

"All my springs are in you" (Psalm 87,7) The Eucharist and our transformation

WORD FROM THE LEADERSHIP TEAM



"All my springs are in you" (Psalm 87,7) is the motto of the 52nd International Eucharistic Congress (IEC) which will be held in Budapest from 5-12 September 2021. It is an excellent opportunity for us Divine Word Missionaries to join the whole Church in thanksgiving for this beautiful gift of love. At the same time, it is an invitation to reflect on the mystery of the Eucharist and its message as we are facing the COVID 19 Pandemic and striving for our renewal and transformation, outlined by the 18th General Chapter.

When we look at the logo of the IEC, we find many similarities to our missionary charism and spirituality. On the webpage of the IEC, we read: "The Host and the chalice symbolize the Eucharist. The Cross refers to what the Eucharist offers and to Golgotha, expressing Jesus' love for us and the death he took for us. The idea of the motto "All my springs are in you" is represented by the spring coming from the Eucharist. The water with its four lines symbolizes the spread of the good news. It highlights the role of the four evangelists and at the same time referring to the four points of the compass – underlining the fact that the mission and good news of the Church are for everyone. The spring flows into a river. Its waves refer to the Danube that crosses Budapest. It connects several European countries, just like the Eucharist connects

nations with different languages and cultures and thus becomes a source of reconciliation."

The simplicity of this logo is striking. Even though "the Eucharist is the source and summit of the Christian life" and "contains the Church's entire spiritual wealth: Christ himself, our Passover and living bread" (cf. *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, 1), the logo does not mirror the "unfathomable richness" of this Sacrament. Instead, it reflects the simplicity of the consecrated Host. Pope Benedict XVI characterized it as "the simplest type of bread and nourishment, made only of a little flour and water. In this way, it appears as the food of the poor, those to whom the Lord made himself closest in the first place." It is not reserved only for solemn, extraordinary moments of our lives. However, it is a typical, ordinary staple food of our spiritual life, strengthening us in our journey while facing our weaknesses and carrying out the mission entrusted to us. "The Eucharist is not a prize for the perfect but a powerful medicine and nourishment for the weak." (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 47).

The Eucharistic spirituality, handed down to us by our Founder, St. Arnold Janssen, is vibrant. We want to reflect only three relevant aspects, which may help us draw inspiration and strength from this great Sacrament of love.

Experience of our vulnerability and fragility.

Pope Francis reflecting on the gift of the Eucharist, highlighted the aspects of fragility and vulnerability. "Jesus becomes fragile like the bread that is broken and crumbled. But his strength lies precisely therein, in his fragility.... Each time we receive the Bread of Life, Jesus comes to give new meaning to our fragilities. He reminds us that in his eyes, we are more precious than we think. He tells us he is pleased if we share our fragilities with him. He repeats to us that his mercy is not afraid of our miseries.... This is the logic of the Eucharist: we receive Jesus who loves us and heals our fragilities to love others and help them in their fragilities, and this lasts our entire life."

The current pandemic uncovers our vulnerability and fragility, which make us suffer. People who suffer become comparable to one another since they share the same situation and need for healing, love, and care. Thus this experience of "Eucharistic fragility," reflected in the vulnerabilities of our bodies and relationships, calls us to solidarity and shall bring us "closer to God and closer to our brothers and sisters, especially the poor, the most vulnerable, and the least" (GC 2018, 3).

Experience of sacrificial and self-giving love. In the mystery of the Eucharist, Jesus fulfills his words: "Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends" (Jn 15:13). While celebrating the Eucharist, we are drawn into the dynamics of Christ's self-giving love. This is the direction of our transformation: from "being self-centered" to "being self-giving." Love is like water. When it stops flowing, when it is not shared, it starts to smell. Love shared with others is like a good sip of freshwater, whereas love not shared becomes only foul-smelling self-love.

The 18th General Chapter states: "We are called to learn from the example of Christ's emptying of himself in obedience, even unto death on the cross, and to deny ourselves to carry out our mission of proclaiming the good news and witnessing to our faith" (GC 2018, 10). Thus, the Eucharist challenges us to a constant life of self-giving, to a life of service, materialized by our commitment to the poor. St. John Chrysostom said something challenging in this regard: "What good is it if the Eucharistic table is overloaded with golden chalices when your brother or sister is dying of hunger? Start by satisfying their hunger, and then with what is left, you may adorn the altar as well."

Experience of transformative power. While participating in the celebration of the Holy Eucharist,

the very act of transformation is happening before our eyes. In faith, we are witnesses of the transformation of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ. But not only this. When the Bread of Life nourishes us, we are being taken into this transformation process. Pope Francis explains: "To nourish oneself of the Eucharist means to allow oneself to be changed by what we receive. Saint Augustine helps us understand this when he talks about the light he received when he heard Christ say to him: 'I am the food of strong men; grow, and you shall feed upon me; nor shall you convert me, like the food of your flesh, into you, but you shall be converted into me'... Each time we receive Communion, we resemble Jesus more; we transform ourselves more fully into Jesus".

The 18th General Chapter does not refer explicitly to the Eucharist while speaking of our transformation. Yet, it highlights the importance of the experience of God's love and the union with

Christ in this process. Two elements are manifested in the Eucharist.

First, "When we are united with Christ, we become transformed persons; his love transforms us" (GC 2018, 10). And further, we read: "Jesus comes to meet us, transforming our lives and inviting us to be his witnesses, messengers, and collaborators. A process of discipleship leads us to a growing identification with his person and his mission. As St. Paul says, 'It is no longer I, but Christ is living in me' (Gal 2:20)

(GC 2018, 20).

The Holy Eucharist plays in the process of our transformation the essential and irreplaceable role. Therefore, we shall always approach the Eucharistic table with a desire to be transformed by God's willingness to become bread, ready to be broken in the life of service to nourish others.

The International Eucharistic Congress happens once in four years. Yet, our Founder reminds us that every day shall be a "Eucharistic day." We celebrate the Holy Eucharist or spend time with the Lord during the Adoration. We shall discover again and again that in our vulnerabilities, "All our springs are in the Lord," and be filled with the spirit of self-giving in love which is oriented toward service and Communion. At the same time, sharing in this "paschal mystery of Jesus directs us to renew and transform ourselves and others, and we become more joyful missionaries" (cf. GC 2018, 52).

Fr. Paulus Budi Kleden and the Leadership Team

The Eucharist challenges us to a constant life of self-giving, to a life of service, materialized by our commitment to the poor.



Welcome, Father Paulus Budi Kleden, SVD.

An update of Father Superior General's visit to Papua New Guinea

The Superior General Paulus Budi Kleden recently returned to Rome after participating in the 125th anniversary celebration of the presence of the Divine Word Missionaries in Papua New Guinea (PNG). Father Kleden arrived in PNG on August 1, and following the health protocols for COVID-19, he has been in quarantine in Port Moresby.

Father Budi flew from Port Moresby to Goroka and met with SVD missionaries and Holy Spirit Sisters based in the highlands. He then traveled by road from Goroka to Madang, allowing the Superior General to see the rural country between Goroka and Madang.

On August 13, the exact date of the arrival of the first six SVD missionaries, the Eucharist was celebrated

in the parish church of Alexishafen. Bishop Douglas Young presided over the Eucharist. Also present were Cardinal John Ribat, the bishop of Port Moresby, six other bishops, and the secretary of the Apostolic Nuncio. Nearly a hundred priests and religious as well as hundreds of the faithful participated in the Eucharist. Fr. General gave a message at the end of the mass. On the Feast of the Assumption of Mary, Father General concelebrated in the Holy Eucharist in the Holy Spirit Cathedral presided by Cardinal John Ribat. Father Kleden gave the sermon for the celebration. He also participated in the Provincial Assembly, a seminar on the 125th anniversary of the SVD in Papua New Guinea, and the Provincial Chapter.



General Visitations

The following are the scheduled General Visitations:

01-15 September
General Visitors:

Ural Region (Belarus, Russia)
Fr. Jose Antunes da Silva, SVD
Fr. Andrzej Danilewicz, SVD
POL Mission Secretary

01-15 September
General Visitor:

Slovakia Province
Bro. Guy Mazola, SVD

15 September - 10 October
General Visitor:

Portugal Province
Fr. Anselmo Ribeiro, SVD

15 September - 10 October
General Visitor:

Hungary Province
Fr. Peter Dusicka, SVD
General Coordinator Spiritual Animation

15 September - 10 October
General Visitor:

Italy Province
Fr. Thanuzraj Stanislaus Lazar, SVD
General Mission Secretary

15 September - 10 October
General Visitor:

Spain Province
Fr. Timothy Norton, SVD
Coordinator for the Promotion of Interculturality in CAG

Father Superior General visits Albania: Musings and Memories



The Bishop and Fr. Kleden with the religious community and collaborators.



Father Budi with Sunil and Gorazd.

From July 10-14, 2021, Father Superior General Paulus Budi Kleden, accompanied by the Superior Provincial of Italy, Francesco Pavesi SVD, visited our mission in Albania. He met with our confreres Fr. Gorazd Kohút and Fr. Sunil Horo, collaborators, and parishioners of St. Luigi Gonzaga in Vlore. In addition, he attended the installation of Fr. Gorazd as the parish priest. The following are some of Fr. General's musings and memories of that visit.

The political profile of Albania

Albania is a small country with a population of around three million inhabitants. A third of the population lives in the capital, Tirana. From 1945 to 1991, the country was under the communist regime, considered one of the most radical communist regimes of the world. However, the transition to democracy was a peaceful process without any judicial trial against those part of the dictatorship.

Since 1991 the government has been trying to develop the country, but such efforts were overshadowed by corruption. The result is the growing gap between the rich and the poor. Nevertheless, the presence of Turkey is getting stronger, both economically and politically. This year, Turkish (Turkic) language will be the second language to be learned in the schools.

The religious profile of Albania

According to the official statistics, the Moslems make up more than 50% of the population. Most of them are not practicing Moslems. The Orthodox are around 7%, while the Catholics are approximately 10%. But the census from 2011, which provided these figures, is heavily criticized as being incorrect.

According to other sources, the percentage of the Orthodox is 17%, while the Catholics are 15%. Thus, in general, there is a peaceful co-existence among the believers of different religions. And yet, more can be organized as joint initiatives of the religions to make this co-existence meaningful for the country's general population.

Once officially declared atheistic, Albania still has a long way to get back to its human and religious values. According to the bishop of Valona, the communist regime destroyed the structures of the religions. It affected the fundamental human values of mutual respect and solidarity. In addition, women do not enjoy much right culturally. Domestic violence is a big issue. Religious ignorance, especially about Catholicism, is widespread.

Apostolic Administration of Vlore (Valona)

The apostolic administration of Vlore (Valona), where our confreres are, is in the southern part of the country. It covers more than 50% of the territory of the country. The other five dioceses are in the North, and there are more Catholics there. The southern part of the country is known as the tourist center. During summer many visitors from other countries come.

The administration counts with around 3000 Catholics. Pastorally, the administration is divided into five zones and nine parishes. The present bishop is Giovanni Peragine, an Italian Barnabite. He worked as a parish priest in the Northern part of the country for almost twenty years. Twelve priests from six religious congregations and one diocesan priest are working in the diocese.

St. Luigi Gonzaga Parish in Vlore

The parish of Vlore (Valona) is historical and of great importance for the diocese. The parish church here is the only one in the southern part of the country remaining from the time before the communist regime. Five sisters from a local congregation were living beside the church, which was used as a theater. After the fall of the communist regime, the priests and sisters of the Orders of Servants of Mary (Servi di Maria) came to the parish and started to renew the parish. The parishioners remember them well.

The church was restored in 1993. Now it is in dire need of further repairs. Though not official, the parish

church also functions as the cathedral of the administration as it is the closest to the bishop's residence. The parish has around 300 registered Catholics. The diocese declares the parish as its priority.

The SVDs in Albania

The SVD started the mission in Vlore in 2015, responding to the repeated requests of the former bishop. The Italian province sent two confreres, but one left after six months. In 2019, Fr. Stefan Lucaci SVD came back to Italy leaving an open question of the continuation of the SVD presence in the country.

However, in late 2019, the ITA province decided to continue the mission and sent Fr. Gorazd in October 2019. Since his arrival in Albania until April 2021, he stayed in the bishop's house while already taking charge of the parish. In February 2021, after some delay due to the travel restrictions caused by the COVID-19 Pandemic, Fr. Sunil Horo from India followed. Finally, in April 2021, the two confreres moved to the parish house, renovated nicely by the previous parish priest, Fr. Stefan.

Observations and impressions

The mission in Vlore is, first of all, about promoting human values. Working with children, youth and families are the ways to be missionaries in this context. The Sisters organize different extra school programs during the school years and vacations. They try to contact young people once they left the parish, though it is not easy. A few of them expressed their desire to know more about the Catholic Church. They are accompanied by the group of the catechists of the parish on this way. But not all decide to be baptized for different reasons, such as the pressure of the family. The Diocese of Valona declares Caritas as its priority.

Some of the female congregations have been in the parish since its opening in the year 1991. Learning

from their experience and collaborating with them is of great importance. Besides, listening to the people who suffered a lot in the time of the communist regime and trying to live out their faith must become the essential missionary attitude. Missionaries need to respect the history of the community and the place.

In general, the parishioners, the Sisters, and the bishop are grateful for the presence of the SVD in the parish. Since the beginning, the ITA province sent young missionaries to this mission. Being young, they are enthusiastic and full of ideas. It is essential always to respect the history of the place and the people's experience.

Our two confreres in Albania

Fathers Gorazd and Sunil are enjoying the mission in Albania and are grateful for the assignment given by the province. Fr. Gorazd already speaks Albanese very well, while Sunil is progressing well in mastering the language. Both of them are committed to assisting the poor and being close to the children and the youth. Sunil has an easy manner of approaching people. It opens him ways to know people of different age groups. He is well accepted by the parishioners and appreciated by the children and the youth.

Father Budi Kleden is grateful for the hospitality of Bishop Giovanni and the support he is extending to our two missionaries. Furthermore, he appreciates the company of Father Provincial Francesco Pavesi. His presence made the trip more organized. And lastly, Father Budi is thankful to Gorazd and Sunil. Their presence and their work in Albania are something that we are proud of as SVDs.

--- Fr. Paulus Budi Kleden, SVD
Superior General

Generalate Assistant Secretary for Brothers' Formation and Education officially assumed office

Bro. Douglas Simonetti of the KEN Province, appointed recently as the new Generalate Assistant Secretary for Brothers' Formation and Education of the Society of the Divine Word, officially took his office ad finem sexenium (2018-2024) on August 15, 2021. Bro. Douglas, who took the place of Bro. Carlos José Ferrada will remain in his province KEN, while carrying out his responsibilities.

Bro. Douglas is the primary contact person for the networking among Brothers in the Society. He works with Coordinators from every zone (if there is any) or the provincial/national director of Brother Formation to see what the issues for Brother are at this time. He attends the Zonal Assemblies of Brothers and other gath-

erings if needed or invited. He animates Brothers to share about themselves, their activities, vocation, etc.

The Generalate Assistant Secretary for Brothers' Formation and Education will follow up implementing the Brother Formation programs, particularly the pre-novitiate and post-novitiate programs in each province/region/mission. In addition, he oversees the ongoing formation programs of the Brothers. It includes updating their professional training in their field and eventual higher studies, oversees the training for Brother Formators, among others.

Welcome aboard, Bro. Douglas.

Join a webinar with an ecological purpose

Bro. Carlos Ferrada, SVD, the JPIC General Coordinator, invites the Arnoldus Family to participate in a webinar titled "Listening to the Cry of the Earth and the People: Economies for an Ecological

Conversion." The webinar is scheduled for this coming September 4, at 4 pm Rome Time. This webinar is organized by Iglesia y Minería and SVD JPIC Rome. There will be translations in English, Spanish, Portuguese, and French.

The webinar is essential in the Season of Creation and the launching of the Laudato Si action platform. It also coincides with another anniversary of the foundation of our Society. Would you please register your participation at: WWW.BIT.LY/JPIC_VERBITAS

The following are the speakers:

Bishop Vicente Ferreira, Secretary of the Comisión of Integral Ecology y Integral of the National Conference of Bishops of Brazil;

Bishop Norberto Foester SVD, Diocese of Ji-Paraná, Rondonia, Brazil;

Sr. Cristina Hoar SSPS, Heads the resistance of the local community against the Pascualama mining project in the north of Chile;

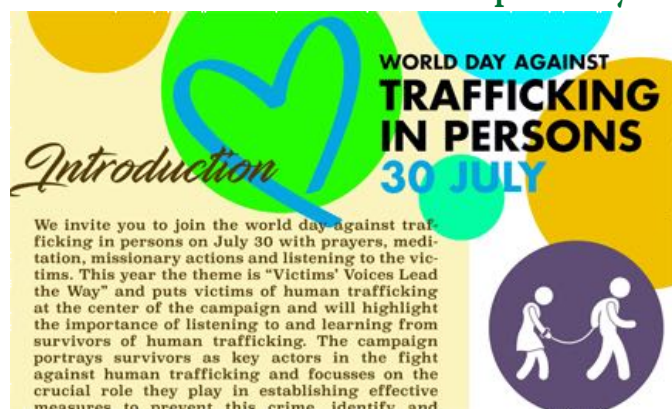
Guiherme Cavalli, Representative of Iglesia y Minería;

Vidalina Morales, El Salvador's environmental advocate and leader of the anti-mining movement in the country;

And Bro. Carlos Ferrada SVD, member of Ethics Committee of Steyler Bank

The moderator of the webinar is Sr. Maria Salomé Labra SSPS from Chile.

A project of the Coordinators of the four Characteristic Dimensions and Spirituality



The coordinators of the four Characteristic Dimensions and Spirituality from the Generalate prepare a pastoral guide once a month. It focuses on celebrating some relevant event for justice and peace on a world-scale level e. g world day. The pastoral guide has four sections: Introduction, Biblical Commentary, Missionary Actions, and Prayer.

The pastoral guide motivates us to join this world event as a religious missionary family actively. Therefore, we encourage you to share and use this pastoral guide in your respective communities. They can be

found on the official website of the Society: www.svd-curia.org.

The next pastoral guide will feature World Creation Day and the Beginning of the Season of Creation on September 1. The first two pastoral guides focused on the World Day of Refugees and the End of Human Trafficking commemoration. Father Mark Ramos SVD does the graphic design.

How to celebrate this year the SVD Day/Week/Weekend

Last year, many of the provinces could not organize SVD Day/Week/Weekend due to the pandemic. Some organized the event virtually or in some other innovative ways. As we live with the virus, and with many restrictions are around us, still, we can find a way to celebrate this SVD Mission Day. This gives identity to our presence in a PRM and also to our lay partners. This is also an opportunity to spread our spirituality, charism, missionary outreach programs, collecting funds for the missions and so forth.

Our Mission secretaries and collaborators can find some suitable ways to celebrates the SVD Day/Week/Weekend in a meaningful way this year in every SVD house/parish/institution. The General Mission Secretary Thanuzraj Stanislaus Lazar SVD offers some insights on how to celebrate this event.

1. Eucharist Celebration: Special prayers for SVD missions and missionaries.

2. Intercultural Worship Service: Have a worship service. Take the offering or sing songs the way it is done in various cultures where SVDs are working.

3. Workshops: Hold workshops with different speakers on SVD missions in the local place.

4. Audio-visual Presentations: Obtain a video from SVD Missions or ask an SVD missionary speaker to show a video, slides, or PowerPoint presentation and lead a discussion.

5. Mission Fair/Carnival: Include a variety of booths and activities set up in a parish or in classrooms. Include: a poster-making room, story-telling rooms (with missionaries telling about their work), a mission film room, and the use of musical instruments.

6. Poster Contest: Have children and/or young people from Sunday School and Catechism classes, Youth Groups, etc. create posters on missions in general or various themes. Display them on the walls in the fellowship hall or foyer. Have judging and prizes.

7. Banner: Ask a group(s) to make a special banner(s) on missions

8. Cards: Make cards with Sunday School children and send to missionaries. These could be displayed on a wall or bulletin board before sending.

9. Culture Show: Have people from the areas with ethnic clothes, a cultural program of various cultures.

10. Musical Instruments: Ask missionaries to bring musical instruments of the people that they work with and demonstrate their use. Form a band and sing a song. Present it in the church service.

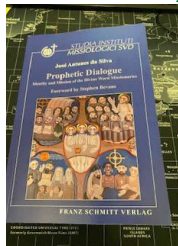
11. Visit to the Missions: Young people and others could visit a local mission center such as a migration center, an indigenous mission, a slum area.

12. Retirement Home: Do a program at a retirement home or nursing home.

13. Skit/Drama: Put on a missions-related drama or skit.

14. Fund-raiser: Raise money for SVD missionary support or a project by selling eatables. Or make some avenues to raise funds for SVD missions during the celebration.

Book on Prophetic Dialogue available in English



The book entitled *Prophetic Dialogue, Identity, and Mission of the Divine Word Missionaries* is now available in English translated from Portuguese. The author, Fr. Jose Antunes da Silva, SVD, writes how the concept of prophetic dialogue was adopted to express the SVD identity and its mission in the contemporary world.

Fr. Stephen Bevans, SVD, in his foreword, refers to the book as essential reading for those committed to ministry in our current Church. This book, which traces the origin of prophetic dialogue and its importance in mission theology today, has been distributed to our houses of formation and different institutions.

The book is the 119 series of the Studia Instituti-Missiologici SVD. Steyler Missionswissenschaftliches Institut published it. For those interested to have a copy of the book, please get in touch with the publisher.

Thoughts and Reflections

Faith in the Storm



‘Faith is the refusal to panic.’ Indeed, it takes faith in the Divine Word to keep calm in turbulent waters. It is said, Pope John XIII at bedtime would put his trust in God and pray, in a childlike manner, “I’ve done my best I could in your service this day, Oh Lord. I’m going to bed. It’s your church. Take care of it!” It was a prayer of deep trust in God’s ability to steer the ‘Boat of St. Peter.’

From a biblical perspective the whole experience of COVID-19 and its effect on our SVD worldwide mission can be likened to “the storm at sea” [Matthew 8:23-27, Mark 4:35-41 & Luke 8:22-25]. Its sudden emergence, the destructive impact and the apparent silence of the Lord as the virus wreaked havoc are reminiscent of a storm. Those who did not drown have been soaked by the chilly waters of the pandemic. As disciples of the Divine Word, we have cried and called upon Jesus; prayers have been offered; the Lord has been awoken. Now, we can sense him stretching forth his hands. We can hear him say “Why are you afraid? Have you no faith?”

During the lockdown in this part of the world where I work on account of the pandemic, I prayed frantically and pleaded with the Lord to have mercy on the world. In deep silence, I took my pen and felt inspired to scribe down this poem:

The roar of the ocean is deafening.
The stare of destruction is frightening.
The legs of the sailors are staggering. In the cacophony of shivers, a whispering voice speaks tenderly:
“I am the Lord of the storm.”
The force of the waves is daring.
The experts have lost their bearings.
The mast is quickly tearing.
In the racket of a whirlwind,
a whispering voice speaks tenderly:
“I am the Lord of the storm.”
The fangs of Leviathan spill the venom.
The poison carries its own genome.
The lungs are reduced to a canyon.
In the sea of uncertainty,
a whispering voice speaks tenderly:
“I am the Lord of the storm.”
The doomsayers predict the worst.
They say we will fail the test.
But soon they will see our best.
For the Lord of the storm is our guest.

We are not yet out of the woods but we can take consolation in the fact that the Lord is doing something new. We can count our blessings in these trying moments. We thank the Lord for the vaccinations that are being rolled out to mitigate the destructive impact of the virus. We thank the Lord for the show of solidarity and compassion – people reaching out to others to share available material resources.

We thank the Lord for the creativity that has been

unearthed in how we go about mission; Zoom conferences and other online activities have now become part of doing mission. We thank the Lord for a new vision of humanity. Now we know, we belong to one big 'global village' – whatever happens to one, happens to all.

In the midst of the pandemic, we can choose to focus on the wreckage the storm is leaving behind or the unrelenting work of the Divine Word to steer the boat

of our Congregation to a safe shore. We have to choose between faith and fear. The former sheds light on our path and the latter deepens the darkness. We are missionaries of the Divine Word. In him and with him, we are safe. Yes, "he never promised us a smooth ride but a safe destination."

--- Fr. Andrews Aboagye Obeng, SVD
Vice-Provincial GHA

Fostering responsibility and commitment to our formandi



Young clerical and brother candidates in Steyl.

The former Superior General of the Society of the Divine Word, Fr. Heinz Kuluke SVD, used to say that the emphasis should be more on assuming responsibilities than on obedience in formation. That makes the formandi grow.

Our Founder, St. Arnold Janssen, had the same vision. As soon as young clerical and Brothers candidates arrived, he immediately assigned them to the available and necessary tasks at the Steyl motherhouse. They include the organization of the retreats, the printing press, promoting and selling the publications, the correspondence, or one of the more than forty different services performed there.

That was the experience of Brother SVD Robert <Bernardus> Schwerdtfeger. Immediately after joined the formation at Steyl, Father Arnold Janssen sent him to learn printing work. Brother Bernardus, being still a formandi, became the pioneer and pillar of Steyl's printing press, and one of the Founder's trusted men.

The trust of Saint Arnold for the formandi was such that in 1895, he sent Brother Wendelinus Meyer alone to the United States to get subscribers for Steyl's publications. Brother Wendelinus at that time had professed temporary vows and was traveling around Germany selling Steyl's magazines and almanacs. He noted the decline in sales of printed material in Germany. Bro.

Wendelinus suggested that Fr. Arnold open a new market in the United States, where many German families had arrived. He volunteered for this critical mission.

After two years of discernment, Fr. Arnold sent Brother Wendelinus to the United States, becoming the first missionary of the Divine Word to set foot on North American soil. Bro. Wendelinus was the providential instrument to start the foundation of the SVD presence in the then countryside of Techny, northwest side of the city of Chicago. Techny is the original site of the SVD headquarters of the SVD in the United States. During Brother Wendelinus' trips in the United States, he sold between 15,000 and 25,000 magazines and calendars each year, and he also made numerous contacts.

Bro. Bernardus and Bro. Wendelinus are considered trailblazers in setting us an example of openness to contribute to Society through their learned skills. On the other hand, it shows the importance of a vision in the formation of our candidates. It responds to the question, What responsibilities do our students receive during their initial formation time, in addition to studying? How do they contribute to the SVD mission in each province, region, or mission?

--- Brother Carlos Ferrada, SVD
General Coordinator JPIC

AFRAM NEWS

Madagascar Region (MAD):

The Bible, a helpful tool in the Madagascar region

Fr. Frank Ayakwah SVD is the Biblical Coordinator of the Madagascar Region. He shares how creating a small group to help in the Biblical pastoral Ministry (BPM) is a vital tool to make the Bible useful and meaningfully personal.

In general, primary evangelization is a very fertile field in Madagascar. And so most of our parishes are in the small towns or villages. Therefore, the general outline of the BPM in the Region of Madagascar is more of reaching out to the faithful to cast the word of God more comprehensively. In so doing, biblical sessions, conferences, and Bible sharing groups are the main activities empowered and encour-

aged in the region.

Creating a small group of lay faithful to help in the BPM activities has been a vital tool. And with this group, we give biblical formation to the Christians in our SVD parishes, forming Bible-sharing groups in some of the SVD parishes. In addition, most of our conferences focus on helping the lay to make use of the Bible in the way of reading it and having quality time with it. In so doing, different methods of Bible sharing and how to read the Bible meaningfully in a personal way are taught.

--- Fr. Frank Ayakwah, SVD



Biblical formation to the Christians in our SVD parishes.

District of South Africa (BOT):

SVDs caught in the middle of protests

The protests that led to the looting and burning of shops and properties in Kwa-Zulu Natal and Gauteng provinces were motivated by the incarceration of former president Jacob Zuma. As a result, contentious issues like political infighting, xenophobia, service delivery, racial violence were ignited and manifested in violent civil unrest, which started on July 9, 2021. These include roadblocks, violent protests, looting and burning of supermarkets and shopping malls. In this context, the Zuma situation is nothing but a pretext for criminal elements. Most of the rioters come from disenfranchised parts of the population but allegedly included some more organized groups.

The South Africa District house is about an hour outside of Johannesburg. Fr. Ioane Filimone Racumu, SVD, and Fr. Arun Vijay D'Mello, SVD, were there when the unrest was happening. The parishioners warned them to stay indoors and take precautions. The other SVD confreres serve in the Tzaneen diocese, an eight-hour drive from Johannesburg. Fr. Mathew Louis Naduville Chennamkulam SVD resides in Bizana, about three hours outside of Durban. Durban suffered many damages, and tensions resulted in burning towns and shopping malls with almost 30 deaths.

The confreres were not affected directly, but the impact on community services has been very detrimental. Shortages and lack of basic needs like medicine and food are felt across the affected areas. At the same time, COVID-19 restrictions and curfew are still enforced in the country.

--- Fr. Ioane Filimone Racumu, SVD

Zimbabwe

A new SVD parish



Archbishop Robert Ndlovu flanked by SVD priests, Diocesan priests, and altar servers.

On June 5, 2021, the SVD Zimbabwe Region was entrusted with the pastoral care of a new Parish, St. Monica, in Beatrice belonging to the Archdiocese of Harare. Beatrice has been under our care as an outstation of St. Dominic in Mubaira since 2013. Beatrice is a small but fast-growing farming town situated some 50km from Harare along the Harare-Masvingo highway.

Archbishop Robert Ndlovu presided over the Eucharistic celebration. Because of the COVID-19 restrictions, the number of attendants was limited. Fr. Edmundus Tue Wea SVD, was entrusted with the pastoral care of the new Parish as the Parish Priest. Archbishop Ndlovu thanked the SVD for their collaboration. He also lauded the support and dedication of the members of this Christian community. He encouraged them to continue working together and challenged them to develop the new Parish further.

The SVD Regional Superior Fr. Vincent Mwiya SVD and the former Regional Superior Fr. Mateus Miten Ruron, SVD, and other diocesan priests were in attendance. The day ended with lunch.

--- Fr. Michael Tawanda Mabvengwa, SVD
Vice Regional Superior ZIM

Vohilava (MAD):

Training women for life and development



The participants were mostly the wives of catechists of our numerous outstations.

From July 20-24, 2021, about sixty women of the Parish of Saints Peter and Paul in Vohilava, District of Mananjary, had the opportunity to participate in a program geared towards their promotion. Seven Religious Sisters of St Joseph d'Aoste took their turns in giving classes. They taught the women theories and practices on essential topics. Among them are primary health care, basic knowledge in sewing, cooking, accounting, basic ethics in welcoming people, Bible knowledge, and the Catholic faith.

The participants were mostly the wives of catechists of our numerous outstations, notwithstanding the presence of another woman. At the end of the program, they asked for more formation. These enthusiastic women presented their recommendations on topics for upcoming ones.

With a lot of happiness and fulfillment, it was decided that this formation event should be a week-long program and held twice a year to benefit fully from it. In addition, they proposed a separate workshop for the youth and young adults. Furthermore, more emphasis will be put on sewing and cooking.

--- Fr. Anyomi Emmanuel Mawuli, SVD

Parish Priest of Saints Peter and Paul, Vohilava

Diocese of Caxito (ANG):

Parish of St. Joseph Freinademetz: The Astonishing growth

The residential complex of Panguila, State of Angola, Province of Bengo, is the result of the resettlement projects for populations living in risk areas such as ditches and slopes in Luanda, which began its construction in 2003 and received the first residents in 2005. However, this fringe of the population came to live in this complex, and some poor civil servants also came to settle here. Although it helped the people to settle down, it also created a divide in society between the rich and the poor.

There were many Catholics who were concerned about having a Church to meet their socio-spiritual life. Therefore, the Divine Word Missionaries in Angola appointed Fr. Denis Pereira, SVD, in 2011, creating



Quasi Parish of St. Joseph Freinademetz in the Diocese of Caxito. He took the initiative with the collaboration of the faithful to erect the structure of the parish. It was inaugurated on December 29, 2013. The Society also planned the education of catechesis, the hall, the parish house, and some professional courses for the people.

More people on the streets and indulging in vandalism prompted the province to start some projects to get them occupied. As a result, we created a school with partial help from the Government. It was inaugurated on January 29, 2018. The school structure has 22 classrooms with a total capacity of 2600 students in a normal situation. It includes the primary and secondary levels and five administrative workrooms, and one for a computer lab.

We also built a sports complex for children, which was inaugurated on July 15, 2021. Our dream is to create a Professional Technical School to educate our youth. We hope our vision comes actual—outstanding achievement in the short period in this parish.

--- Fr. Denis Pereira, SVD

Mission Secretary

Zambia Mission (ZAM):

Joint formation program: A milestone

Fr. Martin Kawana SVD, the Mission Superior of Zambia Mission (ZAM), shares the formation program in the Mission in retrospect. But he reveals a noteworthy aspect of the formation, "We share a joint program with the Zimbabwe Region (ZIM)." This is his sharing.

ZIM is the host for the Pre-Philosophy Program. On the other hand, ZAM is the host for the Philosophy and Novitiate programs. Both students from Zambia and Zimbabwe do their Philosophy Program in Lusaka, Zambia, at the Franciscan administered St. Bonaventure University. The philosophy program runs for three years.

The Divine Word Novitiate in Kabwe is a collaborative project of the AFRAM. It was commenced officially on July 25, 2018. It became necessary to start Novitiate. It was noted that the Novitiate program for the English-speaking AFRAM countries in Ghana was constantly receiving more and more novices. The infrastructure built over thirty years could no longer accommodate the increasing influx of candidates.

Zambia Mission was chosen to be the location for the new Novitiate to cater primarily to those AFRAM countries closer around. Currently, we receive candi-



Our novices join the inter Novitiate program.

dates to the Novitiate from Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

A future Novitiate site

The current Novitiate in Kabwe is temporary. The plan is to build a new Novitiate residence in the suburb of the capital city Lusaka. The land is already secured, and the necessary documents have been processed and procured. We are now drawing the building plans that would be sent to the Generalate for approval.



Our philosophy students study in the city of Lusaka, the capital.

Challenges

Like any other area of Mission, ZAM Mission has not been spared from challenges. However, with the help and collaboration of the AFRAM Zone Coordinators and the Generalate, we are making headways.

The global impact of the coronavirus pandemic affects us. Some of our confreres could not go for home holidays and could not return on time due to the ever-changing travel restrictions. So our planning has always been a challenge. Few of our confreres tested positive, but they all recovered well, and we are very grateful to God for that. The vaccination is going on in the country. We have taken the vaccinations seriously.

--- Fr. Kawana Martin, SVD

Arusha (KEN-TAN):

Transfer of the SVD Philosophy Program: From Nairobi to Arusha

From Nairobi (Kenya), St. Joseph Freinademetz Philosophy Community traveled to Arusha (Tanzania) last July 29, 2021. Since we have not found a suitable rental house yet to accommodate the whole community of thirteen students and two formators, the students and their formators are temporarily hosted

at the Holy Trinity Parish kwa Morombo. The Parish Priest, Fr. Peddy Castelino SVD, and his team have welcomed them, residing now in the rectory.



JF Philosophy Community, Academic Year 2021-2022.

Last August 11, 2021, our 13 philosophy students, together with their formators, Fr. Arata Sato SVD (Praeses) and Fr. Eric Lacandula SVD (Prefect), attended the opening ceremony for the new academic year 2021-2022 at the Spiritan Missionary Seminary in Njiro, Arusha, Tanzania. They were amiably welcomed into the institution. The students have to spend thirty minutes via private vehicle from the parish to reach the Spiritan seminary for their daily classes.

The construction of the philosophy house is ongoing with the support of the confreres in the Province. The confreres have pledged to raise funds from their parishes to support this joint project. The project is ongoing. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the weather in Tanzania, the construction progress has slowed down a bit.

Once the philosophy house is completed, our students will be very convenient to go for their classes. The distance of the Spiritan seminary is only two kilometers away from our future philosophy house. Unlike in Nairobi, the future philosophy community in Njiro has adequate space for cultivating for farming and a vast field to utilize for the fitness activities of the students.

There are many challenges in raising funds for the construction of the philosophy house. However, considering the current pandemic, the Kenya-Tanzania Province will try its best to complete the project in the next couple of years. Transferring the philosophy program from Nairobi to Arusha has been hovering in the archives of the Province for more than two decades now.

Through the untiring support of the confreres and our lay partners, the plan is now unfolding gradually and will be fully realized soon. I always believe that "unity is strength and where there is teamwork and collaboration, wonderful things can be achieved."

--- Fr. Tony Amissah, SVD
Provincial Superior KEN

Ambohitsara (MAD):

With Mary, the Queen of Pangalana



The parishioners of Our Lady, Queen of Pangalana, Ambohitsara Est in the diocese of Mananjary, had their annual pilgrimage in honor of our Lady. Christians from the over sixty outstations came together to pray, adore, deepen their faith and have time with the Lord.

What made it special this time around is the joy it brought to all. Family members and friends have come from far and near to join the seventy-five first communicant. They received for the first time the body and blood of Christ in the hands of the Msgr. Msgr José Alfredo Caires de Nobrega, Bishop of Mananjary.

On August 22, to climax the pilgrimage, a Holy Eucharist was presided over by the Bishop of Mananjary. All Christians present, especially the first communicants, were invited to imitate the disciples who professed their faith and trust in the Lord in the Gospel of the day. At the end of the Holy Mass, the Bishop led the Christian community to renew their consecration to Mary, the Queen of Pangalana.

As usual, special blessings were given to the catechists and their assistants by the Bishop. First, there was a procession of the Blessed Sacrament around the grotto. Then the Bishop gave a special blessing to all those present.

Various youth groups played football matches and joined the singing competition and a biblical quiz.

--- Fr. Emmanuel Anyomi, SVD

Mozambique Region (MOZ):

Annual Retreat 2021

From 9th to 14th August, the confreres from the SVD Mozambique region (MOZ) gathered remotely for their annual retreat. Due to the increase in positive cases of COVID-19, the retreat was realized through zoom video conference.

It was a new experience for all of us as the retreat was different from other years. However, we did not want to lose this unique opportunity to renew our spirit and our missionary commitment to the people entrusted to us by God.

The theme of the retreat 'Jubilee in the Sacred Scriptures and its impact in pastoral life' was an apt one as the MOZ region is celebrating the silver Jubilee of its presence in Mozambique. Friar Alfredo Maurício Manhiça

belonging to a Franciscan order, was the retreat master. He helped us with his deep and challenging reflections on the jubilee year and how each one of us was called to live the graces the Jubilee brings for us.

On the final day, we were challenged to renew our commitment to form and to lead communities, and to inspire men and women to take part in the glory of God in the jubilee year. All the confreres renewed their vows in the concluding Eucharistic celebration. We hope this retreat would bring a renewed force in all of us to promote justice and life so that the glory of the jubilee year could be well realized.

--- Fr. Sebin Mathew Kallanchira

Bulawayo (ZIM):

Ordination and Thanksgiving Mass of Fr. Jacob Sibelo SVD



The newly ordained Fr. Jacob Sibelo SVD (back row 2nd from the right), with SVD confreres.

After multiple delays due to COVID-19 restrictions, the big day finally came. On August 21, 2021, Fr. Jacob Sibelo SVD was ordained with four other candidates, three Diocesans and one CMM, by Archbishop Alex Thomas Kaliyanil SVD, at the Minor Basilica in Bulawayo.

In attendance were 200 Christians, including Priests, religious men, and women who had taken both shots of the COVID-19 vaccine, as stipulated by the government.

In his homily, the Archbishop emphasized the importance of safeguarding one's vocation amidst all the different challenges. He encouraged the candidates to keep their focus on the kingdom of God and his mission. He exhorted them to admire Jesus Christ, protect the church, and be faithful to the duties of the office of priesthood. After Mass, there was a small reception in the Basilica hall for just a selected few.

On August 22, Fr. Jacob said his thanksgiving Mass at Holy Spirit Parish. The Regional Superior, Fr. Vincent Mwiya SVD, and a few other SVD confreres who work in Bulawayo and Hwange Diocese were in attendance. In his homily, Fr. Fransiskus Bhoka SVD reminded Fr. Jacob that he is called to serve and be at the service of the people of God. The celebration ended with lunch for all at the Parish garden. Fr. Jacob is assigned to work in DR Congo, where he did his theological studies.

--- Fr. Mike Tawanda SVD

ASPAC NEWS

Philippine Central Province (PHC):

Alternative Learning System: Hurdling the Challenges of the Pandemic



This year's graduation (2021) materialized after several ingenious modifications.

The Alternative Learning System (ALS), a non-formal education program designed for the out-of-school youth and non-literate adults of the Department of Education (DepEd), has finally facilitated learners' graduation despite the challenges posed by the Pandemic. Several instances of mandatory lockdowns affect learners' movements from home to school to get their weekly assignments. In addition, the weak internet connections were a significant challenge to the on-line platform and the solitary battle to understand their lessons. Since face-to-face modality is discouraged, students clawed their way out from these challenges.

This year's graduation (2021) materialized after several ingenious modifications in measuring the necessary competencies that a graduate should possess. Since the tightening of activities related to the traditional paper and pencil Accreditation and Equivalency Test (A and E), the Department of Education (DepEd) did several experiments. These initiatives include the computerized exam in limited batches and measurement of competency-based on learners' portfolios.

There is a limited number of facilities among DepEd-run schools and computer readiness of partner institutions. There is also the lack of portfolio assessment, that is, all classroom-related activities such as periodic exams, quizzes, projects. The learners need to comply with them because they are the basis for competency. In some areas, rigorous interviews by DepEd focal persons and learning facilitators were added as part of the qualification.

Arnold Janssen Catholic Mission Foundation's (AJCMFI or AJ for brevity) and those coming from other ALS implementers have waited two years for this momentous event. The tentative feeling and frustration on whether a national exam would push through or not manifest in the trickling of learners' attendance

in getting learning kits to be answered within a week in compliance with the blended platform. Besides, AJ's learning facilitators have struggled so hard to prepare for the learner's portfolio. The many instances of revising or adding more activities to comply with the DepEd requirements and the frustrating follow-ups are tests of resilience that separate the hired from the mission-oriented.

To resonate, this year's graduation is a moment for celebration. AJCMFI has facilitated the successful completion of the portfolio of 904 learners coming from 117 community learning centers scattered in the provinces of Palawan, Lanao del Sur/Marawi, Cavite, and NCR. These graduates are classified according to the following: 26 Basic Literacy Program (those enrolled in basic numeracy, reading, and writing), 161 Elementary Level, and 717 Junior Highschool.

Fr. Jerome Marquez SVD, the PHC Provincial Superior, always hammer on the marching directive: "Walang Maiwang Mangmang; Lahat ay Maging Kapaki-Pakinabang." Graduation from ALS and Skills Training and Livelihood fulfills this vision that becomes an indelible ink. This trademark identifies Arnold Janssen Catholic Mission Foundation Inc. as the bulwark of the Church's preferential option for the poor.

--- Fr. Jerome Marquez, SVD

Hong Kong

The Federation of Asian Bishops' Conference's (FABC) new Secretary-General



Archbishop
Tarcisio Kikuchi,
SVD

On July 21, 2021, the Central Committee of FABC has voted and elected Archbishop Isao Tarcisio Kikuchi SVD to replace Bishop Lee of Macau, the current Secretary-General of the FABC. The FABC Central Committee is composed of the presidents of the bishops' conferences in each country. "I did not expect this and now have become the Secretary-General of the FABC. However, I still do not know my duties or how long I will be in office," Archbishop Kikuchi said.

The FABC covers three Asian regions — South Asia, Southeast Asia, and East Asia. Cardinal Bo is from Southeast Asia, and the federation's vice-president, Sri Lankan Cardinal Malcolm Ranjith, is from South Asia. In addition, Archbishop Kikuchi will be taking office next February.

Archbishop Kikuchi was named Bishop of Niigata in 2004 and became archbishop of Tokyo in 2017. He was Caritas Asia's president from 2011 to 2019.

--- UCAN News

Ambassa (ING):

A medical camp for the refugees



On July 5, 2021, the Holy Spirit Catholic Church in Ambassa, in collaboration with the Oisho Bani Society (Rgt. NGO), conducted a Health Camp for the refugees of 302 families who have settled at Hadukolou village in Ambassa. The medical camp came about because many people were getting sick. It was due to poor nutrition and lack of potable and clean water.

Dr. Asok Debbarma, Fr. Ivan D'Silva SVD, and other health workers from the parish reached the medical camp with boxes of medicines. Blood tests were done for malaria. Other ailments were diagnosed and treat-

ed correctly. One hundred twenty-nine patients came with different conditions, and most of them received the medicines. Those with complicated sickness we referred to the Ambassa District hospital.

Fr. D'Silva gives an account of what he saw, "When we reached the settlement area, it is heartbreaking to see the unhygienic condition in which the people live. Those children who came for treatments were undernourished. The breastfeeding mothers and pregnant women were looking pale."

Aside from the medical camp, more things should be done to reach out to the people. There is a need to organize similar initiatives in the future. If there is an outbreak of an epidemic, but God forbid, there will be more causality for sure.

--- Ivan D'Silva, SVD

Philippine Central Province (PHC):

First Filipino formandi sent for OTP to Indonesia



Fr. Raul with parishioners.

Fr. Raul Claveria SVD, is a Filipino confrere in temporary vows who finished his pastoral exposure in Indonesia. He is the first Filipino formandi sent for OTP to Indonesia. Now back in the Philippines, Raul shares his experience in Indonesia.

"Being the first SVD Filipino seminarian sent for OTP to Indonesia was a great privilege to experience a new culture and language. My OTP experience offered me an extraordinary opportunity to understand Indonesian culture and to learn the language. During my first month, I learned the daily greetings and some Indonesian words. Then, to connect and relate with the locals, I had constant dialogue with them and, at the same time, learn the language. And to be able to understand their culture, I had to assimilate and appreciate every single experience."

After learning the language, I was sent to an SVD parish for pastoral exposure, particularly in Central Kalimantan. Mostly, every Sunday, we had to visit other communities for a weekly mass. I also imparted cat-

echism classes. In addition, I was asked to be the treasurer of the house and the secretary during our meetings. Thus, I participated with fervor in the life and mission of the SVD in Indonesia.

--- Frt. Raul Claveria SVD

Madang (PNG):

Symposium on the occasion of the 125 years of SVD presence in Papua New Guinea

On August 12, 2021, a symposium with the theme 125 Years of the SVD in PNG – Did we Bring the Light? was held at the Divine Word University Campus. Fr. Patrick Gesch SVD was the master of ceremonies. Father Superior General Paulus Budi Kleden SVD delivered his welcome address. He underlined the significance of this symposium.

"Because the mission is who we are, as people created, saved, and sent by the missionary God, reflection is integral. Therefore, it is not just opportune but is an expression of this understanding of mission that a symposium is organized. This symposium is one of the essential programs of this 125th anniversary of the arrival of the first SVD missionaries in this country", Fr. Kleden said. The Provincial Superior, Fr. Jose Orathinkal SVD, welcomed Father General, keynote speakers, guests, and the academic community.

The symposium was divided into four segments: Education, Health, Special Apostolates, Culture, and Lay Partners. All the presenters of the segments were given ten-minute presentations and five minutes for comments from the audience. Among the presenters included Archbishop Douglas Young SVD, Fr. Paul Steffens SVD (via zoom), Fr. Philip Gibbs, SVD, among other SVDs.

Fr. Geovanne Patricio Bustos Delgado SVD moderated the discussion panel. Fr. Gesch wrapped up the discussion with his final remarks.

Indonesia- Timor (IDT):

Sharing love with the blind people

With the worsening situation of the COVID-19 Pandemic, yet another disaster - tropical cyclone Seroja hit Timor-Leste, resulting in significant loss of life and displacement. In the East Nusa Tenggara region, the tropical cyclone damaged many homes and public facilities and claimed many lives.

The COVID-19 Pandemic and the devastation from cyclone Seroja have been detrimental to the blind people's groups. Many blind people who work as masseurs are now without a job. Their income is significantly reduced. For some of those who have lost their jobs, it is challenging to meet the needs of their daily lives.

This desperate situation inspired the members of Paguyuban Soverdia Kupang (IDT SVD lay partners) and



Sharing love with the blind people.

the SVD community in Kupang to reach out to these blind people immediately. After coordinating with the local government authorities, we surveyed the number of blind people in the area and understood their needs. We bought basic food rations, including rice, cooking oil, sugar, eggs, utensils, blankets, soap, and detergents. We also collected few usable clothes to donate to these blind people.

On June 18, 2021, the SVD community and lay partners in Kupang traveled to RT 26 Maulafa District, Kupang City, to donate a few necessities and clothes to around 72 people, including 53 families. This act of care and compassion was led by the Mission Secretary of Timor Province, Fr. Agustinus Hironimus Dae Soro, SVD, and the Coordinator of Kupang SVD lay partner group Isidorus Lili Jawa. In addition, SVD priests, brothers, and members of the SVD lay partner group collaborated and were a part of this humble mission.

--- Isidorus Lili Jawa

SVD Lay Partners Newsletter, August 2021

Philippine-Northern Province (PHN):

There is no stopping for the SVD-PhN Mission Partners to thrive



Despite the challenges brought by COVID19, there is no stopping or limiting the SVD-PhN Mission Partners to thrive where we are called to witness and commune. We have taken advantage

of web tools like Zoom for more than a year to come together every Wednesday. We connect as a coordinating body from all five districts across ages in different contexts with our Provincial Mission Secretary and some SVDs. From the new normal emerged a "culture" unique of SVD-PhN. Each Wednesday carries a theme as inspired by the life of St. Arnold Janssen.

The first Wednesday of the month is Devotion

Wednesday or the Mission Rosary Wednesday. Second Wednesday is Formation Wednesday, initially dedicated to reflecting the 4 Characteristic Dimensions with the SVD-PhN 4CD Coordinators as speakers. The third Wednesday is Bible Sharing Wednesday (Vigan Method). Fourth Wednesday is Faith-Sharing Wednesday, where a Mission Partner shares their faith journey as a lay partner. Fifth Wednesday, if any, is Arnold Janssen Spirituality Wednesday. Over the past year, these meetings enabled us to grow in spirit and faith, relationship and friendship, mission and vocation.

Driven by the example of St. Arnold Janssen, a great communicator of his time, we have embraced it as "our duty to proclaim the Word of God to all..." (Con. 102) by maximizing all tools available that would enable us to do so. Thus, for example, we are strongly present

at Facebook @ <https://www.facebook.com/laico.missionero.96> and recently launched our YouTube Channel @ www.youtube.com/channel/UC-_cSCMKEScpdc-9Wy84-7_A.

St. Arnold used to say, "The pastor of souls has to make use of all the means indicated by the signs of the times."

On August 4, 2021, we celebrated our 2nd Anniversary since we sealed and institutionalized this partnership. The partnership goes beyond sharing the missionary task. It is first and foremost nurturing and growing our relationships. Moved by the Incarnate Word's love, the partnership grows, the mission continues.

--- Mary Geraldine "GeeO" Paderon
Mission Partner, SVD-PhN

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**Ho Chi Minh City (VIE):**

## Loving hands amid COVID-19 Pandemic



*Our confreres reached out to the poor with the "Meals of Love" program.*



During June and July 2021, there have been virus outbreaks in Vietnam, including the highly transmissible Delta virus variant. Each day, the outbreaks numbered into four-digit numbers, unheard of in the country. The rising number of cases pressures the country's health care system complexed by the poor conditions of the people.

In Sai Gon (Ho Chi Minh City), where the Divine Word Theologate is located, the city's population is about 10 million people. In this part of the country, there are many people positive for the virus. Until July 22, 2021, Vietnam has over 71,000 cases and over 370 deaths. The government has applied various ways to control such instances as isolation and lockdown to stop the spread of COVID-19. This situation pushes many people into hardship, especially the poor and the homeless.

The Pandemic has also impacted the formation program of the Philosophate and Theologate Community. As a result, our confreres could not proceed with the summer ministry programs at parishes, mission stations, and SVD communities. Instead, the formators planned a program to reach out to those affected by the virus.

Our confreres at the Theologate in Sai Gon reached out to the poor with the "Meals of Love" program. The program serves 100 boxes of meals per day for the homeless around the city. In addition, they also distribute rice, noodle, cooking oil, among others donated by generous benefactors. Thus, the confreres consider themselves as bridges of love and concern.

Going out into the community and meet the people while distributing the meals posed a risk for our confreres. Amid the danger and the risk of catching the virus, our confreres are joyful to have this moment and opportunity of service. One of our confreres expressed his sentiments, "Pandemic brings misery, hardship, and challenges for the people here, but this is also an opportunity to show our commitment to serving others as missionaries."

In this situation, many confreres in formation willed to carry out Jesus' command: "Give them some food yourselves" (Luke 9:13) when Jesus and his disciples saw the crowd was hungry, thirsty, wandering, and not being taken care of by nobody.

--- VIE Department of Communication

## EUROPA NEWS

Vlore, Albania

## The installation of the SVD parish priest of St. Luigi Gonzaga



From left to right: Fr. Pavesi, Fr. Sunil, Bishop Peregine, Fr. Gorazd, Father General.



Fr. Gorazd, the parish priest of St. Luigi Gonzaga.

*The Provincial Superior of Italy Province (ITA), Fr. Francesco Pavesi, SVD, and the assistant parish priest of St. Luigi Gonzaga, Fr. Sunil Horo SVD, give an account of the milestone installation of Fr. Gorazd Kohút, SVD as the new parish priest. Here is their essential information.*

On Sunday, July 11, 2021, Bishop Giovanni Peregine installed Fr. Gorazd Kohút, SVD as the new parish priest of St. Luigi Gonzaga Parish in Vlora during a Eucharistic celebration. The ceremony was held in the only Catholic Church in this city with a group of laypeople from the various communities including the Sisters who serve in the city with about 100 thousand inhabitants. Also present were the Superior General, Fr. Budi Kleden, who was able to visit this land for the first time, and the Provincial of ITA, Fr. Francesco Pavesi.

### Exhortation of the Bishop

The Bishop directed these words during his homily, "Dearest Fr. Gorazd, you are sent to this community, a Christian community quite young, but which has lived and overcome difficult moments, such as the long years of the communist dictatorship. The stones of this building and some members of this community are witnesses to the "Way of the Cross" traveled by this community bathed in the blood of martyrs. It is this community that is entrusted to you. A community that treasures its past but that wants to grow and remain faithful to the Lord. In making yourself a companion of this community, you make your own the style of life that Jesus "ordered" his apostles to live."

### Words of encouragement from Father Superior General

At the end of the Holy Mass, Fr. General addressed the gathering and thanked the local Bishop on behalf

of the Society of the Divine Word for inviting us to Albania. Fr. General mentioned three essential words to the two confreres working in the parish: humility to listen to and learn from the people, perseverance to going through challenges, and creativity in finding ways for carrying out the pastoral responsibilities.

P. Sunil Horo SVD, the vice-parish priest, recently arrived in Albania to help Fr. Gorazd. He is learning the difficult Albanian language and has already conquered the hearts of young and old alike with his smile and simplicity.

After the Mass, the congregation moved to the nearby convent of the Franciscan sisters for a get-together and meal. An agape meal was served to the gathered religious people. The catechists and all who render their selfless service to the Church were also present. Finally, Fr. Gorazd expressed his gratitude to those present. We remain indebted to all who have worked tirelessly to actualize our mission in Albania.

### An overview of the Apostolic Administration of Southern Albania

The Apostolic Administration of Southern Albania includes almost half of the territory of this nation and extends towards Macedonia and Greece. The Bishop is assisted by seven priests, all from different religious institutes. For the moment, there is only one Albanian seminarian who is studying theology.

--- Fr. Francesco Pavesi, SVD  
Fr. Sunil Horo, SVD



**Austria (ECP):****After Corona - For a new WE**

The Corona pandemic has aggravated inequalities, oppression, and various crises. In Austria, a conference called "weltkirche.tagung 2021" explored the question of what a new way of living together could look like in a post-COVID world. Its motto was: "For a new WE – Getting ready for a new way of life." It focused on new oases growing amid the crisis and how we can learn from them.

The conference took place on July 3, 2021, as an online webinar via Zoom. The organizers were the Austrian Conference of Religious Orders, the Austrian Bishops' Conference through its Coordination Office for International Development and Mission, in cooperation with the "Dreikoenigsaktion" (Three Kings Campaign) of the Catholic Children's Movement, the Jesuit Mission, the Catholic Youth Austria and the Divine Word Missionaries in Austria.

The panel was international, women and men, laity, religious clergy, presenting various perspectives. The workshop focused on concrete initiatives and programs and was moderated by persons from Kenya, Brazil, India, and the Philippines.

More information [www.weltkirche-tagung.at](http://www.weltkirche-tagung.at).

--- Text: Ursula Mauri

**Poland Province (POL):****Holidays with missions**

*Children and youth experiencing fun, prayer and sports.*

Despite the ongoing pandemic, we managed to use the vacation time to carry out animation of children and youth. For the 34th time, the Mission Office in Pieniezno organized "Holidays with missions." As usual, the event took place in our center. It is situated in a picturesque spot. It is in the middle of a large forest and right next to a lake.

Participants can choose from 5 stays, each of which lasts ten days. Time is filled with fun, prayer, sports, and meetings with missionaries. The participants deepen their knowledge of religion and get familiar with our Congregation. They can also develop their musical, dancing, and acting skills.

Lay volunteers are excellent support for the organizers. Many of them themselves once participated in this event. Typically, around 700 participants each year take

part in "Holidays with missions." However, due to this year's restrictions, there was only half of them.

--- Fr. Andrzej Danilewicz, SVD  
Mission Secretary

**Munich (GER):****NOW community invites you**

We, the Jetzt-Gemeinschaft, are looking for a fellow brother or a fellow sister, a member of a religious community, who would like to strengthen our community in Munich. It can also be some-one who is studying.

The NOW-Community started in an international student college (Johanneskolleg, short: Joko) with 112 students from 40 countries. This community consisted of three Missionary Dominican Sisters, a Missionary Sister Servant, and two Divine Word Missionaries, for which we created the framework. For many students with different cultures and religious backgrounds, Joko was a place to learn from each other and peaceful co-existence, an exemplary project within the Church and Munich.

The name NOW-Community came into being during a joint trip to Oies, the birthplace of St. Fr. Josef Freinademetz SVD. This NOW is our daily invitation to be ultimately where every individual is at the moment. We as a community remember again and again: we are taken into service and on the way with a God who says of himself: "I AM WHERE YOU ARE" (Excv3,5; after Martin Buber).

We offer:

- A diverse living community of faith, made up of women and men from different religious congregations and different cultures (currently age range from 54 to 78).

- Accommodation currently in Munich Schwabing-North in two flats with 4 and 2 rooms respectively.

- We are part of the cooperative residents' association (Wogeno München e.G.), consisting of a total of 74 parties, and we help to shape the way of living together.

- An openness to creativity in prayer and joy in meeting each other.

- A diversity in the exchange of experiences through the different fields of work and commitment of individuals, among others.

Do you have questions, are curious, or have a concrete interest? Then get in touch with us as soon as possible. We will be happy to answer your questions, send you more detailed information, and an invitation to meet you personally. Don't hesitate to get in touch with Fr. Thomas Heck SVD:

Mail: [ptomheck@gmx.de](mailto:ptomheck@gmx.de)

Tel: +49 89 / 12 41 48 39

Mobile: +49 176 789 62 480

--- Fr. Thomas Heck, SVD

**Austria (ECP):****"The virus knows no borders"**

Fr. Rödlach with the participants of the study trip of professors and students.

Father Alex Rödlach SVD hails from Landeck in Tyrol. He has taught medical anthropology at Creighton University in Omaha. At the Jesuit university, he heads the Institute for "Social and Cultural Studies." He is an expert in the field of global health. During a visit to Austria, he gave an insight into his teaching and research activities in the USA, which are more topical than ever in the Corona pandemic.

***Solidarity with poor countries is necessary***

The outbreak of a global pandemic was only a matter of time, explains Father Rödlach. The colonization of regions where no one used to live, overpopulation, and the increasing mobility of people would accelerate the spread of viral diseases. Father Rödlach used the COVID-19 pandemic as a hook to highlight health research issues in his lecture. These include, for example, vaccine development, procurement, and distribution.

"There is a lack of international solidarity with the poor countries of the South in the distribution of vaccines," Rödlach criticizes. This could have devastating effects on the rich countries as well: "If poorer countries cannot afford to vaccinate their populations, there will be new mutations of the coronavirus that spread rapidly globally and against which the current vaccines may be ineffective," warns the health expert.

***Study trip to Austria planned***

Fr. Rödlach is already preparing a study trip of professors and students of his university to Austria for spring 2022. The international program will take place for the third time. It is designed to allow students to compare the healthcare systems in the U.S. and Austria and give them an insight into the complementary healing methods of Traditional European Medicine (TEM), such as Kneipp medicine.

--- Taken from the article of Ursula Mauritz  
[www.steyler.EU](http://www.steyler.EU)

**Tortosendo (POR):****Seminary in Tortosendo honored by the city**

The Seminary of the Divine Word, in Tortosendo, was honored by the City Hall of Covilhã, along with other institutions. It is "in recognition of the institution's social and humanitarian value that has contributed so much to the community's welfare, health, and safety.

The homage took place during the 1st Social Covilhã Meeting. Furthermore, it was integrated into the "Active and Healthy Municipality Day." The event took place on June 26, in the auditorium of the Faculty of Health Sciences of University the University of Beira Interior.

Recall that in February this year, the Seminary in Tortosendo opened part of its facilities to the Covilhã Hospital to receive COVID-19 patients in a post-discharge situation as part of the fight against the coronavirus.

--- POR Newsletter

**Hoofddorp (NEB):****New evangelization program in the SVD parish in Hoofddorp**

The Kisi Gods singing Kids program was organized in Hoofddorp SVD parish.

The Netherlands-Belgium Province (NEB) is establishing a close working relationship with the local Church and forming a missionary parish. Since 2018 the SVD confreres is very active in St. John the Baptist parish in Hoofddorp.

With the idea of creating a new generation of believers in Jesus Christ, a lay movement, "Kisi- God's singing Kids," began to organize musical programs adapted to different age groups on biblical themes. Their mission is to help young people discover God, develop their talents, learn to live together, and thus come to experience Jesus personally. More information about the group is available on their site [www.kisi.org/nl](http://www.kisi.org/nl).

For the first time in its history, the Kisi Gods singing Kids program was organized in Hoofddorp SVD parish from the 13th to July 17, 2021. Thirty children, aged 6-12 years, participated. Since people of different cultural backgrounds characterize the parish, the program helped the children of different nationalities and cultural backgrounds to come together. They play, sing,



dance, and pray together.

The outcome was very fruitful. There was a very close collaboration between the catechism teachers, members of the team of the youth apostolate, members of the parish council, the priests, and some volunteers from the parish. While evaluating the program, the participants realized that Europe now being a missionary situation; this kind of mission method is helpful to re-evangelize the secularized Europe.

--- Fr. Mathew Thekkeyil, SVD  
Coordinator of Biblical Apostolate

### Steyl (GER):

#### Valuable books from Steyl to Leiden

For many years, a number of valuable antique books lay more or less unnoticed and hidden from public view in the Mission House of St. Michael. Last June 29, books from the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries were given on a 25-year loan to the Natural History Museum "Naturalis Biodiversity Center" in Leiden, a famous university city in the Netherlands. Naturalis is one of the largest museums of its kind in the world.

The oldest book dates back from 1530. Its authors are Balthasar Beck & Johannes de Cuba. It is a hand-colored herbal book. Also a colored atlas by Gerard Merkator and Henricus Hondius from 1606 and two volumes by Maria Sybilla Meriaen went to Leiden. The loan includes 8 botanical works, 15 zoological works, and 6 works on various subjects. The books come from both the libraries of the Mission House and the Mission Museum.

Some of these books do not exist in other places in the Netherlands. Only a few knew of their existence in St. Michael. Accordingly, there was great excitement that these books were now offered on loan to the Naturalis Biodiversity Center in Leiden and are now available to science. Many of these books are of high scientific importance and accordingly valuable. In Leiden, these books have found a new place where they are also professionally and safely stored.

--- Text: Bro. Roland Scheid, SVD

### Köröm/Girincs (HUN):

#### The Summer Program 2021

The summer program 2021 had a very positive outcome. The ongoing COVID-19 has been an obstacle in several planned activities during the summer season. However, we were able to complete the planned programs and activities successfully without any significant difficulties. Even we conducted three camps for the children in three different villages.

The summer camps for children were organized in Girincs, Sajóhidvég, and Köröm villages. In Girincs, the summer camp was held on June 28-30, and about



80 children and 20 volunteers took part in the camp. In Sajóhidvég, the camp was conducted for two days (July 26-27), and about 45 children took part in this camp. In Köröm, we conducted a three-day camp starting from August 16-18. About 100 children took part in this program. Also, we completed a one-day program in the village of Kiscsecs on August 19. It was in collaboration with the local helpers in that village. It was the first time we conducted this kind of event in this particular village.

On July 3, we organized a pilgrimage to Mátraverebély-Szentkút national shrine on the occasion of the national gypsy pilgrimage. On August 15, we organized a pilgrimage with 50 members from Köröm participating. The gypsy holocaust day was celebrated on August 2 in Köröm. The Romano Theater group presented a particular program on this occasion. Several people from the neighboring town participated in this program.

The garden program was another successful program during this summer. We distributed the vegetable seeds to around 200 families around the villages. We were able to see the program's outcome at the end of the summer, as all of them had enough vegetables for their daily cooking.

We also initiated a particular guitar class for the gypsy children. We have a music teacher from the nearby city to teach. We purchased guitars and some other musical instruments for the children for the music class. Every week, two hours of music class has been conducted, and 12 children participated.

In addition, we arranged more regular programs for the mission children. We worked a program for the children thrice a week. The children were delighted to spend the time with us and participate in the different activities.

In the end, we are grateful to God for helping and guiding us through all these programs. We had received much help from the local government and these villages' people in all our summer camps. There were also volunteers from various other places in organizing the camps.

--- Fr. Remis Tete, SVD  
Superior Provincial HUN



*Baranovich (URL):*

## "Special Guests" in Baranovich



*Evening mass to honor Our Lady of Fatima.*



*Procession of the different icons.*

Following quite an old tradition, every month on the 13th day, from May to October, liturgical celebrations are held in the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Fatima in Baranovich. These liturgical services are organized to honor the apparitions of Our Lady of Fatima. In addition, during the month of August, our shrine was visited by special "guests."

Fr. Konrad Potyka SVD, the curator of this sanctuary, took an important initiative. He organized that the eight most revered icons of Our Lady in Belarus are brought to the sanctuary. The icons came from the sanctuaries, where they are honored and revered. They came from Budslau, Braslav, Brest, Belynichi, Grodno, Gudogai, Logishin, and Trokeli.

In early summer, the Apostolic Nuncio Ante Jozic consecrated the duplicates of these icons. A simple pilgrimage by car was organized to carry these icons along the borders of Belarus, covering 3125 km.

During the evening mass on August 13, a number of the faithful from all over the city and the adjoining districts gathered with five priests and a deacon to pray together for the intercession of the Mother of God. Also, about sixty representatives of the "Legion of Mary" from Pinsk and Grodno dioceses took part in the Fatima Mass.

After Holy Mass, a procession was organized around the Church. The faithful prayed the Rosary. They carried the icons of Our Lady and a statue of Our Lady of Fatima. After the services were over, several people remained in the Church for personal prayer.

These replicas of the icons of Our Lady were in our Church for a week (August 12-18). On these days, many people came to pray and offered their prayers to God, trusting in the intercession of the Blessed Virgin.

--- Fr. Stepan Tsergel, SVD

### PANAM NEWS

*Diocese of Obidos (BRA):*

## The SVD's new mission in Curuá



*From left to right, Fr. Yosef Mapang Pukan, Fr. Aparecido Luiz de Souza SVD, and Bro. George Kindo SVD.*



*The inauguration of the parish was held with Bishop Bernardo Johannes Bahlmann, OFM.*

The Divine Word Missionaries of Brazil-Amazon Region now administer the Parish of São Raimundo Nonato in Curuá, Pará. This parish belongs to the Diocese of Obidos. Three SVDs were appointed for the new mission. They are from three different countries, with different cultures, customs, traditions, and languages. This already highlights the unity in diversity, one of the hallmarks of the Congregation.

The three pioneer missionaries are Fr. Yosef Mapang Pukan SVD, the parish priest, from Indonesia, Fr. Aparecido Luiz de Souza SVD, from Brazil, and Bro. George Kindo SVD, from India. The Mass of the inauguration of the parish was held on June 6, 2021, with Bishop Bernardo Johannes Bahlmann, OFM of the Diocese of Obidos. Present for the event were Fr. Leonardus Gade SVD, BRA Regional Superior, Bro. Blasius Kindo SVD,

the Provincial Treasurer, and the parishioners.

### **The main challenges of this new mission**

- To resume the pastoral journey that was interrupted by the pandemic a year and a half ago. As a result, the animation and formation of leaders were interrupted. Catechetical formation stands out in this challenge, especially for the sacraments of Christian initiation.

- Geographic challenges. There are two geographic realities here in Curuá. In the first six months of the year, the rivers are full and invade the surrounding chapels. In the other six months, there is a receding tide. The rivers and lakes dry up, and access to the communities becomes difficult.

- Attendance. There are 54 communities. Of these, nine are urban. The others are located on the roads and most of them on the rivers and lakes. In the city, we are attending all of them on Saturday and Sunday. All have a Sunday mass or a celebration of the word led by Brother George. In the countryside, we will follow the custom of visiting all of them. In this sense, another challenge arises: to maintain our physical health.

- A parish in constant change. During the presentations we make in the communities, we need to assure the people that we will be with them for some years to come. They regret that in the last few years, there have been many transfers of priests here. Some stayed only one year in the parish. Two years ago, one died of

cancer, and eleven months ago, another died of COVID-19.

We, members of the SVD team, agree that the communities in the parish are lively, joyful, welcoming, and have an excellent liturgical formation. We are encouraged by the presence of many young people and children. All are welcoming and express affection, respect, and gratitude for the visits. However, a missionary here cannot complain about routine and boredom. There is no room for that. We are always on the move.

### **Updates in the parish**

Since we arrived 80 days ago, we have tried to gather the leaders that make up the Parish Pastoral Council (CPP) to hear about the reality of the pastoral communities, groups, and movements. Another subject on the meeting's agenda was the celebration of the patron saint's feast in the last week of August. Here in the Amazon region, as a whole, the feast of the patron saint is a crucial moment for the parishes. So we organized this great event.

We have also started the preparation for the parish assembly that will take place at the beginning of December. It will be the moment to evaluate the year and plan for next year. This moment was also opportune to present the history of the SVD, its charism, and characteristic dimensions since it is the first time that the Missionaries of the Divine Word assume this parish.

--- Bro. George Kindo, SVD

## **District of Cuba (MEX):**

### **The situation of protests in Cuba and the response of the SVD**

#### **People clamor for justice and change**

On July 11, 2021, there was a massive demonstration all over the island of Cuba. Out of their own will and desperation, the people took to the streets after so many years of silence for fear of repression. As a result, several roads in different country provinces have been jam-packed. People peacefully demonstrate their clamor for justice and change.

The people are demanding their rights to be heard. But, unfortunately, there is a lack of freedom and a shortage of food and necessities. There is an evident shortage of medicine and the worrying situation of the pandemic, among others. Unfortunately, these protests have turned into acts of violence: beatings, arrests, looting, shootings, and even death.

#### **The counter-response of the government**

While many were enjoying the final match of Copa America, all national television channels were interrupted by a joint broadcast. The President spoke harshly about the demonstrations that were taking place all over the country. In reaction, the government responded with a firm hand. They called on the revolutionaries (those who support the system) to also take to the

streets to confront the demonstrators and defend the revolution.

The President assured that the military is already prepared for anything. And internet access was cut off. This generated more anger and hatred among the people. Instead of creating a calm situation and offering a solution to the clamor of the people, the government made things worse. As a result, many people were detained, and some disappeared.

#### **Cuban Church taking the path of dialogue and non-violence**

Amid this situation, the Cuban Church has always taken the approach of dialogue and non-violence. There are some priests and religious men and women who are more vocal than others. A priest was beaten and arrested. A seminarian was detained for trying to protect the demonstrators. Both were released after a few days.

For the time being, the Cuban Conference of Religious is offering a service of accompaniment to the families of those detained families and disappeared by providing legal advice. In addition, they help trace those missing and give spiritual and psychological support to their families.

#### **The SVD's response to the situation**

We, the SVDs in Cuba, support the declaration of the Cuban bishops and the Cuban conference of religious.

However, with the situation of COVID-19, what can be done pastorally is limited. The churches are still closed. The confreres remain in their communities since we cannot travel or go from one place to another because of the health restrictions.

Despite everything, we try to accompany the people by giving them encouragement and hope and inviting them to prayer. During this tense situation, we cannot forget our poor brothers and sisters. That is why we try to keep the six Comedor (dining room) projects for the poor running in our parishes.

Fr. Francis Ylagan SVD, the District Superior of Cuba, writes, I ask you to continue to pray for the people of Cuba in these critical moments. What happened on July 11 was a sign that many have overcome fear, and at any moment, it can happen again with more force. Therefore, I ask for your prayers for us in the district of Cuba.

--- Fr. Francis Ylagan, SVD  
District Superior Cuba

### Valparaíso (CHI):

## Bishop Jorge Patricio Vega SVD appointed Bishop of Valparaíso



*The Vicar General gave Bishop Vega a crucifix to kiss.*

On June 8, 2021, Pope Francis has appointed Bishop Jorge Patricio Vega SVD, Bishop of the Prelature of Illapel, as the Bishop of the Diocese of Valparaíso. Accordingly, on July 15, 2021, Bishop Vega, at the Mass, took possession of the Diocese of Valparaíso celebrated in the Cathedral Church of Valparaíso. Also present were the Apostolic Nuncio Mons. Alberto Ortega Martín, Mons. Pedro Ossandón, who was the Apostolic Administrator of this Diocese, the Vicars, Deans, Bishop Vega's relatives, and laypeople for three years.

Before the Mass, Bishop Vega made the Profession of Faith and Oath of fidelity in front of the Bible that his parents gave him on the day of his priestly ordination. Once the Mass of Inauguration began, Bishop-elect Monsignor Jorge Patricio Vega was invited to enter this Cathedral Church by the parish pastor and rector of this Church. The Vicar General, Monsignor Leopoldo Núñez Huerta, gave Bishop Vega a crucifix for Monsignor Vega to kiss.

This Mass was rich in signs: the bishop was given the crozier, a symbol of his shepherding in his diocese, and he also sits on the cathedra, a sign of his mission as titular of this Church. The Vicar General read the papal in which his election as titular of a diocese is communicated. At the end of the reading of the Papal Bull, Bishop Jorge Patricio was invited to take his seat in his chair. With this sign, he began his pastoral ministry in our diocese.

Bishop Jorge Patricio Vega SVD, Bishop of Valparaíso, shared in his homily, "As I have said on other occasions, I want to be a Shepherd after the Heart of Jesus. And as the Holy Father asks of us, to be a shepherd with the smell of sheep. For that, I want to walk amid the flock, and thus, within my limitations, be able to know each one of you, in your joys and sorrows, with your hopes and frustrations, making your projects and desires my own".

The Roman Catholic Diocese of Valparaíso, as of 2014, pastorally serves 966,000 Catholics (74.1% of 1,304,000 total) in 69 parishes. It includes 260 missions with 171 priests (86 diocesan, 85 religious), 71 deacons, 406 lay religious (133 brothers, 273 sisters), and 16 seminarians.

Congratulations, Bishop Jorge Patricio, and we wish you many blessings.

--- Source: Diocese of Valparaíso website

### A letter of encouragement from Pope Francis

Pope Francis sent a letter of encouragement to residents of a Mexican diocese afflicted by battling drug cartels, a conflict that has cast attention on the lawlessness covering wide swaths of Mexico and the government's inability to pacify the country.

In the letter sent to Bishop Cristóbal Ascensio García of Apatzingán, the pope spoke of violence in the Tierra Caliente region of western Michoacán state. He also offered prayers for the population, along with the message: You are not alone.

--- Catholic News Service



## Sixty years of SVD presence in Colombia



*Celebrating the Jubilee year and 50 years of priestly ordination of Fr. Brand.*



*The SVDs in the Provincial Assembly.*

By the grace and mercy of God, we celebrate 60 years of the presence of the Divine Word Missionaries in Colombia. Helder Camara said, "When we dream alone, it is only a dream; when we dream with others, it is the beginning of reality." This wisdom of this Brazilian bishop can illuminate the events we are celebrating at this moment.

Our dream in Colombia dates back to 1962 when we started the Divine Word Parish in Medellin. We also collaborated at the Christ, the Priest Seminary in La Ceja, Antioquia. Fathers Henricus Heekeren SVD, Meinhar Tegelar SVD, Franz Knoblauch SVD, and Eugenio Lakatos SVD started this dream together with a group of committed laity.

This collective dream is still alive today. We are grateful for the commitment, effort, sacrifice, and generous dedication of many confreres, laypeople, and benefactors. Day by day, they enliven this dream. From Medellin, the SVD mission spread to Choco, then to Bogota, Valle del Cauca, Cordoba and Venezuela.

On July 9, 2021, on the feast of Our Lady of Chiquinquirá, we had an in-person provincial assembly held in

the Parish of the Divine Word in Medellin. Thus, we formally began the opening of the Jubilee Year. We also celebrated the 50 years of the priestly ordination of the first Colombian SVD priest, Father Manuel Antonio Brand Mesa.

Currently, SVD Colombia-Venezuela is present in five departments in the country. Our work is characterized by the four characteristic dimensions, namely mission animation, bible apostolate, JPIC, and communications. For our work in evangelization, we use the platform of Fundación Editores del Verbo Divino.

We carry the message of Jesus to every corner of Colombia. We are constantly inspired by the words of Jesus, "who became man and dwelt among us." His message of love accompanied us in the arduous, selfless, and challenging work in our places of mission. We continue to sow the hope of a better and more humane world. And we continue to dream big because His Life is our life and His Mission is our mission.

--- Fr. Marselinus Belawa Nuhan, SVD  
Provincial Superior COL

### OUR DEPARTED

#### SVD

| Name                              | Province | + Date-Death | Age | Vows | Year of Orders |
|-----------------------------------|----------|--------------|-----|------|----------------|
| Fr. Nitti, Gregorius              | IDR      | 16.07.2021   | 45  | 22   | 14             |
| Fr. Knaus, Siegfried              | GER      | 23.07.2021   | 84  | 58   | 54             |
| Fr. Osterwalder, Alois            | ECP      | 23.07.2021   | 88  | 67   | 61             |
| Bro. Agyemang, Francis Kwaku Pius | GHA      | 26.07.2021   | 77  | 57   | 51             |
| Bro. Plawky, Paul Simon           | GER      | 27.07.2021   | 90  | 65   | 59             |
| Fr. Schöpf, Otto                  | ECP      | 29.07.2021   | 88  | 65   | 60             |
| Bro. Gottwald, Paul               | GER      | 30.07.2021   | 85  | 65   | 59             |
| Fr. Ruijter, Alphons              | NEB      | 04.08.2021   | 84  | 67   | 60             |
| Fr. Ilosvai, Gyula                | HUN      | 04.08.2021   | 89  | 71   | 63             |
| Fr. Mite, Gabriel                 | IDR      | 05.08.2021   | 72  | 47   | 30             |
| Fr. Berkhmans, Paskalis           | IDE      | 05.08.2021   | 58  | 34   | 28             |
| Bro. Watun, Stefanus Damianus     | IDE      | 06.08.2021   | 77  | 55   | 48             |
| Bro. Ade Andreas, Benjamin        | IDE      | 08.08.2021   | 85  | 62   | 56             |
| Fr. Buijs, Cor                    | NEB      | 09.08.2021   | 83  | 61   | 56             |
| Fr. Daros, Henri                  | IDE      | 11.08.2021   | 73  | 50   | 43             |
| Fr. Oba, Yohanes                  | IDT      | 13.08.2021   | 85  | 62   | 54             |

|                    |     |            |    |    |    |
|--------------------|-----|------------|----|----|----|
| Fr. Pavón, Ricardo | ARS | 17.08.2021 | 79 | 40 | 36 |
| Fr. Rucker, Eugen  | GER | 23.08.2021 | 92 | 69 | 67 |

## SSpS

| Sister: Rel. Name and Family Name         | Prov/Reg | Date-Death | Age | Yrs. in Vows |
|-------------------------------------------|----------|------------|-----|--------------|
| Sr. Maria Sesilia, Bernardette Telik      | TIM      | 06.07.2021 | 75  | 54           |
| Sr. Lusía Sri Andayani                    | JAV      | 20.07.2021 | 42  | 18           |
| Sr. Sapiensia, Henriette Fernandez        | FLE      | 27.07.2021 | 75  | 54           |
| Sr. Celiniana, Natália Pykosz             | BRN      | 02.08.2021 | 96  | 72           |
| Sr. Malar, Jesu Jeya Malar Xavier         | INE      | 04.08.2021 | 36  | 14           |
| Sr. Elvira Pilar, María Alejandrina Ayala | ARN      | 08.08.2021 | 83  | 54           |
| Sr. Akwilina, Agnieszka Gurk              | POL      | 18.08.2021 | 83  | 57           |
| Sr. Betty, Elizabeth Tranel               | USA      | 19.08.2021 | 94  | 74           |
| Sr. Hermesilda, Katharina Tipold          | BRN      | 19.08.2021 | 88  | 60           |

## SspSAp

| Name                        | Convent                         | Date of Death | Age | Years in Vows |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------|-----|---------------|
| Sr. Mary Leah, Leah Boteros | Mandaue City, Cebu, Philippines | 05.07.2021    | 63  | 23            |

## OBITUARIES

**Fr. Ricardo Pavón (ARS)**  
**17-08-2021; 42-80-81-84-85**


Ricardo Aníbal Pavón was born on October 11, 1942 in Médanos, in the diocese of Bahía Blanca, province of Buenos Aires. He entered the seminary in Pilar in March 1977. He began his novitiate in Alta Gracia on March 1, 1980.

He professed his first religious vows in Alta Gracia on March 1, 1981. On March 1, 1984 he consecrated his life definitively for the cause of the Gospel, in the Apostolic College of St. Francis Xavier. On December 8, 1985 he was consecrated priest in Pilar, province of Buenos Aires.

His missionary trajectory shows several changes and transitions. It began for a brief period of time in Colombia. Then he returned to the country to collaborate in the pastoral work of our parishes, passing through Godoy Cruz (Mendoza), Pigué (Buenos Aires), San José (Esperanza) and, more recently, San José de Crespo (Entre Ríos). Due to health reasons, he himself requested to reside at Hogar San Javier since 2010, with a brief hiatus in Entre Ríos.

Ricardo stood out for his resonant voice that surpassed the hearing capacity of his listeners. His affable and approachable personality garnered many gestures of affection and friendship among the people. He had his own sense of humor and always kept a rather low profile, enjoying the moments of conversation and shared snacks. He was happy to go to the nearby communities for the celebration of the Eucharist and his presence was appreciated by the laity.

His days at St. Xavier's Home passed serenely, with

plenty of time for silence and meditation, something that Ricardo always carried within him as a particular inclination. His talents as a barber, like so many other qualities, were put to good use by the confreres at the Hogar. Although his health condition showed a controlled cardiopathy, his sudden death on August 17, 2021, was a surprise. As he did every day, Ricardo got up and ate his breakfast. It was during lunch that he was found lifeless in his room, in the position he most enjoyed, sitting with his feet resting on a chair.

Dear brother Ricardo, rest in peace. May the Triune God, through the intercession of our Saints Arnold and Joseph, welcome you in his maternal bosom.

**Fr. Henri Daros (IDE)**  
**11-08-2021; 48-68-71-78-78**


Henri Daros was born on October 5, 1948, in Mukun, Diocese of Ruteng, Indonesia. After his primary and secondary schooling, he entered the SVD Novitiate at Ledalero on December 8, 1968. He professed his first vows in Ledalero on January 7, 1971. After completing two years of philosophy studies at Ledalero, he took part in a two-year pastoral exposure program at the Pius XII Minor Seminary, Kisol, Flores, from 1973 to 1974. After that, he returned to Ledalero. He studied theology there and took his final vows on January 8, 1978. He was ordained a priest in his home parish Mukun on July 2, 1978, by Bishop Vitalis Djebarus, SVD.

He was first assigned to the Indonesia-Ende Province (IDE). His first placement in 1979 was teaching at the SMAK Syuradikara High School in Ende. Later that year, he was temporarily placed in charge of Ratesuba

Parish. At the same time, the parish priest attended a renewal course in Nemi. On his return, Henrikus became assistant parish priest at Christ the King Cathedral Parish, Ende.

In May 1982, Henrikus went to Rome to study missiology at the Gregorian University. He gained his Missiology Licentiate in 1984. While at Gregorian University, he also studied social communications, which he completed in 1985. Before returning to Indonesia, he attended an International Book Expo in Frankfurt, Germany. He was to participate in another of these events there in 1988.

From 1986 to 2000, Henrikus was Director of the Nusa Indah Press in Ende. Before taking on this role, he attended a course in Publishing Management at the Indonesian Grafika Center in Jakarta. From 1987 to 2000, he was Head of the Dian Trust, which published the bi-weekly magazine, "Dian" ("Candle"), and the monthly children's magazine, "Kunang-Kunang" ("Firefly"). In 1989, he was responsible for the publishing of the Catholic family magazine "Rumah Kita" ("Our Home").

Henrikus held the position of Head of the SVD-IDE Province's Social Communications Commission from 1987 onwards. From 1995, he was the National Coordinator of Social Communications for the four Indonesian SVD provinces. From time to time, he was also in demand as a lecturer in communications at STFK Ledalero Catholic Institute of Philosophy and STKIP Ruteng Catechetical Institute. On September 9, 1999, a new daily newspaper, "Flores Pos," was first published by Nusa Indah Press. Henrikus had been the mastermind of this ambitious project.

In 1997, the Dept. of Foreign Languages at Nanzan University announced a plan to offer an Indonesian Studies Program at their campus in Nagoya, Japan. In March 2000, Henrikus was appointed to be the primary lecturer in the program. As he was required to return almost every year to Ende, he remained a member of the SVD-IDE Province. He accompanied research students and participated in meetings with Indonesian university personnel. After 17 years in this role, he reached retirement age. He returned to Ende in September 2017.

Back in Ende, he proposed to our confreres that a special memorial be made at the SVD St. Joseph Community House to honor Indonesia's first president, Soekarno. Regarded as a revolutionary by the Dutch colonial administration, Soekarno had been banished to Flores. He lived under "house arrest" in Ende from 1934 to 1938.

During this time, he frequented the SVD house. He used to sit on the porch ("serambi") and discuss a possible future for Indonesia with our confreres, who became his friends. As proposed by Henrikus, the "Serambi Soekarno" ("Soekarno's Porch"), has become a popular place for people interested in Indonesia's history. In his last years, Henrikus was always there to wel-

come visitors.

Henrikus died on August 11, 2021, following his liver, kidneys, and diabetes complications. He contributed so much in many ways to our mission. We remember him with thanks.

### Fr. Cor Buijs (NEB)

09-08-2021; 38-58-60-64-65



Cor (Cornelis) Buijs was born on May 21, 1938, in Leerdam, diocese of Rotterdam, in the Netherlands. He entered the SVD minor seminary St. Jan in Soesterberg on September 6, 1953, for his secondary schooling. In 1956 he moved to the SVD seminary in Deurne, where he completed his secondary studies. Then, on September 8, 1958, he began his novitiate in Heide, Belgium, where he professed his first vows on September 8, 1960. After philosophy, Cor got permission to try the Carthusian way of life in Salignac, France, but returned ten days later. So he started his theology in Teteringen. He also professed perpetual vows on September 8, 1964, and was ordained a priest on February 7, 1965.

Cor received a mission appointment for Mexico. He arrived there on January 6, 1966. For the first six years, he worked in a rural parish with 7000 inhabitants in the diocese of Cuernavaca. He was also an admonitor in the regional council. Then he was called to work in formation. After briefly working in the scholasticate in Mexico City in 1974, he moved to Guadalajara. He worked in the philosophy program and the novitiate. He was a novice master until 1979. He was always in search of renewal in line with Vatican II. After two more years in the formation community, he returned to pastoral work in the parish in Zapopan. In 1983, he returned to Mexico City and worked in a parish in the Coyoacan district.

In 1989, after 23 years in Mexico, he took a sabbatical in the Netherlands. He concluded to remain in his homeland. In 1990 he was transferred to the Dutch-Belgian Province. After a brief stint (September 1992 to March 1993), he fell sick as chaplain of the retirement home "Zuiderhout" in Teteringen. While temporarily living in Weert as a chaplain in a hospital, he established contact with the parish of St. Liduina in nearby Kelpen-Oler in the diocese of Roermond. On March 1, 1994, the bishop named him administrator of St. Liduina and parish priest on September 29, 1996. With that, Cor had found his real spot. He was ascribed to the SVD community in Deurne.

When his health weakened, he was given release from active duty on October 1, 2010. However, the bishop allowed him to continue living on the parish premises. In 2019 Cor was diagnosed with dormant leukemia, which became acute around Christmas 2020. He spent his final days in the "Franciscus Hospice" in Weert. On



the evening of August 9, 2021, he passed away quietly at the age of 83.

**Bro. Andreas <Benjamin> Ade (IDE)**  
**08-08-2021; 36-57-59-65-\*\***



Andreas Ade was born on May 14, 1936, in Koting, Diocese of Maumere, Indonesia. Having completed his early schooling in his home village, he was accepted as a candidate for the SVD brotherhood on February 28, 1952. From 1953 to 1956, with two other brother candidates, he studied printing at a technical college in Malang, Java. These three men were to remain together throughout their formation and work. They graduated from the college and returned to Ende, where they were employed at the Arnoldus Printing Press (APP).

Benjamin began his novitiate in Ende on August 8, 1957. He professed his first vows in St. Konradus on September 8, 1959. After that, he took the religious name Benjamin. He professed his final vows in St. Konradus on September 8, 1965. He continued working at the APP until 1967, when he went to Holland and Germany and Brother Vincensius to update their printing skills. In 1968, they returned to Ende. They set up the offset printing press at APP and were involved in the Photo Composing Department.

Benjamin was a member of the House Council of St. Yosef Community in Ende. He also actively promoted vocations to the SVD, regularly visiting schools, parishes, and basic communities. In 1985, he left his work at the APP. He moved to St. Konradus Community Brothers' Formation House in Ende. He assisted in the education and formation of the junior brothers there.

In 1989, he participated in a spiritual direction program at the Roncalli Institute, Salatiga, Java.

In 1991, the Superior-General appointed him National Director for Brothers' Formation, which he held until 1997. In 1993, he was chosen for the second time to be Consultor for the SVD-Ende Province. He was also appointed Vice-Rector of the St. Konradus Community at that time. He was a delegate at the 14th SVD General Chapter at Nemi. He also attended the 1st General Assembly on the Brother Vocation held in Rome.

From 1999 until 2005, he held various leadership positions at St. Konradus before he retired and moved to the Biara Simeon Retirement Home, Ledalero, on October 4, 2005. Until 2011, he assisted in the general running of Biara Simeon. Although he was plagued by hearing problems and a weak heart in later years, he was a faithful religious until the end.

Benjamin passed away at Biara Simeon on August 8, 2021, aged 85 in Ledalero. He had been in vows for 62 years.

**Bro. Stefanus <Damianus> Watun (IDE)**  
**06-08-2021; 44-64-66-73-\*\***



Stefanus Watun was born on January 2, 1944 in Lerek, Diocese of Laran-tuka, Indonesia. After completing his primary and junior secondary education, he became a candidate for the SVD brotherhood on July 16, 1960. He began his novitiate on September 8, 1964. He professed his first vows on September 8, 1966, and took the religious name Damianus. He trained to become a teacher at the Ndao Teachers' College. He graduated from there and taught at the Nurjaya Junior High School, a branch of the SVD St. Konradus Community, the formation house for junior brothers in Ende.

From 1969 to 1970, he did technical training in Semarang. After which, he returned to Ende, where he made his final profession on September 8, 1973. He then accepted the position of head of the St. Yosef Workshop, Ende. In 1981, he went for further studies at the Technical Faculty, Petra Christian University, Surabaya. He completed these in 1988.

He then returned to Flores and taught at the Bina Karya Technical School in Larantuka. While there, he was a member of the SVD Arnoldus Community. Until he left Larantuka in 2004, he held various leadership positions in the technical school and the SVD community.

In 2004, he transferred to the SVD Lembata District. He was a member of the SVD community at Lewoleba. In 2006, he was appointed praeses of SVD House there. In 2017, Damianus participated in the spiritual renewal program for Indonesian-speaking confreres in Steyl and Nemi. Returning to Indonesia, he was chosen to be the District Superior of the SVD Lembata District. He fulfilled this role until 2020. Then, he was appointed for a second term, from 2020 to 2023.

His death was sudden and unexpected. There had been no signs of ill-health until a few days before he passed away on August 6, 2021, in the SVD House at Lewoleba.

**Fr. Berkhmans Paskalis (IDE)**  
**05-08-2021; 63-85-87-92-93**



Berkhmans Paskalis was born April 16, 1963, in Kloangrotat, belonging to the diocese of Maumere, Indonesia. Having completed his primary and junior secondary education, he entered the St. Yohanes Berkhmans Minor Seminary at Matalokoin in 1981. He began his novitiate in Ledalero on July 31, 1985. He professed his first vows on August 1, 1987, in Ledalero. He declared his perpetual vows in Ledalero on August 1, 1992. He was ordained a priest in Lela on September 29, 1993. His first assignment was Indonesia-Ende Province (IDE).

As a young priest, he was the assistant pastor in Bintuni Parish, Diocese of Manokwari-Sorong, West Papua, from 1994 to 1995. Then from 1996 to 1999, he was pastor of Waikomo Parish, Diocese of Larantuka. From 2000 to 2007, he was a member of the community of St. Paul's Major Seminary, Ledalero. In addition, he taught religious studies at the Maumere Nursing Academy and Nusa Nipa University in Maumere.

In 2008-2009 he studied English at Maynooth, Ireland, preparation for a youth ministry course. However, due to time constraints, it was decided that he should do this course in the Philippines. So he returned to Indonesia en route to Manila. But his health took a severe turn for the worse, and he decided to stay in his homeland, where he became involved in campus ministry in Maumere.

Four years later, he returned to Papua in better health, this time to the Archdiocese of Merauke. On May 11, 2013, he was appointed associate pastor of Nasem Quasi parish. However, his health declined again during the following years, and this year, 2021, it was clear he needed hospitalization. The Provincial wanted him to leave his parish, but he was adamant about doing so. He was worried that his parishioners, all indigenous people, would be neglected if he left them.

Finally, on August 5, 2021, he passed away at the Bunda Harapan Hospital, Merauke. He was 58 years old. He had been in vows for 34 years and had been a priest for 28 years.

### **Fr. Alphons Ruijter (NEB)**

**04-08-2021; 34-52-54-60-61**



**A**lphons [Alphonsus Maria] Ruijter, called Fons by his confreres, was born on February 20, 1934 in Amsterdam, Netherlands. On September 11, 1946, Fons came to the mission house St. Jan in Soesterberg to become a missionary. He began his novitiate on September 8, 1952, in Helvoirt. He professed his first vows in Helvoirt on September 8, 1954. After that, he studied philosophy and theology in the SVD major seminary in Teteringen. He took his perpetual vows on September 8, 1960, in Teteringen. He was ordained a priest in Teteringen on February 5, 1961.

He received a mission assignment for Papua New Guinea. He worked in the diocese of Wewak. His first parish was Torembi on the mighty Sepik river. Then he became pastor in Angoram. As a missionary, Fons went his own way. Beyond liturgy and preaching, he emphasized service, community building, and quality of life. Above all, he committed himself to an agricultural project for the local people. In the long run, this demanded all his attention and became his main and full-time work.

For more than 20 years, together with volunteers, he worked to help people build better houses, cultivate more nutritious food, and enhance the participation of women. His approach was different from that of his fellow missionaries. But he was very enthusiastic about it and stuck to it. As a result, the government recognized the project as the most successful development project in the country. The diocese also praised it.

In 1994 Fons turned the project over to his closest collaborators and, after 30 years in Papua New Guinea, he returned to the Netherlands for good. He was 60 years old and in no way worn out. In the diocese of Haarlem, he got involved in the pastoral care for workers as part of the "Regional Service Center North IJmond." Here, too, Fons worked in a way different from what was usual. He committed himself above all to "the common man" to workers and farmers. He was thus a missionary to people at the grassroots.

He acted as a caregiver for his niece, who suffered from MS (multiple sclerosis) in his retirement. She lived in Baarn. There Fons died on August 4, 2021, at the age of 87. He shall be remembered as another type of missionary who left behind a trace of goodness.

### **Fr. Gyula Ilosvai (HUN)**

**04-08-2021; 32 48-50-57-58**



**G**yula Ilosvai was born on April 9, 1932, in Merk, belonging to the diocese of Satu Mare, Romania. He entered the novitiate in Kőszeg, Hungary, on August 15, 1948. He professed his first vows in Merk on August 15, 1950. After completing his secondary school studies and graduating from high school in Pannonhalma in Benedictine's School, he was admitted to the Diocesan Seminary in Esztergom. He professed his perpetual vows in Szekutas on August 15, 1957, during the communist regime. He was ordained a priest in Esztergom on June 15, 1958.

Afterward, he served as a chaplain in Balassagyarmat from 1958 to 1964 and in Budapest-Törökőr from 1964 to 1966. After that, he was a parish priest in Tardos (Komárom-Esztergom county) from 1966 to 1975 and Csitar (Nógrád county) from 1975 to 1988. Then, at the request of the diocese of Veszprém, due to a severe shortage of priests, he was transferred to Somlósárhely as parish priest, where he worked until 1993.

He responded to the call of reviving the Hungarian SVD province. He came to Kőszeg and soon moved to Hajós (Kalocsa-Kecskemét archdiocese), where he served until 2008. He spent most of his retirement years in the Nyíregyháza home for priests. On July 28, 2021, he suddenly got ill. Late on the evening of August 4, 2021, he gave his soul back to his Creator, whom he had always served.

Fr. Gyula did not get a chance to go on a mission due to the difficult circumstances. However, he always served in the parishes and remained with the people. He was very religious and a spiritual man. He lived his religious vowed life faithfully. Though most of his life, he had to live alone and away from the SVD community.

Fr. Gyula lived a life of simplicity. He was a person full of joy and cheerfulness. He did not just spend his time with the people. He loved the manual labor. He worked in the fields, and he loved gardening. Fr. Gyula has left an imprint in our life to be a docile and spirit-filled person. May God grant him eternal rest. Amen.

**Bro. Paul Gottwald (GER)**  
**30-07-2021; 36-54-56-62-\*\***



Paul Gottwald was born on February 23, 1936, in the Lower Silesian village of Wölfelsgrund in the county of Glatz. After World War II, the Gottwald family was expelled and came to Western Germany. They found a new home in Westereiden in Westphalia. On May 5, 1952, Paul went to the mission seminary in Sankt Augustin and entered as a candidate for the missionary brotherhood.

Initially, he worked in the finance office. But when the candidates moved to Steyl in November, Bro. Paul began training as a bookbinder in the bookbinding department of the large printing press. On September 8, 1954, he started the two-year novitiate. In Steyl, he professed his first vows on September 8, 1956.

In 1959, still in temporary vows, he received the mission appointment for Spain. There he was to help set up the bookbindery in the SVD printing press in Estella because the SVD was to join an extensive Bible campaign for South America. In Estella, on September 8, 1962, Bro. Paul took perpetual vows. According to the confreres, he was a very reliable and industrious bookbinder. He worked for months at the folding machine to prepare the New Testament without complaining in the least.

In 1980, after working in Estella for 20 years, he was called back to Germany to take over the bookbinding in the mission seminary in Sankt Augustin. In addition to his work in the bookbindery, he gladly volunteered to help out at the reception, in the dining hall, and wherever needed. He was a very communicative person and loved to get in touch with others. He especially enjoyed taking care of the young foreign confreres who were studying at St. Augustin.

When he noticed that his physical strength was slowly deteriorating, he decided to move to the province retirement facility "Wendelinus Home" in St. Wendel at the beginning of 2014. Here, too, he became involved in a variety of ways.

In recent months, Bro. Paul had recurring health

problems and therefore had to be hospitalized several times. The last time it became apparent that his kidneys were failing and that he could only have survived for a short time with the help of dialysis—this Bro. Paul refused. So he was discharged on July 29 and came back to the Wendelinus Home. The following day, July 30, 2021, he went home peacefully to his Lord.

We thank God for giving us this confrere who served the Lord faithfully in his way and his environment. May he now be an intercessor for us.

**Fr. Otto Schöpf (ECP)**  
**29-07-2021; 33-54-56-60-61**



Otto Schöpf was born on May 14, 1933, in Zams, Tyrol, Austria. He went to the SVD minor seminary St. Rupert near Bischofshofen for his secondary schooling and graduated in 1954. On September 8 of the same year, he entered the SVD novitiate at St. Gabriel Mission House in Mödling near Vienna. He professed his first vows on September 8, 1956. In St. Gabriel, he also made philosophical-theological studies. After professing final vows on September 8, 1960, he was ordained to the priesthood on March 18, 1961.

Since Otto had been sick with hepatitis, there were doubts whether he could work in a tropical climate. Therefore, he received a mission assignment for the Austrian Province and was sent to St. Rupert. At the SVD boarding high school, Fr. Schöpf worked as a teacher and educator from 1961 to 1998. This period was interrupted by internships in the missionary high schools of St. Xaver (Bad Driburg, Germany) and Marienburg (Rheineck, Switzerland) and several study leaves. Finally, at the Catechetical Institute of the Archdiocese of Salzburg, he qualified to teach religion in secondary schools.

In Baden near Vienna, he attended the Federal Institute for boarding house education. In Innsbruck, he completed courses in pastoral psychology at the University's Faculty of Theology. At the same University, he also did a teacher training course in geography from 1974 to 1978. He completed with a teaching certificate. As early as the 1960s, Fr. Schöpf made a great effort to overcome an authoritarian style of education and, as an educator, gave the students entrusted to him more freedom and personal responsibility. However, the transition to a more participatory and dialogical pedagogy did not happen without controversies and conflicts.

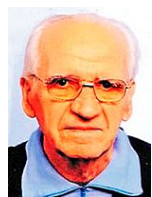
After his retirement as a teacher in 1998, Fr. Schöpf spent a year at the University of Innsbruck updating himself theologically. He lived in Patsch, supported by friends and benefactors, and keeping contact with the SVD and SSps working in Innsbruck. After many years in the school ministry, he wanted to work in pastoral ministry. So he took over the chaplain's position in



Polling, where he worked as an open-minded pastor and a good friend until his old age. His simplicity and modesty but also his humor and critical spirit were appreciated.

When the ailments of old age increased, and he became more dependent on help, he moved to the Freinademetz Home, the SVD care facility at St. Gabriel. Here he spent the last year of his life. He found it difficult to cope with advancing dementia and settle into the environment to which he was not accustomed. Finally, on the afternoon of July 29, 2021, he passed away quietly. He went to the eternal home, for which he had already longed very much.

**Bro. Paul Plawky (GER)**  
**27-07-2021; 38-65-67-71-71**



Paul Plawky was born on October 9, 1931, in Nasiedle, Germany. He entered the seminary in Steyl on August 25, 1953. He began his novitiate in Steyl on September 8, 1954. He professed his first vows in Steyl on September 8, 1956.

In 1961, still in temporary vows, he was assigned to Ghana. He professed his perpetual vows in Nsawam on September 8, 1962.

Bro. Paul's mission in Ghana unfolded in two phases. First, there was the printing house of the Accra Diocese. With the arrival of Bro. Paul, in 1961, it was possible to expand and modernize the business. Next, retail orders were handled, stabilizing the financial situation. Finally, in 1994, the bishop turned over management of the print shop to a qualified layman.

Now he set out for the second phase in his work, viz. helping the Dominican Sisters from Germany with all kinds of technical support in their hospitals in Battor and especially in Akwatia. He also helped the sisters in other medical and social services, including digging over 300 wells and equipping over 200 schools with toilets. For 17 years, Bro. Paul kept the water running at the Dominican Sisters.

In 2012, the Dominican Sisters handed over the hospital to the diocese of Koforidua. They went back to their homeland. Meanwhile Bro. Paul had also reached the age of 81, and a minor accident at work had left its mark. After half a century of serving God and the people in Ghana, he, too, had his farewell on May 14, 2012.

After a brief stay at St. Augustin, he settled in the provincial retirement facility Wendelinus Home in St. Wendel. There he spent the last years of his life. Taken to St. Mary's Hospital in St. Wendel, he died there in the early morning of July 27, 2021.

**Fr. Siegfried Knaus (GER)**  
**23-07-2021; 37-61-63-67-67**



On July 8, 1937, Siegfried Knaus was born in Zußdorf, a small community in Ravensburg County in Southern Germany. From 1951 to 1954, he attended junior high school at the SVD minor seminary St. Johann in Blönried/Aulendorf, subsequently senior high school at the Arnold-Janssen-Gymnasium in St. Wendel from 1954 to 1961. After graduation, he began his novitiate in St. Gabriel near Vienna, Austria, on April 30, 1961. He professed his first vows on May 1, 1963. In 1965 he moved to the Mission Seminary St. Augustin near Bonn, Germany, to study philosophy and theology. In St. Augustin, he professed his perpetual vows on May 1, 1967, and was ordained a priest on September 23, 1967.

His mission assignment to Papua New Guinea did not push through because of his unstable health. The Generalate, therefore, assigned him to Germany. He engaged in pastoral work in his homeland, working in various places in Southern Germany as a member of the SVD District Oberschwaben until a few months before his death. Initially, he did many temporary pastoral jobs. Then two periods of some 20 years each was followed as parish assistant in two distinct parishes: 1974 to 1996 in Biberach County [parishes of Eberhardzell, Füramos, Mühlhausen, and Oberessendorf] and 1996 to 2013 in Ravensburg County [parishes of Gebrazhofen and Merazhofen].

In 2005, he became seriously ill with lymph gland cancer. But he recovered - which seemed like a miracle - and continued his work as part of the pastoral team. Finally, in the fall of 2013, at the age of 76, he moved to the St. Hildegard Home for the Elderly of the SSps in Oberdischingen. He served as chaplain until 2021.

Much of his pastoral work cannot be measured by visible success but could be felt and experienced in the parish. According to his motto, "Adsum," he always wanted to be there for the people. The altar boys were incredibly close to his heart; for them, he organized many events. He appreciated associations and family celebrations very much. He was also intensely committed to the elderly, whom he loved to visit.

Siegfried Knaus only spent a few weeks at the provincial retirement facility "Wendelinus Home" in St. Wendel, where he had come because of his fragile state of health. Nevertheless, he was grateful for the care given him. When his health deteriorated further, he was taken to the hospital. However, he died soon afterward due to multiple organ failure on July 23, 2021, at 84.

We thank God for calling Fr. Siegfried Knaus a missionary in Germany. We thank our confrere for his tireless commitment - despite his health limitations - to bringing God closer to the people and for his following of Jesus, which included accepting the cross.

**Fr. Gregorius Nitti (IDR)****16-07-2021; 76-97-99-06-07**

Gregorius Nitti was born on March 15, 1976, in Buraen, Diocese of Kupang in Indonesia. After graduating from Junior High school, at SMPK St. Yosef Naikoten, Kupang, he continued his senior secondary school at the minor Seminary St Rafael, Oepoi, Kupang, from 1993 – 1997. He began his novitiate in Kuwu on August 25, 1997. He professed his first vows in Kuwu on August 15, 1999. He declared his perpetual vows in Ledalero on August 15, 2006. He was ordained a priest at the Cathedral of Kupang by Bishop Petrus Turang Pr., on October 10, 2007. He received his first assignment in the Indonesia-Ruteng Province ( IDR).

He began his pastoral activities as an assistant parish priest in Bombok St. Ambrosius parish of Ruteng diocese from 2008 -2009. After that, Fr. Gregorius was assigned as assistant parish priest in Bima – Raba parish of Denpasar diocese from 2009- 2010. In 2010 he took another appointment as formator in the SVD Novitiate at Kuwu, Ruteng. Meantime he got an opportunity to spend some months attending the Dei Verbum course in Nemi, Italy.

He was a member of the Bible Center St. Arnoldus-SVD-SSpS. In 2014 Fr. Gregorius was elected as Rector of the Kuwu Novitiate community. In 2017, he was appointed as treasurer of Ruteng Province until his death. He was a thorough and diligent person in carrying out the tasks entrusted to him.

In October 2020, he complained of pain in his stomach and spine. In December 2020, he was rushed to the Siloam hospital at Labuan Bajo. For further treatment, he was taken to the Wirasakti and Leona hospital in Kupang. Eventually, he was referred to W.R. Yohanes Hospital. After an intensive examination, the doctor said that Fr. Gregorius had colon cancer in the last stage. The cancer was complicated by kidney stones, spinal loss, and pinched nerves. He underwent chemotherapy and other treatment.

On the evening of July 15, 2021, his blood pressure was slowly dropping. He received the Sacrament of Anointing of the sick. On July 16 at 11.00 a.m., he was declared dead by the hospital authority; he passed away at 45 years old. His mortal remains were laid to rest in the SVD Nenuk Cemetery.

**Fr. Bernardus Kota (IDE)****12-07-2021; 36-58-60-65-66**

Bernardus Kota was born on April 20, 1936, in Mataloko, belonging to the diocese of Ende, Indonesia. His primary schooling was in his home village and at Mangulewa. He then did his secondary studies at the St. Yohanes Berchmans Mi-

nor Seminary, Todabelu, which he completed in 1958. Wanting to be a missionary priest, he entered the SVD Novitiate at Ledalero on August 15, 1958. On August 15, 1960, he made his first profession in the Society in Ledalero. Studying philosophy and theology at Ledalero, he took his final vows on August 15, 1965. Then, on his 30th birthday, he was ordained a priest in Todabelu by Bishop Gabriel Manek SVD on April 20, 1966. He was appointed to Indonesia-Ende Region.

He had a pastoral year in the village of Wairpelit and then in Kewapante Parish until June 1967. He was then appointed to the Larantuka Diocese. On July 7, 1967, the Bishop of Larantuka placed him at the San Domingus Minor Seminary, Hokeng. The seminary needed a teacher of Indonesian Language and Literature. So Bernardus was sent to IKIP Sanata Dharma, Yogyakarta, where he obtained a BA in this field. He then returned to Hokeng, ready to commence teaching.

In 1971, Bernardus was appointed Director and Prefect of the senior seminarians of San Domingus Minor Seminary. Then on May 11, 1972, he was appointed the Rector of the seminary. While Rector, he continued teaching until the end of 1977, when he took an opportunity to study for his MA at Yogyakarta. While studying at IKIP Sanata Dharma, he also taught Etymology and Philology at that college. In addition, he was also a counselor of cadets at the military academy in Magelang.

In 1980, there was a plan to open a tertiary institute in Maumere. The SVD-Ende Provincial tasked Bernardus to approach several professors from Flores. They were in Yogyakarta to teach at the planned new institute. Bernardus was also transferred from Hokeng back to Ende Province, with the expectation that he would lead in the new institute. As it happened, the new tertiary institute was established in Kupang.

In 1981, Bernardus commenced teaching at SMAK Syuradikara High School, Ende. He was a member of the St. Mikhael Community in Ende. He remained a member of that community until his death. He was also involved in high school, holding different roles. He was Principal from 1990 until 1995, and he was a teacher until he retired. During this time, he also held various leadership positions in the St. Mikhael Community. In 2003, he represented Ende Province at the canonization ceremony of Arnold Janssen and Joseph Freinademetz.

Former students recall Bernardus being a strict disciplinarian and a dedicated teacher. He maintained contact with many alumni over the years, and they fondly remember him. He dedicated his entire priestly life to education, from his early days at the minor seminary at Hokeng to the high school in Ende. In addition, he was passionate about forming lay community leaders.

Bernardus Kota died on July 12, 2021, at the SSpS Clinic in Ende, Flores. He was 85 years old.

**Fr. Bernhard Schweizer (GER)****10-07-2021; 32-52-54-58-59**

Bernhard Schweizer was born on October 24, 1932, in Oeffingen in the Swabian region of Southern Germany. Before and during the Second World War, he attended elementary school in Böbingen/Rems. After the war, he attended secondary school in Schwäbisch Gmünd (1946-1948). On August 31, 1948, he entered the SVD minor seminary in Ingolstadt and completed his secondary education in 1952. On September 8, 1952, he began the novitiate in St. Augustin. After the first vows on May 1, 1954, and philosophy, he went to Brazil to study theology at the SVD major seminary in Santo Amaro (São Paulo). He professed final vows on March 1, 1958, and was ordained a priest on August 2, 1959.

He received the missionary assignment for the then still Belgian Congo. After preparation in France and Belgium, he arrived in the Congo on October 1, 1961. The country had become independent just one year earlier. Only ten years earlier, the SVD had taken over a territory from the Jesuits. Fr. Schweizer began his apostolate in Misay, first as a bush missionary (1961-63), then as a parish priest (1963-66). Finally, he became parish priest, for brief periods, in Mansanzayi (1967), Bagata (1968), and Fatundu (1968-70).

In 1970 he was called to Bandundu. There he was to spend the next 25 years in a variety of tasks. He was parish priest in St. Paul from 1970 to 1973 and again from 1975-1977. In 1974 he started the new parish of Nto-Luzingu, 1977-1981, the new parish of N.D. du Rosaire in the Malebo district. Then, from 1981 to 1993, he was a novice master at the novitiate in Bandundu. A whole generation of Congolese confreres began its religious life under his guidance.

Then he moved to Kinshasa (1996 – 2003). He served as praeses of the community of the Provincialate, vocation director, and responsible for the first Congolese missionaries abroad. He worked in the city parishes of St. Felix/Mombeke and St. Amand. In 2003-2006 he was again responsible for the novitiate in Bandundu. In 2007 he became the praeses of the community and director of the spirituality center “Sychar” in Ngondi in the diocese of Kenge. Here he felt completely in his element, open to new initiatives in the social and pastoral field, maintaining what had been done.

Given his dwindling strength, Fr. Schweizer took leave of the Congo on September 15, 2012, and returned to Germany. After some treatment and recuperation, he felt strong enough to take over the chaplain's position at home for the elderly of a women's religious community in Stolberg near Aachen. When his death seemed imminent, he was received in the SVD retirement facility Wendelinus Home in St. Wendel. There he passed away on July 10, 2021, at the age of 89.

For half a century (1961-2012), Fr. Schweizer served God and the people in the Congo. He let himself be infected by the faith of the Africans. He was always one hundred percent at the service of the local Church and the Congregation of the Divine Word Missionaries.

**Fr. Tadeusz Panek SVD (POL)****10-06-2021; 49 81 82 86 87**

Tadeusz Panek was born in Krotoszyn, Poland on September 24, 1949. After completing primary school in 1963, he continued his education at the local Hugo Kołłątaj High School. In 1967, he enrolled at the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań to study German. After graduating in 1972, he worked as a German language teacher at a high school in his hometown of Krotoszyn. At the same time, he began studies of the English language at Poznań University.

In 1981, following God's call, he entered the Society of the Divine Word. After a year of novitiate at St. Stanislaus Kostka House in Chludowo, near Poznań, he began his philosophical studies at the Divine Word Seminary in Nysa, and then in 1984 theology at the SVD Seminary in Pieniężno. Finally, on September 8, 1986, he professed his final vows in the Seminary Church in Pieniężno. He was ordained priest in Pieniężno on May 17, 1987, by Archbishop Edmund Piszcz.

He received a mission assignment to the Province of Chicago, USA. He carried out his ministry in St. Kitts in the Caribbean until 1989. Upon his return to Poland, his ministry included forming and teaching English at the Philosophy Department of the Divine Word Seminary in Nysa. From 1998 he served as director and lecturer of the SVD Language School in Nysa.

In the years 2003-2005, he lived at the Holy Spirit House in Warsaw. He was the editor of “Komunikaty Polskiej Prowincji” and the Provincial Coordinator for Justice and Peace and Integration of Creation. As of 2005, he taught English at the Divine Word Seminary in Pieniężno. In 2008, he returned to Warsaw and worked as a translator for the Provincial Office and the “Verbinum” Publishing House.

In 2010, he left Poland to carry out his ministry in Russia. After two years, he returned to Poland. He was appointed to the SVD House in Chludowo, where he served as a formator in the novitiate. One year later, he was transferred to Nysa, serving as chaplain to the Elizabethan Sisters. In 2017, he became chaplain to the Borromeo Sisters in Świerklaniec. However, after a few months, due to his deteriorating health, he returned to Nysa.

From 2019, he lived in the St. Luke's Nursing Ward at St. Joseph's House in Górna Grupa, where he passed away on June 10, 2021. He was laid there to rest at the SVD cemetery.



**APPOINTMENTS AND TRANSFERS****Appointments**

|            |                         |                                       |     |
|------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----|
| 19.07.2021 | Fr. D'Mello, Cajetan    | INC sup/dist Jhabua District          | aft |
| 19.07.2021 | Fr. K. Jacob, Jose      | ING MER Area Coordinator ASPAC Zone   |     |
| 13.08.2021 | Bro. Piedziewicz, Piotr | POL adm/dom Mission House Gorna Grupa | aft |

**Transfers**

|            |                              |                                    |
|------------|------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 13.07.2021 | Fr. Owino, Alex Omondi       | GER/KEN                            |
| 20.07.2021 | Fr. Piskorek, Ireneusz       | ROM/POL                            |
| 20.07.2021 | Fr. Klein, Alberto           | ARE/ROM (Collegio San Pietro-Rome) |
| 30.07.2021 | Fr. Amoro, Narciso           | POR/PHS                            |
| 30.07.2021 | Fr. Saco, Alberto            | ZAM/PHS                            |
| 31.07.2021 | Fr. Bertram, Sergio          | MEX/ARS for retirement             |
| 02.08.2021 | Fr. Bei, Marsianus Richardus | PHC/PNG for formation              |
| 02.08.2021 | Fr. Kondi, Nicholas          | PHC/JPN for formation              |

**Change of first assignment**

|            |                             |         |
|------------|-----------------------------|---------|
| 20.07.2021 | Fr. Nguyen, Dung Van Joseph | CHI/VIE |
| 23.07.2021 | Fr. Nsumina Engom, Trésor   | BRN/CNG |

