



Society of the Divine Word (SVD)

SVD Lay Partners

Newsletter - from Around the World

Issue 10, August 2019

Friends of SVD, Ghana



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Editorial

Let's Conceive and Proclaim the Impossible

Fearful and troubled, Mary found herself in the presence of the angel Gabriel. She could never have expected to hear the most incredible news – that she would have a child, and her son would be the Messiah. Although she could not comprehend how she would conceive the Saviour, she responded to God with “Yes”. That response was not a onetime reaction. It was the fruit borne from a life of surrendered love and it stretched forward to characterize her entire life.

As her birthday nears, we realize it's no ordinary birthday. It's the birthday of a very simple yet courageous woman; a homely yet daring woman. She dared to believe in herself and her Creator, leading to a lifestyle of believing in impossibilities. It's because of people like our Mother, that our salvation story moves forward with their initiative, their risk-taking, and their faith. The “Yes” she said, has inspired countless yesses today, as people seek to build upon the grace and blessings they experience in their lives.

One of the great teachings of Jesus Christ was that you and I carry within us immense possibilities. In urging us to be perfect as our Father in Heaven is perfect, Jesus was not taunting us or teasing us. He was telling us a powerful truth about our possibilities and about our potential. It is a truth almost too stunning to contemplate. Jesus sought to beckon us to move further along the pathway of dreaming and realizing the impossible – a pathway his mother was already treading upon.

It surely was not a coincidence that Arnold Janssen chose the birthday of Mother Mary to be the birthday of the Society of the Divine Word. It was God's Word that inspired Mary to conceive and bring the Divine Word into the world. St. Arnold most certainly saw Mary as the Society's constant help in moving ahead and facing the challenges. As Divine Word Missionaries, God has already entered our hearts through the gate of humility. Every day he meets us in mysterious ways; through nature, worship, prayer and especially through his people. He gazes us with love and opens us up to say ‘yes’ to his plans for us. Are we ready to conceive and proclaim Jesus in the world?



Susan Noronha
(Editor-in-chief)

Friends of SVD, Ghana

The SVD Lay Partners in Ghana and their First Delegate Conference

After last issue's special topic was the participation of SVD lay groups in World Youth Day, this time the focus will again be on one group. Since in Ghana the first national delegate

conference took place, it was only logical to focus on the Friends of SVD, Ghana.

Humble Beginnings!



Friends of SVD, St. Joseph's Parish, Kintampo

The first group of the SVD Lay Partners, *Friends of SVD*, of the Ghana Province was started in the year 1990 by the then Mission Secretary, Bro. Rudy Chamenyi, SVD at the SVD Retirement Home, McCarthy Hill, Accra. In the year 2009, through the initiative of Fr. Andrews Obeng Aboagye, SVD (who is currently the Director of the St. Arnold Janssen Spirituality Center, Accra-Ghana), a new group was started at St. Margaret Mary Parish in Dansoman-Accra and was officially inaugurated in 2014 by the Mission Secretary of the Province, Fr. Stephen Dogodzi, SVD. This was followed by St. Joseph's Parish in Kintampo in the Techiman Diocese, St. Augustine's Parish in Asesewa in the Koforidua Diocese, Sts. Peter & Paul Parish and Christ the King Parish (both in the Archdiocese of Accra). Currently, there are ten SVD Lay Partner groups in the Ghana Province.

The *Friends of SVD* had Miss Matilda Anim-Fofie as their representative for the First SVD International Lay Partners Workshop held in Nemi (Rome), Italy in October, 2017. Upon her return to Ghana, Matilda together with the Mission Secretary, Fr. Stephen Dogodzi, SVD, held interactive sessions with the SVD Lay Partner groups in the Province and shared the information and knowledge she acquired at the workshop.

Over the years, the *Friends of SVD* have carried out numerous activities to promote the propagation of the Divine Word through prayers for missions, support to formation houses, fund raising to support new missions, mission markets, reaching out to the poor, organize talks on the role of SVD Lay Partners in different parishes, to name a few. Our vision is to share in the spirituality of the Arnoldus family and the Characteristic Dimensions of the Society of the Divine Word. Our Mission is to partner with the Divine Word Missionaries so that our common motto will be realized; **Divine Word, Live in Our Hearts!**

Harriet A. Dzikunoo and Matilda Anim-Fofie

First Delegates Conference of Friends of SVD in Accra

The First Delegates Conference of the Friends of SVD was held at Christ the King Parish in Accra on Saturday, May 25, 2019 under the theme, "Our Vocation as SVD Lay Partners". The purpose of the conference was to offer an opportunity for the Friends of SVD to deepen their understanding of their role as SVD Lay Partners, so that they can continue to contribute meaningfully to the evangelization mission of the Divine Word Missionaries. The General Mission Secretary, Fr. Stanislaus Thanuzraj Lazar, SVD participated in the conference.

Fr. Andrew Campbell, SVD, the Parish Priest of Christ the King Parish, in his welcome address stressed on the indispensable role of the laity in the evangelization mission of the Church. The keynote address was delivered by Fr. Stanislaus Thanuzraj Lazar, SVD who also set a tone for the event. He mentioned that Pope Francis describes the lay faithful as disciples of God and not as second-class members in the Church's hierarchy and cautions the clergy not to abuse their power and not to clericalize the laity. Each of us is entrusted with a unique role to proclaim the Divine Word. Fr. Stanislaus Thanuzraj Lazar gave an insight into the five different categories of SVD Lay Partners; lay groups (catechists and Sunday school teachers), lay collaborators (those working in SVD institutions), lay supporters (those who help to raise funds), lay missionaries and lay associate groups (such as Friends of SVD). He stressed on the importance of adequate prayer and formation before one is initiated as an SVD Lay Partner. He encouraged Ghana's participation in the next International SVD Lay Partners Workshop to be held in Nemi, Rome (Italy) in September 2020.

The Chairman of the event and a lay partner, Mr. Augustine Deguenon commended the delegates for their readiness to support the Divine Word Missionaries in their missionary activities. He was hopeful that the Delegates Conference would help to reinforce their commitment and zeal.

In attendance at the First Delegates Conference of the Friends of SVD were, the Provincial Superior of the Ghana Province, Fr. George Clement Angmor, SVD, the Mission Secretary of the Province, Fr. Stephen Dogodzi, SVD, the Mission Coordinator for Koforidua District, Br. Stephen Bonsu, SVD, SVD confreres and the Mission Secretary of the Missionary Sisters Servants of the Holy Spirit, Sr. Mary Nyarko,

SSpS. The conference was attended by sixty delegates from the following Parishes and communities - Christ the King, St. Charles Lwanga, St. Luke the Evangelist, St. Margaret Mary, SS Peter & Paul, St. Arnold Janssen House, SVD Retirement Home (all in the Archdiocese of Accra), St. Augustine and Holy Trinity (both in the Diocese of Koforidua). It was decided that preparations should begin soon for the subsequent SVD Lay Partners Delegates Conference next year.

Message from the Provincial Superior

The Provincial Superior, Fr. George Clement Angmor, SVD expressed his gratitude to the SVD Lay Partners for their time and availability for the programme of the day, more so, for the many years of collaborating and working together to spread the kingdom of God. He expressed the hope that we shall continue to work together to establish new groups in other places or Parishes. He assured the participants that all the SVD confreres in the Province are supposed to help them to promote the Lay Partners in different places. He also assured his complete support to the Friends of SVD.

Message from the Mission Secretary

The Mission Secretary of the Province, Fr. Stephen Dogodzi, SVD encouraged Friends of SVD to continue to remain a strong component of the Arnoldus Family. He said "Our founder worked with many lay people to make the congregation what it is today. We also believe as a Province, that sharing in our spirituality and our charism with you, will help us spread the Divine Word who became flesh and pitched His tent among us. Thanks to you all for coming and making the dream of having this delegates conference come true. May the Divine Word continue to live in our hearts and in the hearts of all people".

Harriet A. Dzikonoo y Matilda Anim-Fofie



Plenum



Delegates with Fr. Stanislaus Thanuzraj Lazar, SVD



The group of Christ the King's Parish, Accra



The group of St. Augustine's Parish, Asesewa



The group of St. Luke's Parish



The group of St. Margaret Mary's Parish



The group of Sts Peter and Paul' Parish, New Aplaku, Accra



Delegate conference



Delegate conference



Delegate conference



Profession of First Vows



Evangelisation walk



AFRAM ZONE



Ghana (GHA)

Friends of SVD - Activities in the First Half of the Year

Lenten Recollection

On March 9, 2019, the *Friends of SVD* in the Archdiocese of Accra had their Lenten recollection on the theme "Significance of Arnoldus Spiritual Foundation". This was delivered by Br. John Akuffo, SVD. He emphasized the Friends to be steadfast in prayer, persevere at all times and not despair, for such was the faith of the founding generation of the Arnoldus family. The recollection ended with penitential service and Holy Mass.

JPIC Visits to Nsawam Prison

The Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) office of the Society of the Divine Word, Ghana Province visited inmates of the Nsawam Medium Prison in Ghana on May 11, 2019. The JPIC Coordinator, Fr. Peter Kabutey, SVD led the

visit and was accompanied by *Friends of SVD* from St. Charles Lwanga Parish, Abeka-Accra. A donation of consumables and toiletries for the inmates were received by the Chief Superintendent of Prisons (CSP) Fr. Martin Padi, Chaplain to the prison. He thanked the group for the kind gesture.

Fr. Peter Kabutey, SVD, shared a message of hope from Mathew 11:28 with the inmates. He assured them of God's love irrespective of their condition. He added that they should not see their situations as the end of their lives but rather have faith that God has a purpose for each of them.

Visit by the General Mission Secretary

The General Mission Secretary of the SVD, Fr. Stanislaus Thanuzraj Lazar, SVD visited Ghana Province *en route* to Togo for the AFRAM Zonal Meeting for Coordinators. While in Ghana, he met with the *Friends of SVD* at St. Joseph's Parish, Kintampo in the Techiman Diocese on May 22, 2019. On May 25, he participated in the First Delegates Conference of the *Friends of SVD* at Christ the King Parish, Accra.

On Sunday, May 26, Fr. Lazar joined St. Margaret Mary Parish, Dansoman-Accra for the launch of the 10th anniversary of the presence of *Friends of SVD* in the Parish. The group was inaugurated during the SVD priestly ordination on August 9, 2009. The thanksgiving Holy Mass of the 10th anniversary is scheduled for September 2019.

Harriet A. Dzikunoo



Tanzania (KEN)

Friends of SVD - The Gift of the Laity



Many religious congregations, including the Society of the Divine Word Missionaries, have incorporated a lay group in their religious families. The Arnoldus family has a group known as the *Friends of SVD* which is officially recognized and whose role is to boost the outreach of the consecrated missionaries to the people of God.

The local Churches have also amplified the participation of its laity in the life of the Church. The lay people, under the leadership of the Pastoral Councils, play a very big role in the missionary life of the Church.

Here in East Africa, the establishment of the Small Christian Communities by the Association of Member Episcopal Conferences in Eastern Africa (AMECEA) has given a new impetus to the Catholic Church in this part of the world. Here in Tanzania, the Catholic Church is marking 50 years of the Council of the Laity. The celebrations began at the parish level in all the dioceses and right now they are at the deanery level. The Society of the Divine Word runs three of the eight parishes in



the Arusha City Western Deanery. As part of these celebrations, a number of programs have been going, including ball games, choir competitions, and Bible quizzes. So far, our parishes have been doing well in these events. The Bible quiz has especially highlighted the biblical dimension in our parishes.

With the advancement in education, lay people are now exposed to the theological aspect of the mission of the Church and many are able to understand the Church as defined by the Vatican Council. As the Church also experiences a lot of turmoil in the wake of various scandals, an educated laity will play an important role to prevent these embarrassing scandals in the future.

Fr. Lawrence Muthee M'gaiti, SVD
Coordinator for Communications, (KEN)





ASPAC ZONE



First ASPAC SVD Lay Partners Gathering

Tagaytay, The Philippines - November 2019

Inspired by the highlights of the 18th General Chapter of the Society of the Divine Word, with the theme "The Love of Christ Impels Us", a gathering of SVD Lay Partners from ASPAC will be held on November 18-25, 2019 at the *Divine Word Mission Institute Studies* (DWIMS), Divine Word Seminary, Tagaytay City, Philippines. ASPAC is formed of Philippines, Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Bangladesh, China, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, Macau, Myanmar, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, Timor Leste and Vietnam. Around 30-40 representatives are expected to participate in this event.

This gathering is planned together with the ASPAC Executive Committee (ExCom) members, under the leadership and guidance of Fr. Stanislaus Thanuzraj Lazar, SVD (General Mission Secretary), Fr. Gabriel Suban Koten, SVD (ASPAC Zonal Coordinator), Fr. Truc Quoc John, SVD (ASPAC Mission Area Coordinator). Moderator for the gathering will be Fr. Antonio Pernia, SVD (former SVD Superior General). LSSAJ under the leadership of Tyrone Cimafranca (Chairman) and Cris Lim (President) together with the SVD Lay Partner- PH North, Mike & GeeO Paderon will play vital roles in making this event meaningful. Fabian Pagaduan and Daisy Leones, LSSAJ Vice-Presidents for Internal & External respectively, are

tasked as event chairman and coordinators.

It is an occasion for sharing of structure, formation and mission experiences, and to learn Arnoldus Spirituality and collaboration. Participants will have an opportunity for immersion/exposure to a particular mission area of LSSAJ. At the end of this gathering, it hopes to formulate action plans and commitment for all SVD Lay Partners in collaboration with the rest of the Arnoldus Family. This gathering will also help in preparation for the second SVD Lay Partners Workshop in Nemi next year.

Daisy Leones



India (INE)

SVD Lay Associate Group - First Anniversary

To mark the first anniversary of the formation of SVD Lay Associate Group, there was half-a-day program organized by the members of the group on May 12, 2019, at *Vidya Jyoti* Minor Seminary, Lungai, Odisha. The group was formed on May 17, 2018 under their own initiative.

The program of the day comprised of prayer service, talk, evaluation and thanksgiving Eucharist. Initial half an hour was spent in prayer service. The biblical passage taken from the Prologue of St. John reminded of the original inspiration drawn from it by Saint Arnold Janssen prior to founding the Congregation. After the prayer service, Fr. Anuranjan Bilung, SVD, explained to them the indispensable role of the laity in the mission of the Church. He underscored their role in the light of the teachings of the Church and Saint Arnold's openness to involve the laity in his missionary undertakings. After the talk there was an evaluation on how the members journeyed together last one year as SVD lay associates. It was evident that they have a keen interest to know the Society, and thus expressed a strong desire to be part of this great missionary family (SVD).

To encourage the members, the two *Vidya Jyoti* staff members, Fr. Ajay Kerketta, SVD and Fr. Silvaraj Duddu, SVD were present. On that occasion, the members consigned the financial contribution they made all through the year to Fr. Ajay

Kerketta, SVD the Rector of the Seminary, which will be de-frayed for the education of the economically deserving seminarians. The program concluded with a thanksgiving Eucharist, followed by the fellowship meal.

INE Provincial Circular (June 2019)



India (INM)

Disciples of the Divine Word (DDW) - Two important events



Passover Celebration

The SVD Lay Partners, INM (*Disciples of the Divine Word - DDW*) celebrated the Passover Seder on Saturday, March 30, 2019 at Atma-Darshan, Mumbai. Fr. Donald D'Souza, SVD and Susan Noronha guided and accompanied the DDW members into the Passover experience.

The Passover was celebrated from a Christian perspective preserving the Jewish traditions and experiencing the faith journey of the Israelites. We observed one of the most important annual events on the Hebrew calendar by commemorating the Exodus story, drinking four cups of wine and partaking of symbolic foods placed on the Passover Seder Plate. It helped us to reconnect with the Israelites' journey out of Egypt, and to recall our own spiritual journey. Meaningful traditions were performed throughout the Seder, such as the lighting of candles, washing of hands and the search for the *afikoman* that was hidden and also the washing of the feet.

Around 45 DDW members took part in the Passover Seder. We invited Sanjay and Grace, recently married couple, as our special guests for the Passover Seder. Sanjay and Grace, like thousands more, are migrant workers in the city of Mumbai who have journeyed like the Israelites in their struggle to find better lives and at present are working for SVD institutions.

Afikoman

A half-piece of matzo which is broken in two during the early stages of the Passover Seder and set aside to be eaten as a dessert after the meal.



"It was a beautiful, unique and enriching spiritual experience, etched in our memories forever", expressed Valerie Stanley, one of the DDW members.

Orientation Programme for Teachers at St. Arnold's Central School, Mysuru

Lorna D'Souza, SVD Lay Partner (DDW), conducted two days orientation programme for the staff of St. Arnold's Central School, Mysuru on 24 and 25 May, 2019. The 60 teachers who attended the programme were very enthusiastic and open to learn. Thanks to Fr. Sunil Menezes, SVD, Principal of the School, for this initiative.

Being a person of vast experience in the teaching profession, Lorna shared her experience and dealings with students, parents, staff and superiors without any hesitation. She openly shared some of her very happy and sad incidents from her family life which added a personal touch to the entire seminar. Facing hardships and challenges with tactfulness coupled with courage and determination, so as to bring about radical changes in the lives of students, colleagues, management and parents, were indeed enriching and motivating.

Susan Noronha



Indonesia (IDJ)

Soverdia - Overview of last Months' Activities



Soverdia is the official name of the SVD Lay Partners in the SVD Province of Java - Indonesia. Though Soverdia has been present since 2012 in St. Joseph Parish, Denpasar, Bali, it was officially launched on the feast of Holy Trinity, 2017 by Soverdia Moderator, Fr. Hendrikus Meko, SVD (Java-Indonesia Province). Prior to his appointment, we were introduced to the SVD spirituality, the history of the congregation, St. Arnold Janssen and Arnoldus family.

Currently there are 35 active members of Soverdia. More are showing interest in participating in Soverdia's activities. With our own awareness and willingness, we commit to learn, understand and live the spirituality of the Divine Word. We want to support the SVD missions with our prayers for SVD priests and brothers who work in missions throughout the world.

Visitation – SVD Novitiate, Batu - Malang

On May 15-21, 2019, we hosted the “Emmaus Journey”. This time there were 25 brothers and 2 priests who came to visit Bali. They visited the SVD parishes and carried out SVD animation programs at *St. Peter Parish*, Monang Maning, *Holy Trinity Parish*, Tuka and *The Church of Jesus the Good Shepherd* of *St. Joseph Parish*, Denpasar. They also visited the *Holy Spirit Seminary*, Tuka and carried out SVD introduction and animation for the seminarians.

We organized recreational activities for the brothers and priests, including rafting, visit to Pandawa and Kuta beach,



Garuda Wisnu Kencana Monument, Hindu Ulundanu Temple, and SVD hydroponic garden in Pancarari. We prayed Breviary Service, Salve to God and the Holy Spirit, followed by Mass and dinner. We invited the donors who supported us in the success of the Emmaus Journey.

Mass at Kerobokan Prison Institute, Bali

On the first Sunday of Lent, along with Fr. Yohanes Madya, SVD, we had the opportunity to visit and celebrate Mass for catholic prisoners at Kerobokan Prison, Bali. Father placed ashes on their foreheads marking the beginning of Lent. We also had the Good Friday service in the prison with Fr. Guido Fahik, SVD. Our emotions were high with happiness and satisfaction because the Soverdia and SVD came together to bring relief and joy to the prisoners.

Salve to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and to the Holy Spirit

We pray for the Arnoldus family by offering Mass and praying the Salve Regina every first Thursday of the month to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and every third Monday to the Holy Spirit.

Paulina Suharsi



The Philippines (PHC)

The Lay Society of St. Arnold Janssen (LSSAJ) - Faith Transforming Life Session and Retreat



Faith Transforming Life Session

LSSAJ established its second chapter in General Santos City in the Province of South Cotabato. A Faith Transforming Life Session (FTL) was held on December 27, 2018 with 26 participants, mostly community leaders of Barangay Fatima, a small community located about 45 minutes from the city proper. The FTL was conducted by Daisy Leones, Board Director/Corporate Secretary, now elected as Vice President-External.

Under the able leadership of Danny Remoroza, Chapter President, LSSAJ-Gensan Chapter is now actively engaged in various activities, foremost of which is the community clean-up program, waste management and environmental protection in collaboration with the local government unit (LGU of Barangay Fatima). For the second quarter of 2019, they will hold its first poverty alleviation program by engaging the members in vermiculture and organic farming. Members hold their regular weekly prayer meeting and monthly general assembly every first Saturday of the month.



Annual Lenten Retreat

The Annual Lenten Retreat of the LSSAJ was held on April 13-14, 2019 at the Bukal Ng Buhay, Bustos, Bulacan attended by 26 participants with, Meditation Theme: "Living What You Believe". Topics were LSSAJ Perspectives, with Sammy Yap as speaker; "Jesus Christ, True God and True Man" by Charlie Avila; "Jesus Christ And Me" by Jules Quinabo; "Applied Paschal Mysteries" by Myrna Villarosa; "LSSAJ Forward Perspectives" by Chairman Tyrone Cimafranca and President Cris Lim.

Retreatants joined the Palm Sunday Celebration at the Parish Church. Precious hours of bonding with the orphans at the Bukal Ng Buhay orphanage were also spent by the retreatants to complete the two days with the Lord. Our sincere appreciation to all who made this retreat very meaningful and successful. This was conducted and facilitated by members of LSSAJ.

Daisy Leones



EUROPA ZONE

Germany (GER)

SVD-Partner - Festival with a Difference: Augustiner Klosterfest*



Start work early (about two years), ask groups to add ideas, invite musicians and dancers, order three stages, buy food and drinks, let 600 volunteers be busy – and you are ready for 30,000 guests. That is not a wizard's secret recipe in a fairy tale but real hard SVD-work for *Augustiner Klosterfest*.

On 15 and 16 June, 2019, the 8th festival of Sankt Augustin Monastery was celebrated and people enjoyed the difference to other festivals. On the one hand, you could find what you can expect: music, food and drinks, games for children and information stands. But SVD makes the difference: Many native speaking catholic communities cooked and realized a „World-Food-Festival“. There were prayers and Holy Masses and the catholic organisations informed about their work. At night a guided tour of the SVD-museum showed special aspects of the culture of Africa and Papua New Guinea. And last but not least the magician and SVD-father Hermann Bickel fascinated the audience with his farewell performance. Of course those in need were not forgotten: The benefit was for Fr. Francis Naduviledathu's work in the refugees' camp Bidibidi in Uganda.



For the festival takes place every three years, *SVD-Partner* were there for the first time. Their contribution to the program was a prayer for those in war and need and an invitation to learn more about SVD lay partners in a personal talk. During the festival *SVD-Partner* welcomed people in their tent and gave them a specially folded paper (old maps) with an impulse for their next journey.

Summary and conclusion: It was a beautiful festival, everybody had a good time and many inspiring encounters. Be sure we will be there next time!

The following video clip gives an impression of the festival: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M0aPVEQD58s>

*Festival of the SVD mission house, Sankt Augustin.

Maria Wego

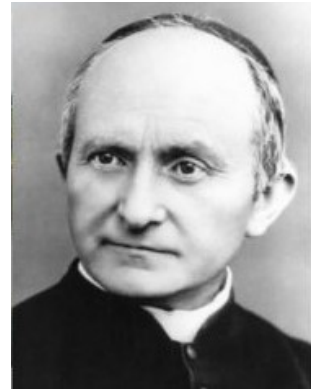


Spain (ESP)

Laicos Verbo Divino (LVD) - The Will of God in My Life

On May 18, 2019, some of the former members of Laicos Verbo Divino (LVD) met in Zamora to initiate the beginning of a small local group of friends who came together, to pray and meditate on the SVD charism, beginning with the theme "The will of God (In Arnold Janssen's and in my life) "

To form ourselves in this charism, we began the meeting with a welcome coffee and the Quarter Hour Prayer. The afternoon's formation programme began with the screening of a video with the life and difficulties that the founding fathers went through at the beginning of the founding of the Society of the Divine Word and understanding the basic features of Arnoldus Spirituality: Trinity, Devotions, the will of God and the Mission, with Fr. Pedro de Dios, SVD. Together, we watched the performance "Witness to the Word" by Fr. Caga, SVD, held at the Tagaytay seminary in the Philippines.



Later, in the Chapel, we had a moment of emotional and personal communal prayer, where each participant drew two lines representing his/her life. One line signifying three important events in life and on the other the marking that God had left in those events. Each one presented his/her chart and read his/her prayer, petition or thanksgiving. We concluded our gathering by praying all together a prayer prepared by the coordinators of the group.

Laura Díez Bilbao
(Group coordinator Steyl Zamora)





PANAM ZONE



CHILE (CHI)

ALMA Verbita - Living the Pentecost



On Saturday, June 1, 2019 we went very early for our mission planned for that day. The morning was very cold, but our hearts were beating fast for the beautiful experience which awaited us, giving warmth and energy, and motivating us to embark on the journey.

In the town of El Monte, many families who wanted their homes to be blessed were waiting for us. Many sick people desired to receive Holy Communion. The day was certainly short, in terms of time, to give answers to all of them.

Inspired and guided by the Holy Spirit and the Trinitarian Love of the Most Holy Trinity, the missionaries visited each of their homes, to share the Word of God and to experience the love of God with each of the families who awaited us. Many sick people patiently waited for the visit of God to each one of them, through the sacrament of Holy Communion.



The Spirit of God was there in our midst. In the loneliness and abandonment of all these patients, the vast majority being elderly. Also in the 20 elderly adults, who came to the fraternal dining hall in search of their only food for the day, we felt the presence of the Spirit of God.

In all, some families depend on the solidarity and dedication of this dining room which provides them food every day.

Certainly, the Spirit of God was in that place and worked on each of the persons present there.

„And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever, the Spirit of truth”.
(John 14: 16-17).

Elena Ortiz



MEXICO (MEX)

Misioneros Auxiliares del Verbo Divino (MAVD) - A Madness Called Mission



The *Misioneros Auxiliares del Verbo Divino* in Mexico, participated in the Holy Week mission from April 14 to 21, 2019. We served communities in the states of Chiapas (Parish of Salto de Agua, Palenque and Playas de Catatzá), Oaxaca (Parish of San Juan Yae and Yagavila), Hidalgo (Parish of Santiago de Anaya and Huejutla) and Colima (Manzanillo).

We had a participation of 219 missionaries of all ages, from the base groups from;

Region A - *Santa Faustina Kowalsca, Amely, San Alberto Magno, Dios Salud, Santos Mártires Isabel and Naty, Nuestra Señora del Rosario and Santa Rosa de Lima*

Region B - *San Juan Pablo II*

Region C - *Seguidores del Verbo Divino, Semilla de Dios and Trinidad Chalma*

Region D - *Santo Cristo, San Antonio, San Marcos, Trinidad Pachuca, Mahets'i and Padre Andrés Rentka*

Region E - *Granito de Mostaza*

With great spirit, we shared the Gospel quote of Mary's YES (Luke 1, 26-38) among biblical circles, themes for children and young people. We celebrated and participated the Word

with the community. We made ours the phrase of our founder St. Arnold Janssen "The Announcement of Gospel is the Most Sublime Expression of Love to the Neighbour".

Parallely, we carried out medical, dental and ophthalmological work in communities of Huejutla Hidalgo, and taking the phrase "The Lord Challenges our Faith to Make Something New". We were able to take dental equipment for the first time to the community of San Juan Yae in Oaxaca with the Fr. Sonny Wangge, SVD from Indonesia. On this occasion, as always, we had the support of SVD seminarians, SVD Fathers and SSps sisters.

"YOUR LIFE IS OUR LIFE; YOUR MISSION IS OUR MISSION."

The love and grace of God have brought us together from diverse personal, cultural and social contexts, in this lay missionary association, consecrated to the Divine Word and distinguished by its name.

José Manuel Contreras Bautista



PANAMA (CAM)

Misioneros Laicos del Verbo Divino - Mesoamerican Subzone Meeting



From June 17 to 21, the Mesoamerican Subzone Meeting was held at the Central American Region (CAM) Central House in Panama City. The Provincial Superior of Mexico, Fr. John Beñas, SVD and the Regional Superior of CAM, Fr. Jesu David Selvasekar, SVD, the coordinators of the four Characteristic Dimensions, lay associates of the Divine Word, and the lay collaborators participated in the meeting. During the days of the encounter, a particular focus was on the Biblical Apostolate, Missionary Animation, JPIC, and Communication. There was a total of seven SVD Lay Partners, four from Mexico and 3 from Panama who participated in the meeting.

Fr. Marek Vanus, SVD, General Coordinator of the Biblical Apostolate, as representative of the other General Coordinators, gave an overview of the positions and vision of the XVIII General Chapter. The Zonal Co-ordinator of PANAM, Fr. Marcelo Cattaneo, SVD gave his insights and also updated on the Zone. The different dimensions shared their activities and best practices in various commitments and ministries.



At the end of the meeting, a plan was created with goals and strategic lines of action. The participants shared about the workshops in Mexico, a platform of biblical studies in CAM, and the experience of sharing of resources, among others. During the meeting, the Eucharist was held in the SVD Parishes *Virgen de la Medalla Milagrosa* and *San Jerónimo*. The participants were received with great joy and a lively celebration.

The meeting was fruitful, and the interaction and sharing brought about the desired results.

Rubiela Ramírez de Rodríguez and Fr. David Selvasekar, SVD
(from Arnoldus Nota)



~ Last but not the Least ~

Visit to Ghana and Togo

Meetings with SVD Lay Partners



Friends of SVD, Benin

My visit to Ghana and Togo was a learning experience, it was a good opportunity to meet the missionaries and SVD lay partners. Although, this was a hectic trip visiting various parishes, institutions and people, meeting the SVD lay partners in some places enthralled me seeing their interest and their commitment to the mission. Here, I share my experience of meeting the lay partners in these countries.

In Kintampo Parish, Ghana, Fr. Stephen Dogodzi, SVD, the mission secretary of GHA Province, Fr. Alexander P.C., SVD, the Parish Priest and myself met a small group of SVD lay partners on 22nd May. They are keen to continue the missionary dimension in their group; their enthusiasm is commendable to reach out to others in the Parish.

The First National SVD Lay Partners Delegates meeting was held at *Christ the King Parish, Accra, Ghana* on 25th May; nearly 60 participants came for this convention. Some of them came from far places too. I gave them a talk on the SVD lay partners. Most of them are actively involved for many years. They have a desire to grow in spirituality and want to

deepen the understanding of the charism. They do missionary activities in their parishes.

Fr. Marek Pogorzelski, SVD is the mission secretary of TOG Province, he introduced the lay partners group in Ouake Parish, Benin on 2nd June. There were 15 of them who came for this meeting, these persons are well informed about the Arnoldus family and are keen to get involved in missionary activities. They meet every Sunday after Mass having some activities in the group. There is a lot of good will but spiritual animation is vital for the group.

Fr. Narui Daisuke, SVD, Generalate JPIC Coordinator and I visited *Paroisse Notre Dame Sous La Croix D'Agbalepedogan, Lome, Togo* for the meeting with the SVD Friends and SVD Lay Associates on 6th June. There are two groups in this Parish, both are very active, many youngsters are members of these groups. They are very enthusiastic being SVD lay partners. Over 30 persons came for the meeting; there was a torrential rain that evening and novena for Pentecost, thus we began our gathering a little late in the evening, otherwise, a larger meeting was planned with extensive talks and discussion. Still, I was very much edified to see the people from this capital city, in spite of work and heavy rain, they came for the meeting.

All these groups are keen to learn more about the Arnoldus spirituality and have shown the desire to do more missionary activities. It was very much encouraging to see their thirst, involvement and enthusiasm identifying as SVD lay partners.

Fr. Stanislaus Thanuzraj Lazar, SVD
Generalate Mission Secretary, Rome



Friends of SVD, Togo



Friends of SVD, Togo

ARNOLDUS FAMILY

Four Pillars - Four Candles



For a long time we have “known” that from the earliest days “LAY PEOPLE” were included in the “Arnoldus Family”. They participated in shaping the worldwide missionary enterprise in many areas. – Our “awareness” of this is ever increasing.

Lay people are not “amateurs”, but in reality they are “experts” in many fields of work. God has evidently entrusted to them a missionary vocation which fills us with grateful respect.

These “Friends and Partners” (A&S=Amici & Socii) are a strong pillar in the “ARNOLDUS FAMILY”

This has become visible three years ago, when four candles are standing at the tomb of Arnold Janssen as symbols of the Divine Word Missionaries SVD, the Missionary Sisters Servants of the Holy Spirit SSPS, the Adoration Sisters Servants of the Holy spirit SSPSAP, and the Friends and Partners A&S in the “Arnoldus Family”; all four branches desire to inspire and support each other in their common “vocation, baptism, and mission” with heart and hand.

In this place, on July 18, 2019, as the Adoration Sisters end their General Chapter, a set of four candles with the corresponding emblems was handed to the superior of each of the SSPSAP convents. – To each set of candles a short text is attached explaining the symbolism.

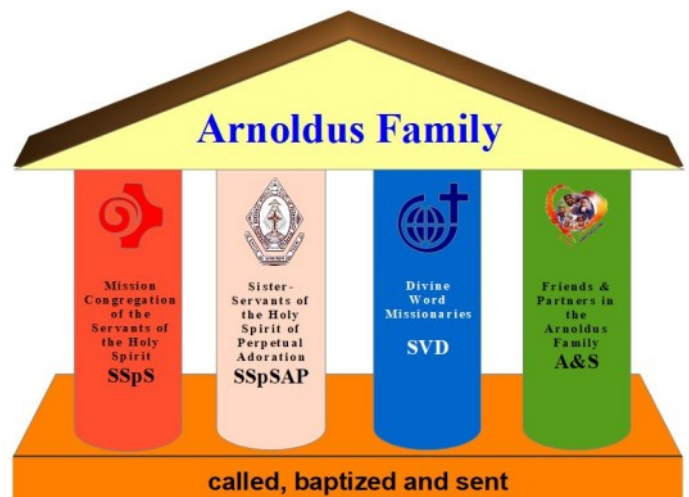
We would like to suggest that four candles with the emblems of the four branches of the Arnoldus Family will also be set up



in all houses of the SSPS and the SVD, thus demonstrating our belonging and joint mission. While the interested confreres and sisters of each locality take care of getting four candles they shall receive from us per e-mail the attachable emblems and the explanatory text. - A sponsor for this has already been found.

We believe that this can be a good sign of unity within the Arnoldus Family.

Fr. Rüdiger Brunner, SVD



Take a look at „God and the World“- column”

The catholic church of Düsseldorf (Germany) carries out the missionary campaign #himmelsleuchten from 20th June 2019 to 2nd February 2020. Two SVD-Partner live there and participate with different activities. Learn more about it and be always up to date via the column „Gott und die Welt – God and the World“ on the blog Düsseldorf-Post (www.duessel-post.de).

Maria Wego



Save the Date

Gebetsbrücke - Prayer Bridge - Puente de la Oración



https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/poveri/documents/papa-francesco_20190613_messaggio-iii-giornatamondiale-poveri-2019.html

Welttag der Armen - World Day of the Poor - Jornada Mundial de los Pobres

As in the last years SVD-Partner invite to the Prayer Bridge on World Day of the Poor on Sunday 17th November 2019. Sign in now on www.svd-partner.eu or send an e-mail directly to SVD-Partner (kontakt@svd-partner.eu).

In June, Pope Francis has published the 3rd World Day's theme "The hope of the poor shall not perish for ever". You will find his message on the Vatican's website.

Maria Wego



SVD Mission Houses

St. Joseph Freinademetz House of Philosophy, Tamale and Divine Word Novitiate, Nkwatia-Kwahu (Ghana)

St. Joseph Freinademetz House of Philosophy in Tamale was founded in 1984 and the SVD Mission House the novitiate in Nkwatia-Kwahu in 1957.



Chapel of the St. Joseph Freinademetz House of Philosophy



Divine Word Novitiate



Divine Word Novitiate



Extraordinary Missionary Month October 2019

Baptized and sent - the Church of Christ on Mission in the World

“Baptized and Sent: The Church of Christ on Mission in the World” is the theme chosen by Pope Francis for the Extraordinary Mission Month. Awakening the awareness of the *missio ad gentes*, and reinvigorating the sense of responsibility for proclaiming the Gospel with new enthusiasm, are themes that combine the pastoral concern of Pope Benedict XV in his Apostolic Letter *Maximum Illud*, published 100 years ago, with the missionary vitality expressed by Pope Francis in his recent Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*: “Missionary action is the paradigm of every work of the Church.” (EG 15)



Prayer proposed by Pope Francis

Heavenly Father,
when your only begotten Son Jesus Christ
rose from the dead,
he commissioned his followers
to “go and make disciples of all nations”
and you remind us that through our Baptism
we are made sharers in the mission of the Church.

Empower us by the gifts of the Holy Spirit
to be courageous and zealous
in bearing witness to the Gospel,
so that the mission entrusted to the Church,
which is still very far from completion,
may find new and efficacious expressions
that bring life and light to the world.

Help us make it possible for all peoples
to experience the saving love
and mercy of Jesus Christ,
who lives and reigns with you
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
One God, forever and ever.

Amen

Imprint

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