



# SVD LAY PARTNERS

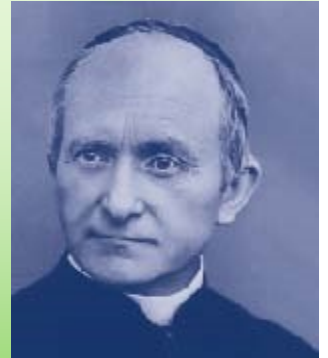
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Issue 3

NEWSLETTER OF SVD LAY PARTNERS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

Private circulation for Divine Word Missionary Lay Partners

To keep authenticity we receive news items only from the authorized contact person.

## EDITORIAL



Dear friends,

Easter Greetings!

In this issue, we are privileged to share the work of many committed and thoughtful SVD Lay Missionaries across the world.

We are a resurrection people. Our experience of emptiness invites us to reconstruct our personal narratives; from narratives of gloom to narratives of joy; from narratives of helplessness to narratives of the can-do attitude. Emptiness invites us to go beyond the limits we have imposed on ourselves. The empty tomb of Jesus is a powerful symbol of hope and newness to all of us who follow Him. There's another day, another road, another story to tell! Our Victory, our resurrection is right here, and now....!!!

What is my story.....?

A huge thank you to all the people who contributed writing the wonderful and inspiring mission experiences, without which there wouldn't have been this newsletter. We would love to hear from everyone...please keep the emails flowing!

**May the example and the intercession of our founder, St Arnold Janssen, encourage us to respond generously to our Christian vocation.**

God bless!

Susan & Rosa – Editors

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### ***"It was not me but the Lord"***

In the life and work of Saint Arnold, God reveals himself as the God of life for all, as God who is "Good News" for all people. To live that message and pass it on in word and deed was Saint Arnold's passionate desire and enduring legacy.

## German Friends and Partners—Speaker Coordination team

**Submitted by Bernd Heinz Hustig**

"The German Friends and Partners of the Arnold Janssen Family will hold a meeting with the whole Arnold Janssen Family (Lay partners, SVD, SSpS and SSpSAP) during the last weekend of May in Steyl.

At the lower Church of the St. Michael Motherhouse in Steyl, on the left side three candles are placed, each representing one of the three congregations (SVD, SSpS and SSpSAP). On May 27, 2017, fourth candle will be placed there, representing all Lay Partner Groups

of the Arnold Janssen Family worldwide, whether they are officially recognized or not.

For more information download "<http://www.steylerfreundeskreise.eu/index.htm/files/Einladung%202017.pdf>" For Information: our new email-address is [freundeskreise@steyler.eu](mailto:freundeskreise@steyler.eu)



## International Workshop for SVD Lay Partners

The Society of the Divine Word is organizing an intensive programme for SVD Lay Partners from 14 to 28 October, 2017 at Nemi, Rome (arrival October 14 and departure October 29). This is an excellent opportunity for the representatives of lay partners groups in various countries to know more about the SVD Society as well as its charisms.

### Objectives of the Workshop

- ☐ To promote more involvement with the Society of the Divine Word
- ☐ To know the roots, the spirituality and the congregation more closely with the Generalate members and spirituality team
- ☐ To get to know the other groups more personally and promoting more exchanges for the future
- ☐ To be more committed to collaborate with one another and design Action Plan of Lay Partners.



Number of participants for this workshop will be thirty; the languages of the course are both English and Spanish. In regards to the financial implications and other details, kindly contact the SVD Mission Secretary of your Province/Region/Missions or the confrere in-charge of your group.



## Disciples of the Divine Word (DDW) – Mumbai, India

*Submitted by Susan Noronha Chettiar*



### Celebrating 100th Meeting...

In October 1999, a group of people initiated a journey for making mission experience possible for the laity under the able guidance Fr. Gregory Pinto. The Disciples of the Divine Word (DDW) thus came into being. The 100<sup>th</sup> meeting of DDW was celebrated recently at Atma- Darshan.

### Happiness filled the air...Christmas Party

We were filled with deep joy and gratitude when around 100 of our special guests—the poor and the lonely responded to our invitation for Christmas celebration. The celebration began with the Holy Eucharist concelebrated by



Frs. Donald, Cosmos, Joaquim and Gregory. After a cup of hot tea and biscuits, the young and old participated in games, singing and dancing. Gifts from Santa were distributed. Happiness and laughter was everywhere. The party ended with a special Christmas meal.

### Mission trips—making a difference!

Members regularly visit SVD missions where they contribute their time, talents and resources for the common good of community and mission. Recently, 3 teams (5-7 members) visited India Eastern Province (INE), India Central Province (INC) and India Mumbai Province (INM).



**Mission Exposure - India Eastern Province (INE)**



**Tala Mission—India Mumbai Province (INM)**



**Mission Exposure—India Central Province (INC)**



## Alma Verbita (CHI) – Chile

**Submitted by Elena Ortiz**

The community of Lay Partners in Chile, *La Comunidad Alma Verbita*, held their annual retreat in November in the Divine Word Retreat Center. The chosen theme was "The Mission in the Trinity". It was an opportunity to deeply reflect, with a Trinitarian perspective, on our relationship with God and the pathways to deepen such relationship and our way of giving testimony when proclaiming the presence of God. We thank Sister María Salomé Labra, Servant of the Holy Spirit, for her time and dedication in the preparation of our retreat.

**Let us continue to remember the people of Chile in our prayers:** As our summer time comes to an end, we hope each one of you has had a well deserved and restful vacation. Regrettably, this year the summer has been marked by the great catastrophe suffered as a result of the multiple forest fires that affected us all as a country. In the last 10 years, Chile has had to face a series of earthquakes, tsunamis, floods and mega fires that have tested our resilience. In the midst of pain, desolation, impotence, human losses and destroyed materials left by the forest fires, we have experienced a greater sense of solidarity, and the resilience of our town. We are a country that rises our arms once again, to face courageously and bravely any adverse situation and we are able to organize ourselves to get ahead. This is a "Contagious" attitude, worthy of admiration. Once again, the great heart that we have is reflected and is part of our DNA as Chileans.

## Divine Word Laity (ESP) – Spain

**Submitted by Gonzalo Revert, LVD**



On March 11, in the House of Spirituality of Dueñas, Palencia, a Biblical Workshop was developed using *Lectio Divina*. It was taught by the theologian and biblical scholar Rocío García Garcimartín,

and included the participation of lay people from Estella, Madrid, Móstoles, Zamora, Valladolid and Mérida, among other Spanish cities, as well as some SVD missionaries who accompanied their respective groups.

It was organized by the Lay Missionaries of the Divine Word (LVD) and in collaboration with the house of Dueñas, the Divine Word Publishing House (EVD) and the Mission Secretariat of the Congregation. Each participant was presented with a notebook on *Lectio Divina* and a folder with the necessary materials to follow the workshop. The day was divided in two parts with a theoretical focus and another of guided reading of the Word. After the workshop, we took the group photo and were sent to return to our places with the illusion of continuing the formation for the laity rejuvenated with this course. All attendees were encouraged to leave their written impressions and suggestions in order to continue planning this type of activity.



## SVD Partners (GER) – Germany

*Submitted by Maria Wergo*

On December 12, 2016 our group called "SVD-Partner" has been associated by the German SVD-province. The commitment took place on January 15, 2017 in Steyl.

The following is an excerpt from their website:

<https://www.svd-partner.eu/mission-vision/english/>

We are people like you and me. Our biographies and way of life are very different but we have one in common: the spirituality of the Divine Word Missionaries strengthens our faith and determine our behavior. They describe their purpose as: *Bringing the Gospel to everybody, being a fellow for the discriminated, working for peace and protecting the environment are our targets.* **CONGRATULATIONS!**



SVD-P Commitment Mass in Germany



**Photo and Article Submitted by Michael Pöner**

On January 15, 2017 we, six women and two men, made our first commitment for three years to be Lay Partners of the Society of the Divine Word and to be witness to the ministry and charism of our Founder St. Arnold Janssen and the Society. The public promise was made within a very special Mass held in the lower church of the Motherhouse St. Michael in Steyl. Amidst the myriad of personal, professional and familial responsibilities, we ceremoniously promised to prioritize the Mission and committed ourselves to action for peace, justice and the integrity of the Creation in our daily lives. SVD-P is the first associated SVD Lay Partner Group in the German province. We have received greetings and congratulations from SVDLP-Groups and Divine Word Missionaries all over the world. Thank you very much!

We pray for you all.



# Lay Society of St Arnold Janssen ( LSSAJ ) – Philippines

*Submitted by Daisy Leones*



*A Press Release by the Lay Society of St. Arnold Janssen released on January 31, 2017:*

## **FAITH MEETS THE WORLD**

The Lay Society of St. Arnold Janssen (LSSAJ) held a symposium by Secretary of Socio-economic Planning, Dr. Ernesto Pernia jointly with the European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines (ECCP) on poverty and inequality-reducing economic development for the Philippines at the New World Hotel, Makati, on January 31, 2017.

What is a Faith-based organization, like LSSAJ, doing by partnering with a business chamber, like ECCP, to discuss a very secular topic like economic development? Precisely because LSSAJ believes that it is the stark disconnect between Faith and Life that is the root cause of poverty, corruption, social injustice and environmental degradation in our famously religious and devout country. Faith is not to be expressed only in rites and devotions but must be practically imbedded in the most mundane task of producing AND sharing the gross domestic product.

Envision the Philippines, with all its 103 million people, continually connecting Faith and Life. Faith simply enjoins us to "Love God and Our Neighbor as Ourselves". Obeying that commandment can only result in a prosperous, well-governed, just and environmentally protected Philippines where the rule of God's and man's law prevails.

This is LSSAJ's first, but definitely, not the last partnership with ECCP. The vision is clear but ambitious. The path to its realization is steep and requires a lot of effort and constant renewal. LSSAJ believes that it is attainable if all like-minded organizations join hands to help reach the goal. Nation-building and building the Kingdom of God on earth are, after all, synonymous in outcome.

### **Regular General Assembly every 2nd Saturday of the month**



*"May The Heart Of Jesus Live In The Hearts Of All People" - St. Arnold Janssen*

## More News from the Philippines

*Submitted by Pocholo A. Morillo*



The XVD Alumni Association Planning Workshop was held on January 5 - 8, 2017, at the SVD Retreat House, Sunnyside, Baguio City Philippines. There were about 32 participants composed of lawyers, college and university professors, prominent businessmen, bankers, doctors and a dentist, non-government organization (NGO) practitioners, former executives of top Philippine corporations, and a judge, all former SVD seminarians and from formation houses. The key objective of this workshop is to align the vision-mission-goals, objectives-programs-projects (VMG-OPP) with that of the SVD's VMG-OPP.

As a result, COMMON Key Result Areas (KRA) were identified and the optimal utilization of resources; human, financial, facilities may be effected. Also, both organizations may tap the expertise and competency areas inherent in the available personnel of the same for the attainment of specific action plans. To name some of the KRAs are: medical and dental services; e-database generation; formation of Psychosocial Intervention for Disaster Stricken Communities; and running of short courses on fields in Management (Human Resource Mgt and Dev't) and Finance- financial literacy, risk management , reporting. Areas which answer to the Congregational Priorities, Strategic Goals, Strategic Objectives on the four characteristic dimensions especially JPIC, poverty eradication, education for the poor, and the creation of linkages to relevant government and non-gov't organization / agencies. Daily Masses were held in the duration of the workshop to provide an atmosphere of openness to the Spirit of



Grace and imploring the intercessions of the Immaculate Spouse of the Holy Spirit and that of Sts. Arnold and Joseph. Rev. Fr. Emil Pati, Provincial Superior of North SVD with Fr. Oscar Alunday, North Mission Secretary hosted the Association. Rev. Fr. Nielo Cantilado Central SVD province superior with Fr. Flavie Villanueva, Central Mission Secretary took an active role in the holding this workshop. This workshop helped push further the Generalate's resolution on the greater collaboration of the Society with Lay Partners as clearly enunciated by the Fr. Arlindo Dias, General Visitor on his recent visit to the Philippines.



## Auxillary Missionaries of the Divine Word ( MAVD ) – Mexico

**Submitted by CD Gianini Sahagún Becerra**

We share with you a little of the Mass of thanksgiving in celebration of our 35th Anniversary. Mass was held in the city of Guadalajara Jalisco, where some former confrere advisers were present, such as Father José Antonio SVD and Father Ranjit Ekka SVD. The Presider at Mass was our current advisor, Father Gustavo Villavicencio SVD and other brother priests concelebrated the special Liturgy.

Father José Antonio SVD, presented a letter of recognition from the Provincial , Fr. John Benhas, which was received by the current National Coordinator of ARVC, Gianini Sahagun. On behalf of all the missionaries, he thanked Father John for this special detail and he also thanked everyone who has ever been part of this great missionary family, for all of their work.

Then there was a small celebration with dinner, snacks, refreshments and music, which gave the opportunity to interact with the priests and some active members of the movement. Among the guests were the laity who are the founders of the Auxiliary Missionaries of the Divine Word in Mexico, along with Father Manuel Mayvett .

## Auxillary Missionaries of the Divine Word ( MAVD ) – Panamá

**Submitted by Ana Luisa Vasquez**

On March 11th, with great joy , we received the new Secretary of Mission of the CAM Region - Panama, Br. Pedro Azuaga, who will have the difficult but beautiful work of leading this group of Families and Young Missionaries.

**SUPERIOR REGIONAL OF PANAMA:** It is appropriate to thank Fr. David Selvasekar, the outgoing Mission Secretary of the CAM - Panama Region, for the wonderful work he carried out during the period of April 2014 - December 2016, with the group of Lay Missionaries of Panama. We wish him success in his new duties as Regional Superior of Panama, and we are sure he will develop great works, as he has done in the different places where he has led. **Congratulations and blessings!!**

A Lenten Retreat was held on April 8, in the House of the Divine Word - Alcalde Díaz. For the subsequent months, we will carry out a mission to the indigenous communities of Chiriquí Grande - Bocas del Toro, during Holy Week. Afterwards, we will go to the Town of Lago del Lago and Prairies of San Lorenzo.

For this year, we have as a priority the promotion of the pastoral vocation of priests and religious, at Ad Intra and Ad Extra level, for which we have arranged several activities for young people.



*Special thanks to Fr. David Selvasekar for his years of service and pastoral guidance as the outgoing Mission Secretary of the CAM - Panama Region who served in this position from April 2014 to December 2016.*

*His time, dedication, collaboration and spiritual guidance is greatly appreciated by many people.*



## Friends of SVD, Kenya-Tanzania Province

**Submitted by Fr. Amaldoss Rethinasamy, SVD**

### Annual Convention of Friends of SVD

The second annual convention of the Friends of SVD, the SVD Lay Associates, was held from 20 – 22nd October 2016 at the Holy Spirit Parish, Eldoret. There were eighty participants from our six parishes in Kenya. The theme of this year's convention was "KNOWING THE HISTORY OF THE CONGREGATION AND THE FOUNDING GENERATION OF THE ARNOLDUS FAMILY". Fr. Eusebio Manangbao, S.V.D shared about the history of the congregation and the founding generation of the

Arnoldus Family with the participants which enabled them to understand our history better and to know where we have come from. The AFRAM Zonal Coordinator, Fr. Joseph Kallanchira, S.V.D, shared about the presence of Divine Word Missionaries on the African continent with the participants. This sharing helped the participants to know and appreciate our presence and work among the African people. Fr. Albert Fuchs, S.V.D, the Provincial Superior, explained to the participants about our different apostolates in Kenya – Tanzania province. Fr. Amaldoss Rethinasamy S.V.D, the Mission Secretary, coordinated different



presentations and logistics during the convention. The participants have learnt more about us during the convention and this has enabled them to collaborate with us more spiritually and support us in little ways they could. It is a matter of pride and encouragement to us that the participants were able to take care most of the operational expenses like food and accommodation during the convention. May the Holy Triune God be praised for His presence during the convention.

### Mission Sunday Celebrations in Kenya

The missions and parishes under the care of Divine Word Missionaries in Kenya – Tanzania province celebrated the World Mission Sunday together with the universal church on 23rd October 2016. The confreres preached on the significance and contribution of every Christian for the cause of spreading the mission of Christ. The province Mission Secretary, Fr. Amaldoss Rethinasamy, SVD, led the preaching on the Mission of Christ at Divine Word Parish, Kayole, Nairobi on Mission Sunday. He focused on the theme of every Christian being a missionary in many ways and that the call to be a missionary is not limited to priests and religious. He urged the Christians to reflect on how they can contribute to spread the mission of Christ the world over and specially to help the Divine Word Missionaries in their missionary endeavours. The Christians were given mission envelopes which they return with their contributions any time from the following Sunday. They also distributed mission envelopes in other parishes under SVDs' care on different Sundays before or after the Mission Sunday to request the Christians to support the missionary work. It is heartening to note that the people are enthusiastic to contribute their mite for the missionary cause of the universal church and of the SVD mission activities.

## SVD-Freundeskreis in Switzerland – Switzerland

*Submitted by Philipp Hautle*

In 1963, Father Ernst Waser SVD founded the Freunde des Gymnasiums Marienburg. At that time, he was the tutor of the students of the Marienburg, a SVD boarding school in Rheineck near the Lake of Constance in Switzerland. The main purpose of the Friends of Marienburg was to support the boarding school.

In 2012 the boarding school Marienburg had to be closed. Therefore the Friends of Marienburg – then about 1300 members – changed their general objective: **We support the SVD missionary work.**



Board of the Freundeskreis at the general meeting

Since then the SVD-Community of Marienburg invites us every January to celebrate the feast of St. Arnold Janssen. We enjoy our fellowship. We get informed about specific activities. If possible missionaries tell us about their struggles and successes. We get in touch with the SVD Priests from Asia and Africa who work in our Swiss-German Dioceses. Their gifts and efforts encourage us for a worldwide missionary view and living in the Spirit of St. Arnold Janssen.

Since 2016, the two SVD provinces of Austria and Switzerland are joined to the Europe Central Province. For us, the Friends of the SVD, it was a special honor to be invited to their First Chapter of the new province last November.

In our annual Letter of Pentecost all the members are informed about our activities, about projects and developments in the SVD.

We also appreciate the integration in the international network of the SVD-Friends.

Finally our present hit is the STEYLER SPEZIAL-BIER. We got the idea of brewing a special beer after our wonderful trip to Steyl and St. Augustin. Yet, much more important than our beer is our prayer for the Holy Spirit.

So we feel ourselves united in a special way with all the Sisters and Brothers of the SVD and with you friends of the SVD all over the world.



*Arnold Janssen Day in the Marienburg with Mgr. Markus Büchel, Bishop of St. Gallen, member of the Freundeskreis and former student in the Marienburg.*





## Lay Missionaries of the Divine Word ( MLVD ) – USW

**Submitted by Sandra Garcia**

With great joy and excitement, we proudly announce the grand-reopening of **Kairos Catholic Store** at it's new location in Riverside, California which is now fully owned and operated by Lay Missionaries of the Divine Word!



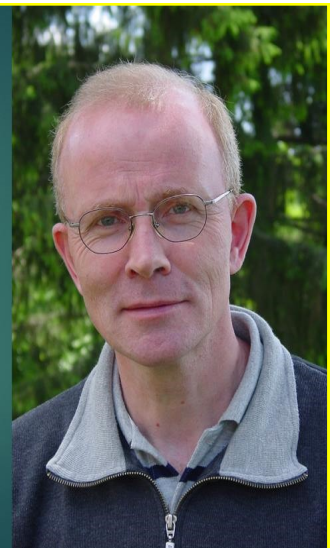
This center of Evangelization, which provides religious goods, spiritual enrichment classes and special events for the greater Riverside County is a true blessing from God for all those who seek His presence. The building was an old auto shop and has been fully transformed by the talented hands of MLVD members who wonderfully recreated the space for our purpose. The store is open 7 days a week to provide people that which reminds them of the Holy and to help proclaim our faith through Bible study classes offered in both English and Spanish. We are grateful to God for the opportunity to serve Him through our time of service to His people.

### ENGLISH TRANSLATION of the Superior General's greeting

*In the name of the Society of the Divine Word, I want to sincerely thank you, all of the Lay Missionaries of the Divine Word, for this unique and create initiative which daily serves the needs of many people. May God bless you, your loved ones and all the people whom God entrusts to you with this unique mission.*

*"En nombre de la Sociedad del Verbo Divino, quisiera agradecer sinceramente a todos ustedes MLVD por esta iniciativa única y creativa que sirve a muchas personas con diferentes necesidades cada día. Que Dios los bendiga, a sus seres queridos y a todas las personas a quienes Dios les confía en esta misión tan única"*

P. HEINZ KULÜKE, SVD  
SUPERIOR GENERAL



### Father Miguel Ruiz's Facebook Post on Grand Opening Day:

*"From Rome, I ask God to bless Kairos, the work of the Lay Missionaries, thanking all those who, through their collaboration and hard work, have made it possible. Having your own center of evangelization is a clear message for the world, the Mission in the hands of the laity has a promising future. Congratulations and I join you MLVD with the joy of the Mission fulfilled. May all be for the Heart of Jesus to live in the hearts of all!"*

Fr. Miguel Ruiz, MLVD founder, who now resides in Rome, sends his greetings and shows his support of the grand opening of the new *Kairos Catholic Store* location in Riverside, California.



# Lay Missionaries of the Divine Word ( MLVD ) – USW

**Submitted by Sandra Garcia**



*Above and Below: Sandra Garcia, leads an explanation of the Gospel with the help of Children who dramatize a story during Children's Liturgy of the Word at St. Kateri Tekawitha Parish.*

*Gabriel Flores leads a discussion during a mini retreat for the Catechists of St. Kateri Tekawitha Parish in Banning, California.*



*Below: Edith Flores leads a discussion on prayer during a the Catechist's retreat at Saint Kateri's Parish in Banning, California.*



*Below: Maria Diaz, listens to the presentation being led by MLVD members during the Catechist retreat, while she waits for participants to purchase their religious articles from Kairos Mobil.*



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