

many people. Therefore, we hope to hold more activities of this kind in our Parish.

Pope Francis, on the occasion of Grandparents and the Elderly, read in St. Peter's Basilica said the following: "Grandparents and the elderly are not leftovers of life, waste to be thrown away. But they are those precious pieces of bread left on the table of our life, which can still nourish us with a fragrance that we have lost, 'the fragrance of mercy and memory.'"

--- Fr. Jaianxiong Luke Duan SVD

Ghana-Liberia Province (GHA):

Twenty-three novices made their first religious profession



Twenty-three young men coming from Ghana (9), Togo (8), Madagascar (4), and Mozambique (2) professed their first vows on July 7, 2021. It calls for great joy to us as a religious Society and a Province to witness such an astounding number of young men.

On June 30, 2020, these young men began this journey. They willingly and freely submitted themselves to the Will of God. They went into the process of knowing themselves in the more profound sense and the Society. All these years in the novitiate formation means dealing with a historical being, spiritual and human, imbued in cultural beliefs, customs and concepts. To the Novices, teaching was not as challenging as being a living example of what is taught; "la coherencia de la Vida. That is, the coherence of life.

Fr Titus Tuoyintir, SVD, the Novice Director shares the following, "My heart is filled with joy and peace in Christ to have journeyed with these twenty-three young men during their novitiate year experience. I thank God for being part of this historic event. It is an overwhelming and learning experience as the Novice Director where everything becomes a mystery. The formation is dynamic; to accompany and to be accompanied as well".

--- Fr Titus Tuoyintir, SVD

Togo Province (TOG):

Ordinations and handing of mission crosses

On August 7, 2021, four confreres were ordained priests by Mgr Nicodème Barrigahbenissan in the Parish Maria Auxiliadora of Gbényédzi in the arch-

diocese of Lomé. And on Saturday, September 18, the four newly ordained received from the hands of the Provincial Superior Seraphin Kpakpayi, SVD, the missionary the mission crosses.

The solemn handing of the mission crosses was done during a Eucharistic celebration in the chapel of the provincial house. Several confreres of the community participated in the event. a

Congratulations to our newly ordained confreres: Fr. Antoine Adanlessossi SVD, Fr. Justin Gbedjeha SVD, Fr. Jérémie Sossou SVD, and Fr. Roger Agre SVD.

--- TOG Newsletter

Mahatsinjo (MAD):

Children planting trees



On September 1, 2021, the Scouts and altar boys of "Paroisse Christ Roi," Mahatsinjo, in the diocese of Mananjary, came together to plant trees. Before the event, they heard a short talk on Pope Francis' Laudato Si by Fr. Peter Rego, SVD. The children were enthused to continue with the planting exercise.

Each was encouraged to plant at least three young plants before next year's celebration. About forty children took part in the one-day program. The exercise was organized to create awareness of the need to safeguard the planet. The children went home with pride, significantly as they could contribute their quota for the good of all.

--- Fr. Peter Rego, SVD

Simanjiro (KEN):

The parish's call to "Imbelekenya" (Change)



The bishop blessing a couple.

Here in Simanjiro, we celebrate the good aspects of our Maasai culture. We sensitize our people to change those aspects that go against the will of God and the rights of women and children. This is why the theme of our Parish

Feast celebration here is "Imbelekenya" which means change. We celebrate our patron "Jesus the Good Shepherd" with a Mass. This Singing competition brings together choirs from our 30 outstations.

The celebration this year took place on September 5, 2021, at Lenaitunyo outstation. The Eucharist was presided over by Bishop Prosper Balthazar Lyimo, auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Arusha. On this day, we also raise funds to build a permanent Church in the outstation where the celebration takes place.

Many stations still do not have churches, and the others have only small churches built with mud. All the other outstations put together their contributions to assist the one community that has been selected. The members are to fulfill a set of requirements in the

spirit of faith and responsibilities. These include faith instructions to the children. They also help the development and sustenance of the Parish by tithes and offerings.

During the same celebration, the Bishop blessed four couples. This is a massive step in our efforts to preach monogamous marriages and blessing of the same in the Church. We thank God for His many blessings in our Parish, especially during the last few years.

--- Fr. Lawrence Muthee, SVD

Mananjary (MAD):

Armed robbers attacked Regional House



Our confreres are already out of danger.

Three robbers broke into our Regional House in Madagascar at 8.45 p.m. on September 12, 2021. They brutally attacked and inflicted wounds on Fr. Alexander Dhae SVD, the Regional Superior of Madagascar, and Fr. Borice Randrianirina SVD. The robbers fled away with valuables.

Frs. Alex and Borice narrated to Fr. Budi Kleden, Superior General, that the three assailants first attacked the security man and tied him up. Then, while one assailant was keeping watch at the gate, the other two entered Borice's room. They ordered him to hand over his money and other valuables. When Borice resisted, the two attackers punched him hard, stuffed his mouth, and bound his legs with an electric wire.

Leaving Borice bleeding, the robbers then rushed to Fr. Alex's room. They knocked at his door. Alex opened the door thinking that it was one of the confreres. But, instead, the robbers barged into his room, hit him on his head, and ordered him to surrender all his money and other valuables. When Alex tried to resist, they hit him with machetes and cut his fingers.

While the robbers were busy looting Alex's room, Borice managed to unloose himself open and sneaked out through another door. Then, he started shouting for help. Hearing this, the robbers fled away with the stolen goods: a mobile phone, a camera, and over one thousand euros.

The two confreres and the security guard suffered several cuts on their faces and fingers in the attack. Despite being wounded and traumatized by the incident, Alex and Borice could gather the strength to drive to the bishop's house. From there, our confrere Adam brought them to the hospital.

The police are investigating the case. No arrests have been made so far. However, Alex said, "It is strange that the robbers knew the place well and knew where to enter and get out." He suspects that someone who has good knowledge about the Regional House might be behind the attack.

Though the two wounded confreres and their security guard are still in a state of shock, they are out of danger. Nevertheless, they need to continue the treatment and undergo psychological therapy. We keep them in our prayers.

--- Communication Department

ASPAC NEWS

Waibalun (IDE):

The parish of Waibalun, one of the oldest SVD parish in Indonesia



St. Ignatius Parish, Waibalun, turned 104 years old.



Fr. Budi Kleden with some parishioners.

On July 31, 2021, St. Ignatius Parish, Waibalun, turned 104 years old. This parish was erected in 1917 by a Jesuit missionary, Fr. Van der Leo, SJ. The name of the patron saint of the parish, St. Ignatius, was to honor the Founder of the Jesuit order, St. Ignatius Loyola.

In 1915, the SVD began its mission in Flores. The Jesuit priests slowly abandoned Flores, intensifying pastoral work on the island of Java. St. Ignatius parish was handed over by Fr. Van der Loo, SJ to Fr. Simon Karsten, SVD in 1918. Since then, the parish began to be served by SVD missionaries.

The discipline, ethical and spiritual life of missionaries greatly affected the lives of the people. Therefore, religious vocations flourish in this parish. In 1942, the first priest from this parish, Fr. Yan Bala Letor SVD, was ordained and then followed by Fr. Paulus Sani Kleden SVD in 1950, who later became Bishop of Denpasar (Bali) in 1961. There are 78 priests, monks, and Sisters from this parish: There are three SVD Brothers and twenty priests, among them Leo Kleden, Joseph Djaga Dawan, and Paulus Budi Kleden.

The work of SVD missionaries in Waibalun parish is

also evident in the pastoral efforts to strengthen the role of the laity. Since Fr. Franco Zocca SVD (1978-1986), the Parish Pastoral Council was formed. People are also trained to pray in families and the Basic Ecclesial Community, preside over death or thanksgiving ceremonies, and various other Catholic prayers. During the time of Fr. Bernard Muller SVD, laity groups (St. Anna, Konfreria, Legio Maria, and St. Agnes) in pastoral work was intensified and continues to this day.

Based on parish statistics, at the beginning of 2021, Waibalun parishioners numbered 6431 people spread across three local communities (Waibalun, Lewolero, and Pante Besar) and 1 Sub-Parish (Lamawalang). Waibalun Parish, after 104 years, is still being held by the SVDs. There is a sequence of parish priests from time to time: Fr. Herman Enninga SVD, Fr. Joannes Krol SVD, Fr. Johannes Eben SVD, Fr. Johannes Van Asten SVD, Fr. Anton Visser SVD, Fr. Hendrikus Motter SVD, Fr. Franco Zocca SVD, Fr. Bernard Muller SVD, Fr. Dominic Suban Tukan SVD, Fr. Sebastianus Dora, SVD, and from July 31, 2014, up to now, the parish priest is Fr. Maximus Seno, SVD.

--- Fr. Servinus Mere Veto Yanuartri SVD

India-Hyderabad Province (INH):

Ongoing formation

for the first five years ordination group

Twelve confreres who are part of an ongoing formation for the first five years of ordination group met at Arnold Bhavan on August 11-12. The gathering was planned and coordinated by Fr. Lawrence Bose SVD, In charge of the young priests in INH. Fr. S. Rajasekar reports the significance of the revival. The INH Province conducted the seminar and gathering of the young confreres to renew, reform, review, revive and strengthen their spiritual, psychological, intellectual, and moral growth.



The day's sessions began with a prayer service. Then, Fr. Ignatius Santhuraja SVD, the Provincial Superior, paid homage to St. Arnold Janssen and inaugurated the sessions. Next, Fr. Lawrence Bose, the Coordinator of the program, introduced the resource persons of the day. They presented topics like Ministry, Challenges faced by young priests in the youth ministry, and Inter-

culturality. These sessions, talks, and personal experiences enthused and renewed our spirits and increased our love for the mission. The discussions and sharing made us introspect into our lives and evaluate whether we are going along with the will of God or not.

The following day was spent sharing our personal experiences and insights to encourage each other. At the end of the seminar, the Provincial Superior addressed the gathering with his inspiring and valuable words and suggestions. Soon after the delicious lunch, we had a trip to Salar Jung Museum, Golconda, and Tank Bund to relax and spend time with each other.

--- INH Newsletter

Chittagong (BGD):

Inter-religious Children's Program "Shishu Mongol"



We organized an inter-religious children's meet in the tea garden.

"Baskali tea garden" is about 30 Kilometers from the Immaculate Conception Church in Chittagong, the presbytery where I live. In one of my visits to the tea garden, I was moved by the pitiable conditions of the children there. There are about 250 families in the tea garden, 700 daily wage earners. There are more than 150 children below 12 years of age. The tea garden has an elementary school up to class 5 with two full-time teachers. For one and a half years, the school has been closed due to COVID-19. Only a few students go to the school during the average time, and hardly anyone passes class 5. There is no opportunity for higher education. The main reason is the apathy and lack of interest and awareness among the parents.

With the help of the local parish priest and sisters of different religious congregations working in Chittagong, we organized an inter-religious children's meet in the tea garden. In the tea garden, there are various ethnic groups of people belonging to other faiths, Muslims, Christians, Buddhists, etc. On September 17, one hundred thirty children came together for a day's program. We started with Holy Mass with Catholics praying for all, especially the children, conducted classes with the topics such as; we are all children of one God.

They taught the children action songs and nursery rhymes. We had a session of sports and games too, and prizes were distributed. No one went home without

compensation in hand. The parents of the children were observing all these activities from a distance! The management of the tea garden joined us in the program.

We shared a meal with the children. Unfortunately, the program ended abruptly with a heavy downpour. However, the memories are still lingering in the children's minds as they walk back to their homes on slippery tea garden roads. Some asked me when is the next program?.

--- Fr. Cyprian Pinto SVD

India-Central Province (INC):

Fr. Viegas was awarded a Ph.D. degree

Fr. Michael Godwin Viegas SVD was awarded a Ph.D. degree on September 9, 2021. His doctoral dissertation is titled "The Concept of Moksha in Indian Thought with special reference to the idea of Sarvamukti according to S. Radhakrishnan." The event was held at the Jesuit-run Satya Nilayam Research Institute, Chennai, India.

Sarvamukti is a collective process of self-reflective humanity leading the world to its final destiny or fulfillment. Radhakrishnan calls it 'corporate salvation' or 'cosmic redemption,' wherein not only a few individuals but the whole humanity will be transformed, and a world created anew. Fr Godwin is presently the assistant Novice Master at Catholic Ashram, Khurda, Indore.

Pune (INM):

The bestowal of Mission Crosses



On August 22, 2021, at the Divine Word Seminary, Pune, eleven newly ordained priests were given the Mission Cross during the solemn Eucharistic celebration by Fr. Richard Mathias SVD, the Provincial Superior of India Mumbai Province. The ceremony was held in a meaningful and straightforward way keeping in line with the tradition of our Society.

Fr. Jesuraj Rayappan SVD, the Rector of the Divine Word Seminary, welcomed and introduced everyone to the event's significance. In his thought-provoking homily, the Provincial emphasized that there might come numerous unknown crosses on our religious missionary journey, and we should never miss our focus.

After the homily, a mission cross was given to the new priests, and they received it prayerfully. The conferring

of the mission cross is a powerful symbolic gesture of being sent out to the Mission. This also marks the end of the initial formation and the beginning of the missionary service of the newly ordained priests. The event ended with the felicitation of the eleven priests and a fellowship meal. The path of the unknown is open before them, and they are ready to step out.

--- INM Newsletter

India-Hyderabad Province (INH):

JPIC reaching out to the needy

The second wave of COVID-19 had overwhelmed the health care system, leaving hospitals struggling to cope with essential drugs and oxygen supply. In addition, the lack of hospital beds resulted in an increased number of COVID-related deaths. As of now, the wave is waning overall, with cases dropping day by day. However, the worst affected and displaced are migrants, daily wage laborers, traditional artisans, teachers, and families who solely depend on wages for their sustenance.

The JPIC Coordinator of the Province had taken the matter very seriously and immediately plunged into action. The needy and deserving people were provided with dry ration food kits comprising rice and grocery items. Supplementary medicines and tonics for faster recuperation were also handed. These food kits would suffice for a month for a family. They were distributed to the needy and affected people, especially the teachers, non-teaching staff, and migrants of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana states.

About 750 families were able to benefit from the emergency relief work initiated during this second wave. JPIC Coordinator, along with few other confreres of INH Province, reaching out to these people with the dry food kits in this difficult situation was a great relief to the needy and suffering people. Each family was given enough rice and groceries to relieve their hunger and make them live happily along with their family members.

--- INH Newsletter

Andheri (INM):

Blessing of the Mission Office

India Mumbai Province has a new Mission office at the Institute of Indian Culture, Andheri. On September 8, 2021, this Mission office was blessed by Fr. Richard Mathias SVD, the Provincial Superior. Many SVD confreres, SSPS, and lay Mission partners joined the celebration as it coincided with the Birthday of our Mother Mary and the foundation day of the Society of the Divine Word.

The theme of the Mission office is "Mission Possible, with His help and yours." The Mission office is entrusted with the mission of Mission Animation, Lay Mission



Partnership, Vocation promotion, and World Mission Fund. Fr. Jolly M. SVD is appointed as the Mission Secretary. On the same day, a new website was launched for the Mission office: www.svdmissioninm.com.

--- INM Newsletter

Papua New Guinea (PNG):

Filipino SVD was ordained bishop of Daru-Kiunga



The newly ordained Bishop Durero SVD, is the third Filipino bishop in Papua New Guinea.

A Filipino missionary priest was ordained bishop in Papua New Guinea on August 29, 2021, signaling the start of his new ministry. In a ceremony held at the St. Gerard Cathedral, Bishop Joseph Durero formally assumed his post as the third shepherd of the Diocese of Daru-Kiunga. He replaced retired Canadian Bishop Gilles Côté of the Missionaries of the Company of Mary, who served the diocese for 22 years.

The episcopal ordination was presided over by Cardinal Sir John Ribat of Port Moresby, with Archbishop Fermin Emilio Sosa Rodriguez, Apostolic Nuncio to PNG and Solomon Islands, and Bishop Côté as co-consecrators. They were joined by nine other bishops from different dioceses across PNG, priests, religious, and laypeople from the diocese.

The newly ordained is the third Filipino bishop in Papua New Guinea. He joins Vincentian Bishop Rolando Santos of Alotau-Sideia and Salesian Bishop Pedro Baquero of Kerema. Pope Francis, on May 23, appointed Durero as bishop of Daru-Kiunga, a suffragan of the Port Moresby archdiocese. At the time of his appointment, he was the vicar general of the Archdiocese of Madang.

--- UCAN News

Pune (INM):

Ishvani Kendra organizes Overseas Mission Orientation amid the Pandemic



The Overseas Mission Orientation (OMO) course is Ishvani Kendra's unique contribution to the Church in India to prepare its missionaries to serve in missions abroad. It was scheduled for June 2021. However, with the second wave of the Covid-19 Pandemic hitting India with devastating and tragic consequences, it had to be postponed as it became a real challenge to organize anything residential.

By the end of June, there were some indications of the Pandemic slowing down in the country. Therefore, the Institute took a bold decision to reopen its doors to welcome the OMO course participants from July 31 – 21 August 2021.

We had a full house of 30 participants who came from different parts of India. It included nine SVD new priests, one Montfort brother, and 20 sisters belonging to seven other religious congregations. These 30 missionaries are being sent to 24 countries on all six continents as soon as the borders are opened. The enthusiastic missionaries were oriented with inputs on cultural and psychological transition, intercultural communication; faith traditions; protection of minors and sexual harassment; challenges of mission life; new religious movements, Church teachings, especially on the direction of the Church with Pope Francis; and Biblical missionary discipleship.

Technology also came to the fore as missionary sisters, and priests of Indian origin from six different countries joined the participants live on ZOOM to share their experiences and the challenges they faced. Each participant also made a research presentation on their mission destination.

--- Fr. Mathew Kavukatt SVD
Program Coordinator

Nenuk (IDT):

Forty-four SVD Novices profess first vows

On August 15, 2021, at the Feast of The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, forty-four SVD novices professed their first vows in Nenuk. Fr. Yustinus Didimus Nai, SVD, the Provincial, presided over



the Eucharistic celebration and the profession of vows. The mass was attended by the first-year novices and the SVD confreres of the St. Joseph community. Unfortunately, because of the COVID-19 Pandemic, the parents of those who professed their vows could not attend. Instead, they followed the celebration online.

Under the theme: My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, the Provincial in his homily said, The word and actions of Mother Mary need to be imitated by all SVD Novices and even all confreres in each community. He emphasized the importance of replicating the poverty, obedience, and chastity of Mary. Congratulations to all our first vowers.

--- Fr. Michael Taneo SVD

Quezon City (PHC):

SVD New Handbook on Human Development



During the summer break, the formators of Christ the King Mission Seminary (CKMS) and St. Arnold Center for Integral Development (SACID) staff produce a handbook on human development. This Handbook is a helpful tool for the SVD seminarians in their holistic and integral formation journey.

Being attuned with the developments regarding priestly formation stated in the recent Vatican Document on Ratio Fundamental Institutionis Sacerdotalis, this Handbook is one of our responses to the need for a deeper understanding of the self to be able to discern well the gift of a religious vocation. With the assistance of the Guidance Counselors and Psychologist of the Seminary, we were able to come up with a Handbook that fits the needs of our seminarians in their Initial Stage of Formation. It is mainly focusing on their Affective Development and Individual Accompani-

ment towards a deeper appreciation of their Vocation.

This Handbook helps crystallize their insights and sharpen their skills on living the Gospel values relative to the Religious, Missionary, and Priestly life. Moreover, each level of formation has a unique program and goal to achieve to see their growth in their seminary formation and persevere.

The layout of the front cover of the Handbook is the image of Jesus (the Divine Word) with our Founder St.

Arnold Janssen and St. Joseph Freinademetz, welcoming the Seminarians to our famous castle-like Seminary building named after Fr. Theodore Buttenbruch, SVD. This animated image is lovely to the youth of today. They can see the joy in welcoming them to the SVD Seminary and how we fit our formation program to the signs of the times.

--- Fr. Sherwin Tristan Aromin, SVD

EUROPA NEWS

Vienna (AUS):

Celebrating 20th anniversary of Filipino Chaplaincy



Cardinal Christoph Schönborn with the Filipino community.

With a festive service led by Cardinal Christoph Schönborn, the Philippine Worship Community Vienna-Salzburg celebrated its 20th anniversary on Sunday, September 5. The service took place at the Church of St. John at Keplerplatz in Vienna Favoriten. The parish “Zum Göttlichen Wort” (To the Divine Word), cared for by the Steyler Missionaries, is one of the meeting places of the migrant community of about 1000 faithful.

In addition to the Archbishop of Vienna, the priest of the Filipino community, Father Ron Sandoval SVD, and the parish priest, Father Matthias Felber SVD, concelebrated at the Mass. During the celebration, Cardinal Schönborn awarded Herta Niedermayer of Vienna with the diocesan Order of St. Stephen for her commitment. The volunteer contributed a lot to the development of the Filipino community through German lessons, many social and pastoral activities, and her learning of the Tagalog language.

The parish was founded 20 years ago by Fr. Sandoval. He first worked as a chaplain in the parish of Allerheiligen. There he started with church services for Filipinos. The need was great: 600 people came quickly, making it necessary to move to larger churches - first to St. John Capistrano and finally to Keplerplatz. Pastoral care in the parish is provided by 72 volunteers - lectors, communion ministers, sacristan, youth ministers.

Eight choirs offer musical accompaniment for the celebrations. Members of the Filipino community also meet to celebrate together in Floridsdorf, in the Donau City Church, in the chapel of a St. Pölten retirement home, and in Salzburg-Lehen.

--- Source: Kathpress

Photos: Philippine Worship Community

Brzegi (POL):**Consecration of the church**

The ceremony has been presided by Marek Jedraszewski, archbishop of Cracow.

On September 4, 2021, took place the consecration of the Anthony of Padua parish church in Brzegi, southern Poland, where SVD missionaries have been serving since 1975. The ceremony has been presided by Marek Jedraszewski, archbishop of Krakow.

"Today's celebration we consider as thanksgiving and crowning moment of the years that past. That is why we thank God for the benefactors and builders of the church as well as for the priests who had served here over the years", said Fr. Artur Bodziony SVD, the parish priest.

The construction of St. Anthony of Padua Church was finished in 1952. It was built of wood in the traditional style known in the highlands of southern Poland. For many years it has been a pastoral center under the jurisdiction of the nearby parish in Bialka Tatrzańska. Until the mid-90s, the center of the Light-Life Movement was in operation. This renewal movement was established in Poland by the Servant of God, Fr. Franciszek Blachnicki, who served in Brzegi between 1974 and 1979.

A pastoral center with parish rights was established in Brzegi on January 25, 1986. Fifteen years later, on March 4, 2001, thanks to the efforts of the late Fr. Eugeniusz Sliwka SVD, the Provincial of the Polish Province, the independent parish of St. Anthony of Padua has been erected here.

The first SVD missionary working in Brzegi was Father Hubert Lupa SVD (1975-1992). After him worked here Fathers: Stanisław Lomnicki SVD (1992-2007), Stanisław Zysk SVD (2007-2013) and Konrad Duk SVD (2013-2019). Since 2019 Fr. Artur Bodziony SVD works as the the parish priest in Brzegi.

www.werbisci.pl

Photos: Fr. Zbigniew Sudol SVD

Steinhausen (ECP):**A long due centennial anniversary**

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic a year later than planned, the Steyler family met on the Schlossberg in Steinhausen. The event was held on the lawn in



front of the Maria Hilf Mission House. Here the work of the Steyl missionaries in Switzerland began in 1920. Fathers, Brothers, and guests celebrated the long due centennial anniversary in the summer weather.

There was a festive, relaxed atmosphere. Bishop Markus Büchel revealed that Marienburg was the most important thing for him after his parents. He only "barely" did not become a Steyl Father. Superior General Paulus Budi Kleden and Provincial Fr. Stephan Dähler SVD contributed personal memories.

The service, organized with the local parish, focused on the theme of "mission." There is that sense of encounter with the Word of God and with people. The local church choir provided the musical accompaniment to make the celebration a worthy jubilee occasion.

Bishop Markus, Marlen Schärer, the parish president, and Felix Bischofberger, president of the Circle of Friends of the Steyl Missionaries, greeted those in attendance. There was an opportunity to share memories and celebrate reunions over an aperitif - especially with Fr. Paulus Budi Kleden, who lived and worked here more than two decades ago.

--- Steyler Missionare-Switzerland

Slovakia Province (SVK):**Provincial Chapter**

The Provincial Assembly held in Nitra.

From September 20 to 22, the XII Provincial Chapter of Slovakia Province was held in Nitra, in the Mission House of the Mother of God. Its theme was linked to the last General Chapter's invitation to renewal and transformation, taken from apostle Paul's exhortation: "...be renewed in the spirit of your minds" (Eph 4:23). There were 23 members present at the Provincial Chapter discussing the present ministry and the

future orientations for SVK.

SVK counts presently to almost fifty members. They form an international community originating from several countries: Slovakia, Czech Republic, Poland, Vietnam, India, and Indonesia. Another thirty missionaries from Slovakia and the Czech Republic serve in foreign SVD missions. After the conclusion of the Provincial Chapter, on September 23, there was a Provincial Assembly held in Nitra, also attended by other confreres from the province.

It was an occasion to strengthen the ties of fraternity, particularly in the present time of restrictions that keep us in the distance. We remembered and celebrated the anniversaries of the confreres of the province occurring this year. The Assembly concluded with a celebration of the Mass followed by lunch.

--- Fr. Marek Vanus SVD

Slovakia Province (SVK):

Pope Francis visited Slovakia

For four days, from September 12 to 15, the country of Slovakia experienced a unique atmosphere. Pope Francis came on his official visit after attending the concluding Mass of the International Eucharistic Congress in Budapest, Hungary. With his visit, Pope Francis honored not only the official representatives of the country. However, he had a meeting with religious as well as with young people. He also visited the marginalized groups, the Center for homeless people, run by Mother Theresa's sisters and a "ghetto" of Roma minority.

Our confreres took the occasion and participated in the meetings with the Pope, very often with a group of their parishioners or young people. Many SVDs attended the Holy Father's final Mass on the Feast of the Sorrowful Virgin Mary, the country's national Patroness.

--- Fr. Marek Vanus SVD

Germany Province (GER):

A day of pilgrimage

On this year's Feast of the Assumption, Father Peter Quan Nguyen SVD, Inter-diocesan Chaplain in Münster/Osnabrück, organized a pilgrimage day of the Vietnamese community to Our Lady of Bethen. However, we still had to comply with hygiene regulations due to the COVID-19 pandemic. About one hundred sixty parishioners from Norden, Emden, Wilhelmshaven, Bremen, Beckum, Oldenburg, Münster, and Osnabrück came together. In addition, some parishioners from Hamburg, Sankt Augustin as well as Paris participated in the pilgrimage.

All were happy for the opportunity to join the inter-diocesan day of action. In the Eucharistic celebration,



There was a solemn Eucharistic adoration.

Father Quan, in his homily, spoke about Jesus' action at the Wedding at Cana. He shared about the love in the Christian family and the blessing of supplication. Fr. Martin Vu Quoc Vinh SVD from St. Wendel celebrated in the Mass. After the Mass, everyone gathered for lunch. People enjoyed the singing contributions of the different parish groups. Many songs were sung in honor of the Blessed Mother. Common prayers were offered for the pandemic victims, especially for Vietnam, which has been severely affected.

In the end, there was a solemn Eucharistic adoration with the request for protection and blessing for all humanity. The pilgrimage day ended at 4 pm. We parted with happy faces, inwardly satisfied, and with faith in God.

--- Texts and photos: Hoang Thanh

Mission is the work of the Holy Spirit

The Church is by nature synodal, and fulfills her mission only if she obediently follows the actual and effective action of the Holy Spirit, as we read in the Acts of the Apostles. It is only in this way that one can overcome "the temptation to do it alone", and to "take God's place, claiming to model the Church on one's own cultural convictions". As if, "having ascended into heaven, the Lord had left a void to be filled". This is what Pope Francis said today, speaking on the morning of Saturday 18 September to the participants in the Convention of the diocese of Rome.

Fides.org

PANAM NEWS

Chicago (USC):

SVD administers a new unified parish



Fr. Kelly (fourth from left) is the pastor of the unified parish.



Our Lady of Africa's first Mass animated by the choir.

On July 4, the newly formed Our Lady of Africa parish community on Chicago's South Side celebrated its first Mass. After years of collaboration among Chicago Archdiocesan officials, pastors, and parishioners of Corpus Christi, Holy Angels, St. Ambrose, St. Anselm, and St. Elizabeth, the unified Our Lady of Africa parish was created.

The five grouped parishes were located within six and a half miles of each other. According to archdiocesan records for the Fiscal Year 2019, the combined total average Sunday attendance at the five parishes was 602, representing a 61 percent decline in the past 20 years.

The new Our Lady of Africa parish is physically located in the former Holy Angels church. In addition, the past sacramental records of the five former parishes and future Our Lady of Africa sacramental records will be held there. Father Robert Kelly, SVD, formerly with St. Elizabeth and St. Anselm, was named pastor

of the unified parish. The Society of the Divine Word has served the South Side of Chicago for more than a century.

"We started at St. Monica's Parish in 1915 at the invitation of the Archdiocese of Chicago," Father Kelly said. "St. Monica's was Venerable Fr. Augustus Tolton's parish, founded for African-American Catholics in the early 1890s. St. Elizabeth was founded in 1881. Father Joseph Eckert SVD was pastor of St. Monica's when it united with St. Elizabeth parish in 1924. Father Eckert then became pastor of St. Elizabeth parish."

The new Our Lady of Africa parish will serve the Chicago neighborhoods of Bronzeville, Washington Park, and Kenwood. The Divine Word missionaries who serve Our Lady of Africa are also responsible for the Holy Angels Catholic School, supported by the Big Shoulders Fund of Chicago.

--- Theresa Carlson
USC website

Santa Fe (ARS):

Parish Youth Encounter



On August 28-29, a group of young people and couples from the Parish of San José de Esperanza - Santa Fe met the young people of the parish of San Cristobal, of the archdiocese of Rafaela. Fr. Cornelio Nika, SVD, accompanied the group.

They arrived at noon at the parish that was served by the Divine Word Missionaries several years ago. There they had lunch and left for the community of Huanqueros, where the meeting took place. The missionary

couples were in charge of the formative meeting. The theme revolved around the call and the following of Jesus.

There was an excellent climate of fraternity among the participants and their interest in continuing the meetings. Therefore, a new "encounter-retreat" was planned to be held in the parish of San José de Esperanza.

--- ARS Website

Santiago (CHI):

Semana Verbita

In the year 2020, Colegio del Verbo Divino (CVD) was marked by distance classes due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This led the school to celebrate the Semana Verbita (Verbita Week) virtually. Its last edition was held in September 2019.

The successful vaccination campaign against COVID-19, reaching and surpassing 80% of the vaccinated population, lowering the number of positive cases, returned the illusion of enjoying an entertaining College week. Therefore, the Verbita Week 2021 was held as



usual. On the eve of the vacations, national traditions took a leading role in the different activities of each of the cycles.

The children of the Early Childhood Education enjoyed getting to know their school, their identity, and the most representative places. At the same time, the students of the First Basic Cycle, through parades, dances, and games, learned about the culture and traditions of the native peoples, with the theme "Traveling Chile."

On the other hand, the Second Basic Cycle and Secondary Education students participated in entertaining sports and cultural games, where teamwork and healthy competition animated a joyful and enthusiastic Verbita Week 2021.

--- CVD Website

Holguín, Cuba (MEX):

The attitude of solidarity of Cayo Mambí causing admiration from detractors

The progress of the construction of the parish temple of Cayo Mambí in Holguín would not have been possible without the collaboration of all its faithful and the support of foreign benefactors. Solidarity, cooperation, and friendship are values that characterize this joyful community.

In this sanitary and humanitarian crisis of the COVID-19, there is a substantial shortage of oxygen tanks, medicines, food, cleaning, and hygiene articles that the Caribbean island had not experienced for years.

Faced with this painful reality, the ecclesial community of Cayo Mambí does not remain stunned. However, it has formed close ties of solidarity to obtain and share food and medicines. Fr. Lukáš Mizerák, SVD, has climbed eucalyptus trees to make inhalations and infusions. Unfortunately, there is a lack of allopathic drugs. The parish team also makes food packages and cooks food in a parish community kitchen for the poorest neighbors, including non-Catholics.

This attitude of solidarity has caused admiration from detractors of this Catholic community, including sects, the Communist Party, and government authorities. We congratulate this SVD community, where the mission is transformed into solidarity, communion, and empathy. It is an example of a mission at the service of the most disadvantaged.

--- MEX Website

Santiago de Chile/Rome

Arnoldus family reaffirms commitment to care for Creation



Women in Madagascar planting trees.

The Arnoldus family and the Churches and Mining Network reiterate their commitment to ethical finance that cares for people and Mother Earth in the webinar. In tune with the Time of Creation, religious congregations join together in the Mining Divestment Campaign to promote concrete alternatives from the Church.

On the eve of another anniversary of their foundation, the Divine Word Missionaries and the family of St. Arnold Janssen present in the five continents met last September 4 to "Listen to the cry of the Earth and the Peoples: economies for an ecological conversion." The three congregations founded by St. Arnold participated in the webinar: the Divine Word Missionaries, the Missionary Servants of the Holy Spirit, and the Servants of the Holy Spirit of Perpetual Adoration.

About 80 people from different parts of the world joined this initiative. They heard the cries of women and men asking for action and coherence on how the Church can respond to the cries of today. The conveners were the Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation Commission (JPIC) of the SVD missionaries, the Churches and Mining Network through the Mining Divestment Campaign, Vivat International, and Steyler Ethical Bank.

The members of the Arnoldus family and the Churches and Mining Network generate an alliance for concrete actions to stop the devastation of the land, the suffering of communities and families, and climate change. Brother Carlos Ferrada, SVD, General Coordinator of JPIC of the Congregation, confirms the adherence to the Mining Divestment Campaign. The member congregations of the family of St. Arnold Janssen are very committed to the seven objectives of the Laudato Si platform.

The meeting heard different realities, united in common with the wounds of injustice, inequality, indifference, and violation of rights. The Church has a great responsibility in knowing how to listen to these pains and respond hopefully to the present and the future.

--- Taken from Vatican News

OUR DEPARTED

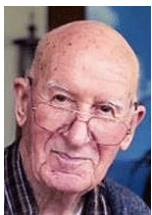
SVD

Name	Province	+ Date-Death	Age	Vows	Year of Orders
Fr. Görlach, Jair Antonio	BRS	05.09.2021	47	23	18
Fr. Mata, Eli	PHC	06.09.2021	71	50	44
Bro. Tae, Anselmus	IDT	07.09.2021	62	30	**
Bro. Betu, Lambertus	PAR	07.09.2021	56	28	**
Fr. Souza, Ademar Lino de	BRS	10.09.2021	50	18	12
Fr. Bere, Yulius	IDT	15.09.2021	81	58	50
Fr. Kloster, Victor	ARS	15.09.2021	93	73	66
Bro. Silug, Luis Baldomero <Vincentius>	PHN	20.09.2021	89	62	**
Fr. Scholly, Karl	IDT	22.09.2021	81	58	54
Fr. Saffer, Eduardo	CHI	23.09.2021	94	75	69

SSps

Sister: Rel. Name and Family Name	Prov/Reg	Date-Death	Age	Yrs. in Vows
Sr. Uta, Therese Nienhaus	GER	29.08.2021	94	68
Sr. Bernadetta, Kiyo Natsume	JAP	03.09.2021	99	71
Sr. Margrit Thoma	PHN	11.09.2021	90	68
Sr. Martha Pawolung	FLW	12.09.2021	32	08
Sr. Achillia, Cecilia Meijers	NLD	12.09.2021	94	65
Sr. Isabel Angela, Benedicta Mejia	PHN	19.09.2021	92	64
Sr. Hirene, Bernarda Sarte	PHN	21.09.2021	97	67
Sr. Elenita, Regina Fres	PHN	26.09.2021	91	66

OBITUARIES

Fr. Victor Kloster (ARS)
15-09-2021; 28-46-48-54-55


On June 10, 1928, Victor Kloster was born in Caseros, in the present diocese of Gualaguay, province of Entre Rios. His entire formation took place at the Apostolic College of Rafael Calzada, Buenos Aires. He began his novitiate on March 1, 1946. He professed his first vows on March 1, 1948, and his perpetual profession was on March 1, 1954. On January 9, 1955, he was ordained a priest and began a long missionary career in this Argentina.

His pastoral work began as prefect and professor at the Divine Word Institute of Pilar until 1962 and then at the Guadalupe School of Buenos Aires from 1963. From 1967 and for 18 years, he was prefect and parish priest in St. Michael Archangel, in the south of the province of Buenos Aires. In 1985 he took over the parish of Macachín, La Pampa, as pastor until his transfer to Colonia II in 1993. In May 1996, he joined the Hogar San Javier community after suffering a cardiovascular accident (CVA) that affected his motor skills.

Victor was the confrere with the most years of resi-

dence at Hogar San Javier. In recent months, he had become the "patriarch" of our ARS Province. He kept a rather timed rhythm that began, after breakfast, with his morning mates of the Hogar. His temperament sometimes made it difficult to communicate with him, as he was a rather reserved personality.

However, he was appreciated by those who knew him closely and found a simple and faithful man in him. Behind his serious and strict appearance, Victor had a good taste for classical music and was always present in the community moments of the daily Eucharist and the sharing of the table.

Victor has always been grateful to those who have accompanied and cared for him at the Hogar. With the after-effects of his stroke, he tried to be self-sufficient. He moved around the house independently. Two years ago, he underwent surgery for a small tumor in his frontal lobe, from which he recovered quickly. However, since that operation, he began to experience physical deterioration, typical of his age.

On September 15, 2021, around 6:15 p.m., our brother Victor Kloster passed away at the Hogar San Javier in Rafael Calzada at 93.

Fr. Eli Mata (PHC)**06-09-2021; 50-69-71-77-77**

Eli Mata was born on November 22, 1950, in Locsin, Albay, Philippines. He entered the Christ the King Mission Seminary (CKMS) in June 1964. He began his novitiate in CKMS on June 29, 1969. He professed his first vows in CKMS on June 29, 1971. He declared his perpetual vows in Tagaytay on March 28, 1977. He was ordained a priest in Tagaytay on July 2, 1977.

His first mission assignment was the Chile Province (CHI), and he was one of the first Filipino missionaries assigned there. He worked in the parish of the Holy Spirit in Fresia. He also did parish work in Rancagua. Fr. Eli worked tirelessly in the Bible Apostolate, and he brought communities to embrace the Word of God and put it into practice. He also worked in Santiago in different capacities.

Returning to the Philippines in 1999, he was assigned at Christ the King Seminary as a formator for one year (1999-2000). Then he was appointed as Rector of the Divine Word Formation Center in Davao City for one

year (2000-2001). From 2001 to 2008, he was again in Christ the King Seminary as Assistant Prefect, then as Spiritual Director. He also taught Spanish. In 2002, he underwent a heart bypass operation, which forced him to recuperate for one year. Once recovered, he eagerly resumed his duties.

From 2008 to 2011, he was the Program Director at the Divine Word Mission Center in Magdalena, Laguna. Then, returning to Christ the King Seminary, he was assigned as Associate Priest at the Shrine of the Divine Word while also teaching Spanish.

In 2015 he survived a heart attack which prompted the installation of a pacemaker. After recuperation, he resumed his Spanish classes. He showed that despite the medical challenges, he can still work and do his share in the formation work. He has the attitude of always giving his all to his work. It earned him the respect and admiration of his confreres and the seminarians.

On September 4, he was diagnosed with COVID and was brought to Lourdes Hospital. Unfortunately, his weakened heart condition was unable to fight off the onslaught of the coronavirus, and he finally breathed his last at 5:44 PM on September 6, 2021.

APPOINTMENTS AND TRANSFERS**Appointments**

17.08.2021	Fr. Yuliantoro, Antonius Eko	IDJ mis/sec	aft
17.08.2021	Fr. D'Silva, Navil	ECU Z. Coord/PANAM	tri
17.08.2021	Fr. Oliveira, João Batista de	BRC Z Chair.execom/PANAM	tri
17.08.2021	Fr. Selvasekar, Jesus David	CAM Z.vice chair.execom/PANAM	tri
20.08.2021	Fr. Ferreira, João Maria	BRS cons/prov	aft
12.09.2021	Fr. Nebres, Sedfrey William	PHC ZA.Coord.com/ASPAC	tri
12.09.2021	Fr. Gomez, Glenn	PHC ZA.Coord.zel.miss/ASPAC	tri
13.09.2021	Fr. Ibarra, Elmer	AUS ZA.Coord.ap.bibl/ASPAC	tri
14.09.2021	Fr. Rodrigues, Maxim	INE ZA.Coord.JPIC/ASPAC	tri
16.09.2021	Fr. Boeing, Jose	BRA coord/characteristic dimensions Brazil subzone	tri
16.09.2021	Fr. Ola Rotok, Siprianus	USS coordinator Northern subzone	tri
16.09.2021	Fr. Nakpane, Gbandi	MEX coord/characteristic dim. Mezoamerica subzone	tri
18.09.2021	Fr. Pais, William	ECU ZA.Coord.form/PANAM	tri
21.09.2021	Fr. Rodrigues, Manuel Lopes	BRA coord/ap.bibl	tri

Transfers

17.08.2021	Fr. Heinz, Michael	GER/BOL
17.08.2021	Fr. Manzano, Dennis	SIN/GER
27.08.2021	Fr. Gato, Jaime Marcelo Maria	BRC/BRA
27.08.2021	Fr. Usen Bunga Lolon, Urbanus	AUS/TLS
03.09.2021	Fr. Trzebuniak, Józef Korneliusz	IDE/POL
14.09.2021	Fr. Norton, Timothy	NEMI/COLLEGIO VERBO DIVINO-ROME
17.09.2021	Fr. Pereira, Jose Loreto	USW/ECU