



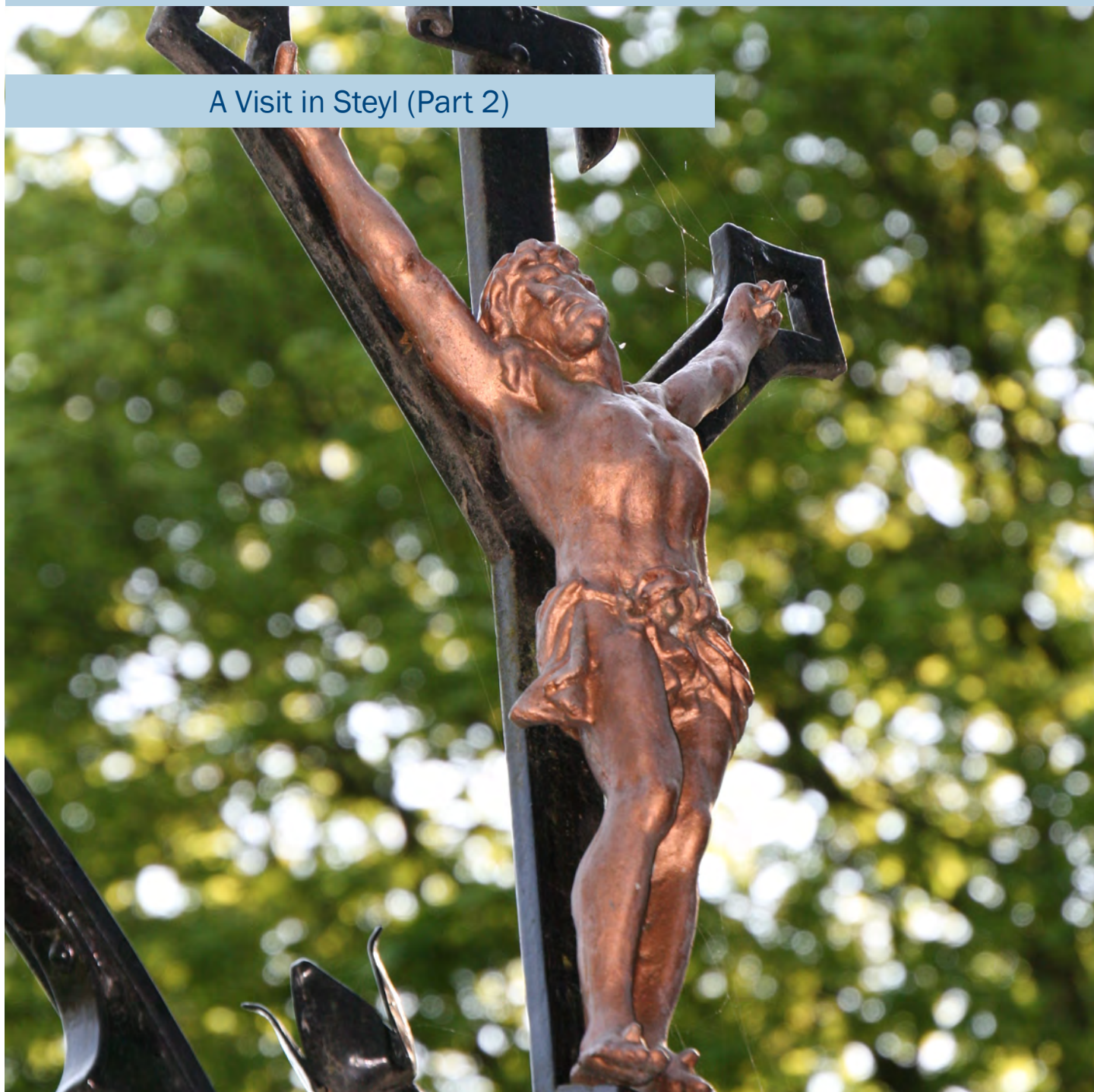
Society of the Divine Word (SVD)

# SVD Lay Partners

Newsletter - from Around the World

Issue 18, April 2022

A Visit in Steyl (Part 2)



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## Editorial

### Rolling Stones!

“Who will roll away the stone for us?” That was a big worry. They had resigned themselves to what had happened. And now they were wanting to do the final rituals. Perhaps, a final goodbye. But then, who would roll the stone away? This was one aspect they did not plan out. It was an insurmountable hurdle, laid over the entrance to Jesus' tomb. On their way, they talked about what had happened – the arrest, torture, and death of the person they loved. They had followed Jesus to Jerusalem. Everything seemed good then. He was healing the sick and bringing joy to the thousands. He was their Messiah! Sadly, the story changed. Jesus was killed! The one in whom they had placed all their hope was now lying in a tomb behind a heavy stone – dead.

When they reached the tomb at daybreak, they were taken aback by the unexpected. They found the stone rolled away. The tomb was empty. Something eerie had happened. Perplexed and frightened, they entered the tomb. The man dressed in a white robe told them, “Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here” (Mark 16:6). The stone was rolled away! And that's how the Easter story begins.

Easter becomes personal and our own when we realize that our stories too resemble the original Easter story of the stone being rolled away. I am grateful I have my own Easter story that happened at the death of my mother. Her death left a huge void in me. As she was lying on the hospital bed, struggling for life, I wanted her to stay. She was otherwise a healthy woman who bravely confronted her challenges, especially after my dad's death. This time, however, I watched her give up. I wanted her to stay because she was everything to me. I wasn't ready for what was about to happen. It was as if the earth was closing in. The stone was rolling in. And then somehow, I found the strength to let go, to surrender. The resurrection of Jesus slowly brought in hope and a new way of understanding reality. The stone covering my fears and uncertainties was being rolled away. As the days passed by, it was my faith in the resurrection that created a comforting presence of my mother in my life. A presence that gave me new strength. I am grateful that my faith journey took me to a place of deep gratitude. That's my Easter story.

Christ is risen. May all of us experience the risen Lord. Happy Easter!

Susan Noronha  
Editor-in-chief





## A Visit to Steyl

### Part 2: St. Gregor

After visiting the Missionhouse St. Michael in the last issue the tour through Steyl will continue with a visit to St. Gregor and its garden.

To get an idea of the whole area on the Meuse, here is an aerial view from Google Earth.







St Gregor had different functions over the years. In 1890 Arnold Janssen acquired the building from German Augustinian nuns who had lived there since 1876 and returned to their original convent in Essen. It was the convent of the Missionary Sisters until 1904 and from 1896 also of the Cloistered Sisters. After their move in 1904, St Gregor became the home of the brothers and the rear part of the building was the SVD's infirmary and retirement home.



St. Arnold Janssen also lived there from 1905 until his death in 1909.

St. Gregor was also the seat of the Generalate at the beginning of the 20th century.

Since the seniors moved to St. Wendel in 2008, the building has been unused.

View into the cloister with part of the Via Crucis (below) and the statue of St. Gregory (pope Gregory I, the Great).





The chapel of St. Gregor with the three altars, the altar of Mary, the main altar and the altar of St. Joseph (from left to right). St. Arnold Janssen suffered a stroke in front of the altar of Mary.



On the ground floor of St. Gregor with a view of the garden is the room in which Arnold Janssen lived from 1905 until his death in 1909. In the hallway next to the door, There is a marble slab with the Latin inscription *B. Arnoldus Janssen ab anno 1905 hic habitavit et die 15. m. Jan. 1909 defunctus est.* (B. Arnold Janssen lived here since 1905 and died on 15 Jan. 1909).

Above the bed is a marble slab with the inscription *Hic obiit Dno Pater et Fundator noster Arnoldus Janssen Die 15 Jan. 1909* (Here died in the Lord our father and founder Arnold

Janssen 15 Jan. 1909). Arnold Janssen's personal belongings were on display there until the beginning of 2022. They are now in St Michael's in the corridor to the oratory.

A special piece of furniture in the room is the space-saving table. With the lid closed, it is a large desk; with the lid open, it is a bed.





The garden of St. Gregor is a quiet place with lawns and old trees. In the past, two large arbours offered the sick and elderly a nice place to rest. Unfortunately, they no longer exist.

At the end of the garden, a life-size statue of Mary and Child was erected in 1950 to mark the 75th anniversary of the SVD. It stands under a canopy with marble columns. The statue is framed by taxus trees.



At the far end of the garden, hidden behind trees, is the Resurrection Chapel from 1913. From the entrance on the left is a niche with a depiction of the Resurrection framed by five coloured windows. On the wall to the right of the entrance are the names of the confreres who died in the war.



A ceramic Via Crucis dating from 1920 can be found on the outer wall of the garden.







## AFRAM ZONE



### Ghana (GHA)

#### Friends of SVD – Blessing and Commissioning of the Arnold Jansen Spirituality Centre

The newly built Arnold Jansen Spirituality Centre (AJSC) is a residential facility with offices, a Chapel, and self-contained 48 bedrooms. The Apostolic Nuncio to Ghana, Most Rev. Henryk Jagodzinski blessed the building and was commissioned by the Provincial Superior, Fr. Cyprian Kuupol, SVD on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2022, during the feast day celebration of St. Arnold Janssen.

Present at the ceremony were Most Rev. John Bonaventure Kwofie, CSSp the Metropolitan Archbishop of Accra, Most Rev. Emmanuel Fianu, SVD, Bishop of Ho Diocese, Most Rev. Gabriel Edoe Kumordji, SVD, Bishop of Keta-Akatsi diocese, as well as SVD confreres, SSps sisters, and SVD lay partners.

The program began with a Mass. During Mass, the jubilarians both SVD and SSps were blessed as well as presented with gifts, a usual practice during the Arnoldus family feast.

After Mass, Fr. Andrews Obeng, SVD, the Director of the Centre, narrated the story of how AJSC was made possible because of immense support from individuals from within and outside the Province. He thanked all benefactors including donors from SVDs working abroad and local lay faithful who in diverse ways helped with the construction of the magnificent edifice. There

were goodwill speeches by the Metropolitan Archbishop of Accra, SSps and SVD lay partners.

The Center offers a serene and eco-friendly environment. Some of the services offered at the Center include spiritual direction, retreat, training programs, workshops, counseling, clinical psychology, and psychotherapy. The Center is also open for pastoral care.

The program ended with refreshments for all invited guests.

Helen Dzikunu





## Kenya (KEN)

### Friends of SVD – Activities at the Beginning of 2022



#### Feast Day Celebration of Saints Arnold Janssen and Joseph Freinademetz

We started the novena prayers in honour of St. Arnold Janssen from 6<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> January and in honour of St. Joseph Freinademetz from 20<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> January 2022, followed by the celebration of their feast days on 15<sup>th</sup> January and 29<sup>th</sup> January respectively.

#### Coming Together - Kenya and Tanzania Lay Partners

On 13<sup>th</sup> January 2022, Kenya lay partners crossed the border to Tanzania to witness the priestly ordination of one SVD Deacon Pamphil Sambaya. The Tanzanian lay partners greeted them with open arms and welcomed. The two group members had a great opportunity to meet and share ideas.

#### Three Final Vows and Diaconate Ordination

On 5<sup>th</sup> February 2022, Friends of SVD had the opportunity to join the Divine Word Missionaries during the final vows of Brother Rex. The Holy Mass was officiated by Fr. Tony Amissah, the Provincial Superior of the Kenya-Tanzania Province. Friends of SVD helped in the Liturgical animation. On 6<sup>th</sup> February, we witnessed the diaconate Ordination of Br. Rex. The Eucharistic Celebration was presided over by Rt. .Rev .David Kamau Ng'ang'a, the Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Nairobi, Kenya.

We thank God for the gift of this year and for enabling us to start anew hoping that God will help us do better, especially during lent season. May the Holy Triune God live in our hearts and in the hearts of all people, Amen.

Grace Akinyi





## South Africa (BOT)

### SVD Lay Partners Malamulele – Group Activities



SVD Lay Partners Malamulele, under the Region of Botswana - South Africa is a total of nine members. We continue to hold meetings and some activities. We are still on the initial formation stage and also trying to get more dedicated members to join us to participate in the mission of St. Arnold Janssen.

#### Spirituality

We engage in Bible sharing, beginning with the Bible enthronement and prayers for the mission. Some lay partners participated in the Bible studies sessions and also in the catechetical workshop conducted in the parish.

We also participated in the Mission Awareness programs conducted by the SVDs. We took part in the celebration of St. Arnold Janssen feast day and other celebrations.

#### Recollection and Retreats

To help us in our spiritual growth, Fr. Jay de Leon, SVD, and Fr. Mobin Joseph, SVD conducted Recollection and Retreat. These spiritual exercises helped us to deepen our knowledge of God and understand our faith journey.



#### Outreach Programme

We are fortunate to receive donations from three donors to provide groceries to deserving people in the catholic community. Donors that came to our assistance are Indian Community that raises funds to support the Parish, SVD Social Fund from the SVD congregation, and the New Rochelle Feeding program. With all the funds available through our parish office, we managed to buy and distribute food parcels and school uniforms for 70 needy families.

The members visit the sick and aged families and support the bereaved in their difficult times.

#### Vocation Promotion

Local youth are encouraged and supported by SVD lay partners to live a good family life. More importantly, to be able to hear God's call to serve Him and respond accordingly.

Thandi Mazibuko







## ASPAC ZONE



### Indonesia Ende (IDE)

#### Soverdia Nagekeo – Care for the Environment



#### The Implementation of the Encyclical *Laudato Si*

The implementation of the Encyclical *Laudato Si*, and to show its concern for the environment, the Soverdia IDE of the Nagekeo district, carried out the following activities.

#### Planting Palm Trees in the Mbay City Area

The carrying out of tree planting action was accomplished during this rainy season. Mbay is a very hot area that requires cooling. This is possible through forest conservation by planting trees. We are, therefore, inviting people to plant trees to keep our environment cool.

Plastic waste is very dangerous because it produces high carbon emissions which result in drastic climate change and air pollution. It makes the earth warmer. The burning of plastic waste increases the risk of respiratory ailments such as asthma. It has a negative impact on our environment. Plastic segregation is necessary for recycling; hence it has to be segregated from other wastes. We carried out this activity in the Mbay area, especially on the Maropokot beach. We hope and pray that our simple gesture inspires other people to do the same. Earth is God's great gift to us. Let us together save the earth and its inhabitants.

Elfrin Hurek

#### Cleaning the Environment from Plastic Waste Scattered in the Mbay Area

The plastic waste cleaning action is a regular program on every first Friday of the month. Meanwhile, the clearing of plastic waste was put together because the Mbay city environment was getting dirtier by the day.





## Indonesia Java (IDJ)

### Soverdia – New Groups and Ongoing Activities



#### Affirmation Five New Soverdia Group

God's beautiful grace has been bestowed on SVD lay partners Java Province. We are very happy to receive new members from the following groups:

- Soverdia Meliau – West Borneo inaugurated on 19 December 2021,
- Soverdia Holy Spirit Batu – Malang, East Java inaugurated on 15 January 2022,
- Soverdia Jeruju – West Borneo inaugurated on 16 January 2022,
- Soverdia Teraju – West Borneo inaugurated on 23 January 2022, and
- Soverdia Tayan – West Borneo was inaugurated on 6 February 2022.

Now the total SVD lay partners in IDJ Province is 618. Hopefully, with this big number, we will be more enthusiastic in carrying out the mission of St. Arnold Janssen.

#### Gema Soverdia Radio Broadcast

SVD lay partners of Java Province are starting to use radio broadcasts as tools to give testimony and proclaim God's goodness; as well as tools for communicating and sharing stories between fellow SVD lay partners and SVD missionaries. The 'Gema Soverdia' broadcast program was initiated by Fr. Agus Murtika, SVD, in collaboration with SVD novices and



lay partners of Malang. The broadcast is every Tuesday from 19.00 – 21.00 hrs. We hope that the Gema Soverdia broadcast program, will help to promote SVD spirituality to more people.

#### Keeping the Mission and Activities During the Pandemic Period

Even though COVID-19 Omicron cases increased, we continued serving people during this pandemic enthusiastically. SVD lay partners of St. Yoseph Denpasar Bali visited the Kerobokan Prison in January 2022 and donated candles, devotional books, etc. On 6<sup>th</sup> February Holy Mass for prisoners was celebrated by Fr. Kadek Ariana along with 3 of our members. Entry was restricted due to COVID protocols. Lay partners of Jeruju, West Borneo, organized Holy Mass for the elderly and shared gifts of love on Valentine's Day. Lay partners of Tenggarong, East Borneo, held a Recollection and the Renewal of their Vows on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2022. Lay partners of Martubung Medan prayed Missionary Rosary every third Friday while visiting parishioners in the Martubung Parish area of Medan.

Paulina Suharsi





## Indonesia Ruteng (IDR)

### Persaudaraan Misioner Sang Sabda (PMSS) – Recollection and Social Work



#### Advent and Christmas Recollection

SVD Mission Secretary of Ruteng Province arranged a time to have Recollection for the SVD lay partners together with the family of our missionaries from Manggarai. The Advent Recollection was held at SVD Ruteng Central House on 11<sup>th</sup> December 2021. The Recollection was led by Fr. Paulus Tolo, SVD, IDR Provincial with the theme: At the Side of Jordan River– New Mission in SVD. During the last General Chapter, the importance of lay partners was discussed, Fr. Provincial reminded us to collaborate with the Mission Secretary in carrying out the mission activities, fundraising, and supporting the SVD missions. Also, living our lives according to the spirituality of the Founder, bringing many people to join the lay partner group, taking part in the Formation programs for the lay partners, and, the most important is their self-giving for SVD Mission. The Recollection ended with confessions and discussions. One of the resolutions after the Recollection was visiting the Wae Pecah orphanage house on 18<sup>th</sup> December 2021.

#### Wae Pecah Orphanage Visit

30 SVD lay partners visited our orphanage house in Wae Pecah on 18<sup>th</sup> December. Along with the members of the orphanage, Fr. Modho Yakobus, SVD, the Director of the house, cordially welcomed us. Holy Mass was celebrated presided over by Fr. Vitalis Hiburdin, SVD, IDR Mission Secretary. Wae Pecah orphanage was established by late Fr. Kale Bale, SVD, and continued by late Fr. Gudi Hilarius, SVD, and now Fr. Modho Yakobus, SVD as its Director.

After the Mass, we had a Christmas party with the children and the community. They are 42 kids coming from different family backgrounds and places. Some study in schools and some at the university. We gifted them with food items, toiletries, clothes, and some cash as our Christmas gift. "The joy of Christmas will be complete when we are able to share our joy with the orphanage children as Jesus our Emanuel shared His life with us".

Fr. Vitalis Hiburdin, SVD





## Indonesia Timor (IDT)

### Paguyuban Soverdia Timor – Celebration and Formation



#### Celebration of Mission Day

Every year on January 29, the feast of St. Joseph Freinademetz, the Province of SVD Timor, celebrates SVD Timor Mission Day. This year it was celebrated in collaboration with the SVD lay partners from 28 - 30 January 2022 at the Monastery of St. Joseph Freinademetz Laat Manekat Noemeto Kefamenanu – TTU District with 50 lay partners coming from 4 districts; Kupang District, Soe District, Atambua District, Malaka District, and SVD priests. The theme was “Called to Share”.

The Provincial Superior, Fr. Didimus Nay, SVD as well as the Mission Secretary, Fr. Agustinus Hironimus Daesoro, SVD spoke on the responsibilities of being SVD lay partners and supporting the SVD mission in Timor. There was a discussion on forming the Statutes of the lay partners group. This event was hosted by the Coordinator of SVD lay-partner of Timor, Mr. Isidorus Lilijawa. From the SVD Timor Mission Day, we experienced a closer relationship between the SVD and the SVD lay partners as we discussed a joint action plan for the Timor SVD lay partners for 2022.

#### Inauguration of New Group - Kefamenanu District

On the feast day during Holy Mass, Father Provincial inaugurated the SVD lay partner group of Kefamenanu District.



The newly formed committee has Chairman: Gabriel Olein, Secretary: Edy Ceunfin, and Treasurer: Dona Elvira Balan.

#### Formation Session – Kupang District

On 12<sup>th</sup> February, SVD lay partners of Kupang District conducted a “Basic Formation” session with the theme “Exploring the Spirituality of SVD Founder and Charism of SVD Congregation”. The session was opened by the Mission Secretary of Timor Province. Reflection was given by Fr. Yosep Riag, SVD, Campus Ministry Coordinator of Catholic University of Widya Mandira of Kupang. During the presentation, Fr. Yosep spoke to the members about the challenges faced by our Founding Generation. It was with God’s blessings that the SVD mission house in Steyl was built and we should live the charism of our Founder by continuing his mission. Lastly, Fr. Melky Ukat, SVD missionary from Timor working in the Philippines, shared his testimony regarding mission work in the Philippines. About 35 members participated in the session.

Isidorus Lilijawa





## India (INM)

### Disciples of the Divine Word (Mumbai) – Encouraging Experiences from our Feed the Hungry Project



Children under the flyover are all smiles when our mobile food van reaches them. There is a sudden rush, and we are having difficulty distributing food packets. They're content to eat and play with their siblings. We, too, laugh with them. When we see a person without a smile, we try to strike up a conversation with him or her. You might be surprised how a simple conversation can inspire an exhausted person to smile with gratitude. The people sleeping on the roadside are delighted when we reach them. While everyone is rushing, one or two among them assist us in the smooth distribution of food. Something to smile about.

To reach out and befriend the friendless is challenging. Let us allow the love of Christ to challenge us where needed. Smiling is infectious, you can catch it like the flu. Someone smiled at me today, and I started smiling too.

Susan Noronha

It was Christmas 2021. Once again Government implemented COVID protocols due to the third wave. Nevertheless, we did not abandon our project. In addition to packed food and water, we were able to provide juice packs, cookies, and lollipops. We had a similar approach on New Year's Day and St. Arnold Janssen's Feast Day. None expected us to be on the food distribution drive on these feast days. With God by our side, we had a wide array of shared experiences on all these three days.

There are days when we meet strangers who talk to us and thank us for the hot meal. There are also days when we feel helpless when our food crates are empty and hungry people are approaching us. Then there are days when we fondly recall these opportune moments and thank God for choosing us to help feed His hungry people.





## India (INM)

### Disciples of the Divine Word (Pune) – Social Work and Recollection



#### Committed Discipleship to Spread God's love

Over the last few months, SVD Lay Mission Partners - DDW Pune organized programs to commit discipleship and spread God's love.

#### Outreach Programs

On 27<sup>th</sup> December 2021, we organized an Outreach program, for the boys of Sarva Seva Sangh (SSS), Pune – a centre for rehabilitation and empowerment of children. Children displayed their fabulous singing talents and participated in exciting games organized by the DDW members. The program ended with a delicious dinner.

On 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2022, members organized an Outreach program at Snehalya\* Institute for children and adults with cerebral palsy and multiple disabilities at Wagholi, Pune. The program was attended by 55 physically challenged children, priests & religious sisters of the institute. Members sang Christmas carols and organized games to bring in the festive spirit. Children displayed their talents through singing and dance performances. Gifts were distributed to the children followed by a sumptuous meal.



#### Spiritual Recollection

On 9<sup>th</sup> January, Fr. Cyril Edward, SVD led a Spiritual Recollection for the members at the Divine Word Seminary, Pune. He spoke about Arnoldus Trinitarian and Missions (ATM) spirituality in a creative way.

Arnoldus Spirituality - based on prologue Jn 2:1-8 and St. Arnold Janssen to draw inspiration from his family traditions of a prayerful and devout lifestyle.

- Trinitarian Spirituality - St. Arnold Janssen spread Divine love by sending the missionaries to spread love and form Christian communities.
- Missionary Spirituality - to be alert, alive, and a witness to the Gospel and spread it through our missionary service.

It was a deep spiritual experience and we gained a more personal relationship with Jesus.

DDW members continue to organize the Feed the Hungry project every 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of the month. Members sponsor food items and bananas which are packed and distributed to the hungry on the streets of Pune.

Mazeline Alex  
Godfrey Fernandes

\* Snehalya (Hindi) = A Home of Love





## The Philippines (PHC)

### The Lay Society of St. Arnold Janssen (LSSAJ) – Activities of the Last Months and Elections



1<sup>st</sup> March 2022, nearly two years after the pandemic shuttered the Philippines, the country now saw a more relaxed quarantine restriction. However, the Russia-Ukraine conflict, will definitely impact the lives of people around the globe. Coupled with these situations, our country faces National Elections on 9<sup>th</sup> May 2022. In the midst of the current situations, the LSSAJ continues to pursue its advocacies.

In collaboration with the XVD Association and the Philippine Rosary Movement (PRM), we continue with night rosary prayers via zoom and live streaming on Facebook. Prayer intention is now more focused on world peace, particularly the Russian-Ukraine conflict. The LSSAJ chapter in Dasmariñas city continues with FTL (Faith Transforming Life) sessions and Biblical apostolate.

Super typhoon Rai, locally known as Odette, wreaked havoc in the Visayas and Mindanao Islands, affecting several SVD parishes, schools and our fellow SVD lay partners. LSSAJ provided spiritual, financial, and material support.

On 29<sup>th</sup> January, LSSAJ in collaboration with the Federation of Filipino Married Priests sponsored a forum “The State of the Philippine Environment and Possible Ways Forward”. More than a hundred participated from various sectors and some LSSAJ members including architect Jun Palafox and Samuel Yap. Architect Jun Palafox avidly pursues LSSAJ’s advocacy by holding regular podcasts on environmental protection and urban planning through YouTube.



On 26<sup>th</sup> February, LSSAJ together with the Federation of Filipino Married Priests conducted a forum “At the Crossroads of Metaphysics and History”, with Fr. Raymond Festin, SVD, General Councilor, as the main speaker. It was an interesting discussion for Filipinos and Christians. The forum was part of LSSAJ’s electoral education in pursuit of promoting social justice and good governance. Charlie Avila, and Cecil Floresca were the reactors.

LSSAJ continues addressing the issues confronting the elderly, particularly poverty, elderly abuse, and exclusion. Daisy Leones is a regular speaker on its weekly webinar. She discusses issues like universal social pension, financial literacy, elderly abuse, care for the elderly, etc.

#### New Office Bearers for 2022- 2023

Charlie Avila: Chairman, Cris Lim: President, Daisy Leones: Vice President, Mayette Tamondong: Corporate Secretary, Julio Tonquin: Treasurer. Other members include Elin Mondejar, Emma Flores, Antonio Alvarado, and Willy Sanchez. LSSAJ’s new office is at the Catholic Trade, Oroqueta, Manila.

[Daisy Leones](#)





## The Philippines (PHS)

### Lay Mission Partners of the Divine Word (LaMP-DW) - A Lot of Activities



#### Planning for Congregational Direction

On 16<sup>th</sup> October 2021, members of the LaMP-DW – Bohol Chapter convened at the covered court of Holy Name University, Tagbilaran City, Bohol to set directions for the organization. The Chapter President, Ms. Nanelyn Wate welcomed all the participants to this first-ever planning activity.

The first session started with input by Fr. Eduardo Rocha, SVD, followed by the visioning session with goals and activities. The group decided to focus on Family and Youth, Social Justice and Poverty Eradication and Integrity of Creation. These activities intend to strengthen and spread the mission of the SVD through its lay partners. The workshop was ably facilitated by Atty. Adolfo Doroy and Dr. Maria Paz Espiritu, members of LaMP.

#### Marian Pilgrimages at Bohol's Holy Doors

We had our first Marian pilgrimage on 8<sup>th</sup> October. We visited six churches with Marian patrons in the Diocese of Tagbilaran. On 30<sup>th</sup> October, members visited the oldest churches in Philippine history; the Church of Immaculada Concepcion, Baclayon, the newly restored Our Lady of Guadalupe Church, Loboc, and Our Lady of Fatima Shrine, Carmen, Bohol where Holy Mass was celebrated by Fr. Charlton Plateros, SVD and Fr. Vic Uy, SVD.

#### Outreach Program

On 23<sup>rd</sup> December LaMP-DW held its outreach activity with garbage segregators at Basic Education Department Gym of Holy Name University. The activity was opened by a prayer by Fr. Charlton, SVD, and was followed by *Kumustahan* or greeting the garbage collectors. A short input, sharing, and distribution of the gifts followed. Two representatives from the group expressed their gratitude. They were also victims of super typhoon Odette.



#### Advent and Lenten Recollections

"Advent is the quiet disposition of waiting for the most sublime, our ultimate happiness." This was one of the many enriching messages that the LaMP-Bohol brought home from its recollection master, Msgr. Harold Parilla on 27<sup>th</sup> November. Meanwhile, the LaMP-Bohol is now getting ready for the upcoming Lenten Recollection on 19<sup>th</sup> March by Fr. Isagani Ehido, SVD.

#### Piso Para sa Misyon

LaMP-DW identified *Piso Para Sa Misyon* as one of the activities to raise funds to support the missionary work of the Society of the Divine Word. This activity started with Holy Mass on the feast day of St. Arnold Janssen. After the Mass, tin cans for donations were distributed to the members. They will be returned to the organization on 8<sup>th</sup> September 2022 on the Foundation Day of the SVD. The proceeds will be used for the mission activities of the SVD.

Amie Rosarie Caballo  
Ma. Elisa Dolotin  
Adolfo Doroy  
Nanelyn Wate





## EUROPA ZONE

### Spain (ESP)

#### Laicos Verbo Divino (LVD) – Synodal Consultation in Zamora: From the Local to the Universal



In our Pastoral Action Unit of *Morales del Vino* formed by seven towns, we have been in Synod mode since October 2021. This Synodal consultation called by Pope Francis, (closed here on March 4) has a three-fold theme “For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation, and Mission. Two of our parishioners have traveled to several towns in recent weeks to respond in the community to a questionnaire that has guided us in our reflection, to dialogue on the changes that the Church needs in these areas and to contribute constructive suggestions that will help us to continue walking together as the People of God going forth.

The proposals are local but seek an ambitious and far-reaching objective: more involvement in social situations of poverty and marginalization, pastoral accompaniment; in the face of the problem of loneliness of the elderly due to the growing depopulation in the villages; the lack of religious vocations;

and the role of the laity as co-responsible in the mission and parish ministry. More proposals were tabled: for leisure and volunteering to bring young people closer, more commitment that makes us go out of our comfort zone both as pastors and parishioners, formation for pastoral agents, and even the old debate about married priests in view of the scarce presence of priests due to the vocation crisis, to achieve a Missionary Church. These were just some of the proposals, which will be integrated into a document to contribute to the Diocese of Zamora.

It is the moment that Pope Francis offers to the People of God to listen to his “voice”: May God enlighten us to make the Church grow in fidelity to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Laura Díez Bilbao





## Germany (GER)

### SVD-Partner - News from Germany



#### First SVD-Partner meeting in 2022

The first meeting of SVD-Partner from 18<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> February 2022 in Steyl was as usual characterized by prayer and discussion, new contacts and of course again new ideas.

Thankfully Fr. Dennis Manzana, SVD from the International Core Team of the Arnold Janssen Spirituality Network had time and presented the tasks and goals of the network. Together they discussed the situation of the church in Germany and worldwide. Sharing of opinions and information is to be continued in any case. Spiritual director Fr. Jürgen Ommerborn, SVD also had time and joined the meeting via Zoom from St. Wendel. He refereed about Arnold Janssen and pilgrimages.

Later on the group discussed the situation of the Church in Germany and what the current situation means for each person personally. It was decided to devote a whole day to the question "What do I believe in? My personal credo" in fall. Then some arrangements were made, first of all for the online webinar of the international SVD lay groups on the topic of "Synodality and Lay Partners", which took place in March.

Everyone especially enjoyed the get-together with the SVD community on Saturday evening. A repetition at the SVD-Partner meeting in the fall is definitely desired!



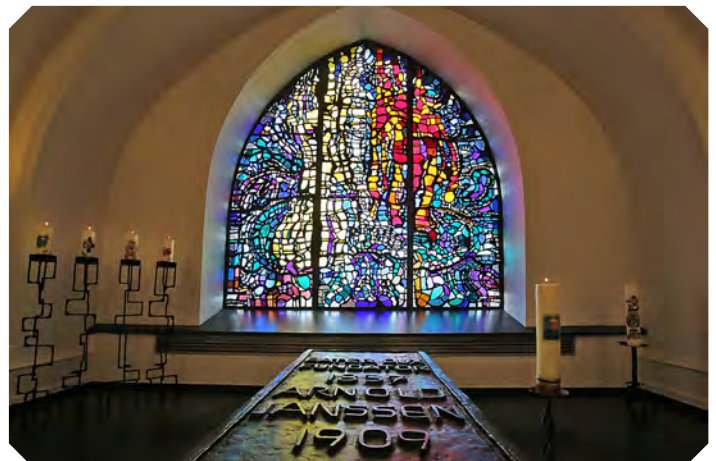
#### Prayer for peace in Ukraine

When SVD-Partner invited people to the International Prayer Bridge for the World Day of the Poor in 2017 for the first time, people in Ukraine were among the first to join in the common prayer. Since then, there has been contact, and now SVD-Partner share the fear and concerns of people in the war zone. They, therefore invited people to pray for peace and to ask God to send instruments of peace to the parties in conflict.

Maria Wego

Currently SVD-Partner are keeping in touch with Olena Noha, a Caritas worker in Kiev. She fled the city and now continues to work for people in need about 100 kilometers away. This includes setting up shelters and evacuating children's homes from the east of the country, as well as helping the urban poor, who now need even more help.

SVD-Partner send emails to Ukraine periodically to show Olena and her team that they are not forgotten. As often as her time allows, Olena replies: Thank you 🇧🇷 🇮🇹 🇵🇸 .





## Slovakia (SVK)

### Misijná Rodina – Spiritual Renewal and Teambuilding



From 11 to 13 February 2022, a spiritual renewal for members of the lay partner group from Bratislava took a place at the Retreat House in Nitra - Calvary. The topic of spiritual renewal was "Reading the Word of God." The leaders of renewal were our priests from The Society Divine Word: Fr. Johnny Ambattu, who is the Rector of the Mission House of St. Arnold Janssen and currently leads SVD lay partners in Bratislava, Fr. Pavol Baláž, Mission Secretary in Slovakia, and Fr. Ján Štefanec, who led this Spiritual renewal.

On Friday evening, we started with Holy Mass and the presentation of Fr. Pavol about the work of the lay partners. We talked about the formation of the lay partner groups, the opportunities, and topics we could study and share during our

meetings in the future, as well as the specific ideas on how the meetings should be scheduled.

On Saturday, morning prayers were followed by an input by Fr. Ján about "Reading the Word of God." Firstly, he emphasized the essence of God's Word Enthronement in the Christian family and the need to create a place where the family or individuals can read the Scriptures regularly. He introduced ways how to read the Scripture and contemplate God's Word, e.g. Lectio Divina. We continued with sharing from the text of the Second Vatican Council. The document was a breakthrough in the availability of Scripture for the laity.

After the Holy Mass, we had time to build a community, and together we took a trip to the Church of St. Michael, a Chapel in the monastery of the Holy Spirit Adoration Sisters. Later, we visited the Nitra Castle and the Cathedral of St. Emeram. We ended up building a community by tasting wine from the vineyards in Strekov.

On Sunday we participated in a Holy Mass and spent time discussing the vision of the lay partners (Misijná Rodina) in Bratislava.

Veronika Šubjaková  
Simona Senková







## PANAM ZONE



### Mexico (MEX)

#### Misioneros Auxiliares del Verbo Divino (MAVD) – National Meeting and Elections



##### National Meeting XXXVII 2021

The XXXVII National Meeting of the *Misioneros Auxiliares del Verbo Divino* (MAVD) took place in Áporo, Michoacán from 12-14 November, 2021. It was very fitting to see the members again, as well as God himself.

It was wonderful to see each other after such a long time, to get close and to feel the human warmth of our brothers and sisters, to share laughter, joy, but above all, the testimony of the one who has called us to serve Him in this life of mission.

We had the great opportunity to be accompanied by our Provincial Superior, Fr. Hans Weibel, SVD as well as our SVD Advisor Fr. Martin Resendez Islas, who with their themes, increased and strengthened the missionary spirit even in spite of the circumstances in which we find ourselves socially, inviting us more than ever to “be” the church going-out, taking the gospel to all corners of the earth. It was a very participative, emotional, and harmonious meeting, making the most of every activity and celebration.

The meeting culminated with a closing Mass, officiated by Bishop Juan Espinoza Jimenez, concelebrated by Fr. Daniel



Ortega Navarro, the Provincial and our SVD Advisor. During the Eucharistic Celebration, the official appointment of new national coordination of MAVD was made.

##### New National Coordination Team

On behalf of all, we thank the outgoing coordinators for their time and service: José Manuel Contreras Bautista (coordinator), Sandra Rebeca Herrera Pérez (secretary), Jorge Chávez (treasurer). May the Holy Triune God reward them for their efforts.

The new coordination team: Domingo Ramiro Chía Palacios (coordinator), María Lucero Ileana Pérez García (secretary) and Xóchitl Hernández Hernández (treasurer). We pray for God's blessing, May God enlighten and strengthen them to accomplish their mission under the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. May they always be inspired by the Holy Spirit. “The Lord challenges our faith to do something new.”

[Xóchitl Hernández Hernández](#)





## ~ Last but not Least ~

### Life Stories of SVD Lay Partners

#### Rubiela Ramírez de Rodríguez and Rogelio Rodriguez-Pizza (Panama)



Missionaries aren't always born with exceptional gifts or outstanding talents. It is the simple and everyday people like you and me who let God guide their steps completely.

It's my pleasure to introduce to you our missionary couple, Rubiela Ramírez de Rodríguez and Rogelio Rodriguez-Pizza, SVD lay partners from *Misioneros Laicos del Verbo Divino* (MLVD), Panama (CAM).

#### Demonstration of Selfless Love

Rubiela and Rogelio are married for 35 years and are blessed with three biological children; Luana, Pedro, and Clareana, and four foster children; Erika, Emilena, Melissa, and Janeth. They believe that being foster parents is a blessing. God calls all of us to care for children who need homes and they have helped their foster children feel safe, valued, and welcomed into the family. Here's a glimpse into the life and mission of our missionary couple.

Rogelio speaks -

"Every month, as a family, we participate in the different activities of the MLVD group. We have been doing this before and during the pandemic in the Parish of St. Jerome and in its different communities, especially at the Chapel of St. Arnold Janssen, the first of God's future parishes. We participate in the Holy Mass as a family and our faith in God and in His ways grows stronger every day."

#### Evangelization and Reaching Out

"Most of the time we do missions together and believe that it is truly a great gift from God. We have founded various prayer groups of the Holy Rosary and Lectio Divina to encourage people to take part in the Sunday Mass. With the collaboration of parish communities, we have dedicated ourselves to recycling items and collecting dry food for needy families. We have teamed up as guides to the immigration process with priests from various countries. We have helped people as

family catechists with pre-marriage sessions. My wife, Rubi conducts pre-baptismal and confirmation classes and organizes confirmation catechesis to the youth."

Rubi shares -

"We have lived in Panama City. Erika was 16 years when she came to us to finish her studies. Along with her studies, we also sent her for Bible classes in our Parish. Today, along with her elder daughter, she is a catechist and is a part of the parish choir."

I have been active in pastoral activities since 1997 and my husband since 2009. Our experience as missionaries is wonderful because we have had the opportunity to share with people from different cultures, not only in our Parish but also in the missions. We are delegates of the Word and catechists working alongside the SVDs. We like to form prayer groups in the places where we go. Along with the Word of God, we distribute images of the Virgin Mary and Jesus. We teach people how to make the Holy Rosary until they are able to do so on their own, and continue to spread the message. We work together in areas such as social work, medicine, dry food distribution, clothing, school supplies, and so on.

We are also active in the SVD congregation in the community of *Isla Otoque* and in the community of *Isla Otoque Occidente*\* as delegates and Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion. Here, we help the community as catechists.

We feel happy by doing all these pastoral works, to the greater glory of God. We do it in thanksgiving to God for the many blessings received. May God and Virgin Mary continue to bless us all."

I met Rogelio and Rubi in October 2017 at the 1<sup>st</sup> International Workshop for SVD Lay Partners in Nemi, Rome. Having served in many diverse callings, the couples' first love has always been working with the missionaries as the Lord's disciples and living the Gospel to the fullest. May the abundant love of God bless you, dear Rogelio and Rubi, as you live the mission entrusted to you.

Susan Noronha

\* *Isla Otoque Occidente* is an Island located in the Gulf of Panama



## Silent Worker in the SVD Vineyard

### Zdenka Rybova from the Czech Republic



*How long do you know the SVD and how did you get to know them?*

For many years I have lived in a small parish in the Czech Republic, which in 2011 became a Parish administered by the SVD. There were a number of events in the parish related to this change. I had three small children at the time and not everything was in my power. However, I was thrilled when the parish priest, began to rebuild the parish on our knees - by Adoration, Rosary, and of

course, daily Mass. Since then, I have been very touched by the spirituality of Arnold Janssen.

#### How do you help the SVD?

First, I try to be a useful member of my SVD parish in Prague, the capital of the Czech Republic. We have a number of activities and capable volunteers who ensure the smooth running of our parish. My help lies in proofreading the texts, in translating the everyday Spiritual Reflections for the SVD province website, and quotes of Arnold Janssen for every

Wednesday and Sunday. Sometimes I cook for our priests, I take them on a trip to have some relaxation time and I always try to be ready to help. I take care of the ordinary activities of our Church, like cleanliness, flower decorations so that it is clean and ready for Mass.

I was given the opportunity to learn more about the SVD missions in my own and other provinces. I also travel around the world, spreading the Gospel and animating people about the Divine Word Missionaries. I am active in the Czech Church and I take this as an opportunity to pass on the message of the SVD mission.

#### What do you particularly enjoy about this work?

As I said, I am overjoyed to see Arnold Janssen's idea of setting the world on fire for Christ. You know, the word "mission" is really in crisis in Europe, but a crisis is always an opportunity. I am glad that I received the gift from God and I can not only know SVD spirituality but also live. I am most pleased with one thing, I hope I will be well understood: Arnold Janssen must have been a difficult personality with many specific aspects that were probably not always easy to bear. And yet he is holy and has done great works. What good news for me, with which it's not always easy!

Interviewed by Susan Noronha

## Video Production

### Presentation of SVD Lay Groups

In this cyber boom, videos have a great impact, and many people like to see and watch something. SVD lay partners all over the world are growing and many new groups have emerged in recent years and some of the older groups strengthened themselves with various initiatives and activities. In this context, producing a short video on each of the lay groups is vital. This helps to know the lay partner groups, their history, work, goals, challenges, and future plans. In fact, all these are to be portrayed in a short video that each group is expected to produce. This video series is titled "SVD Lay Partners Around the World".

This can be done only by the cooperation of each group. Thus, each group leader and lay partners are requested to produce a video regarding their group. To produce them in an orderly manner, kindly contact Fr. Stanislaus Lazar, mission secretary, Rome ([mission@svdcuria.org](mailto:mission@svdcuria.org)) so that he can give you norms and a schedule of your production.

We have already released the first three videos

1. SOVERDIA – Indonesia Java Province.
2. DIWORMILA – US Southern Province
3. AMIVD – Portugal Province

Wishing you all good cooperation in this project.

Fr. Stanislaus Lazar, SVD





## You are asked!

### Let's introduce saints of our country to each other!

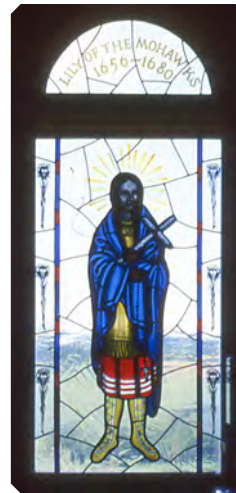
A couple of weeks ago I have read about an initiative in the USA asking Pope Francis to canonize six Afro Americans. I only know one of them (Julia Greeley). Thinking about it I realized that I know only a few saints from other continents. I guess that others feel the same way, too.

Looking at saints' lives helps us on our own path of faith. Learning more about saint from other countries widens our view as SVDLP. Therefore:

Who would like to tell the inspiring story of a saint of his/her country or continent?

Please, contact Maria Wego (SVD-Partner, Germany). E-Mail-Adress: [kontakt@svd-partner.eu](mailto:kontakt@svd-partner.eu)

The brief biographies will be published in the next issue.



Chapel window with St. Kateri Tekakwitha in the shrine "Our Lady of the Martyrs", Auriesville, New York (USA)

### Invitation to permanent SVDLP Peace Prayer

News about terror and war dominates the headlines around the world. As Christians, we are called to bring Jesus' message of peace to the people and to live it in practice. To do this, we need the empowering strength of prayer.

We therefore invite all SVD lay groups to pray for peace every Monday. This permanent SVDLP Peace Prayer should be a sign of peace for the world and a sign of unity among the SVD Lay Partners.

The SVDLP Peace Prayer has been translated into several languages. The collection is attached to this newsletter and can be downloaded from the [SVD-Partner's website](#).

God, our Father  
take our greed and pride  
and turn them into gratitude and humility  
so that peace may be within us.

Jesus, our brother  
take our clenched fists  
and turn them into giving hands,  
so that peace may come among us.

Holy Spirit, giver of life,  
take the anger and hatred of our hearts  
and turn them into love  
so that peace may be in the world.

Saint Arnold Janssen, Saint Joseph Freinademetz  
accompany us on our way  
so that we, as instruments of peace  
proclaim God's love.  
Amen.





## News from the SVD

### Episcopal Ordination – Bishop Tim Norton, SVD

22 February 2022 at the Cathedral of St Stephen, the Brisbane Archdiocese and the Divine Word Missionaries celebrated the appointment of Fr. Tim Norton, SVD as the Auxiliary Bishop of Brisbane.

Bishop Tim was closely associated with the SVD lay partners, especially during their First International Workshop (2017) and during the SVD 18<sup>th</sup> General Chapter (2018) in Nemi, Rome.

We congratulate him and wish him joy and satisfaction in his new ministry.



### Arnold Janssen Spirituality Network (AJSN)



During the opening of the 15<sup>th</sup> General Chapter of the Missionary Sisters of the Holy Spirit (SSpS) last January, Fr. Budi Kleden, SVD mentioned that in 2017 just before the SVD 18<sup>th</sup> general Chapter confreres reacted with surprise upon learning the decision of the two General Council to suspend the Arnold Janssen Spirituality Team in

Steyl. Fr. Budi describes the reaction as “an indication of the importance our members put on the collaboration of our two congregations in the area of spirituality.”

Given the importance the members of the Arnoldus family put on the collaborative work on the Spirituality of our Founder and the Founding Generation. Therefore after a period of consultation and restructuring process, grateful to all who have been part of the previous AJSC teams the SSpS/SSpSAP/SVD joint General Councils announce last May 23, 2021 the new structure for spiritual animation in our family. The new structure which is based on the principles of decentralization, participation, collaboration and contextualization was given an updated name “Arnold Janssen Spirituality Network” (AJSN). And it is composed of three levels: first the Congregational level with the International Core Team (ICT), Extended Team and Advisory Group, second is the Continental/Zonal level and third Province/Region/Mission/National level.

The International Core Team is given the shared responsibility for 15<sup>th</sup> and oversight of all AJSN activities. The members appointed to the team are Fr. Peter Dusicka, SVD from Slovakia, Sr. Teresa Sriwahyuni, SSpS from Indonesia, Sr. Maria Cristiana Avalos, SSpS from Argentina and Fr. Dennis Manzana, SVD from the Philippines.

The objectives envisioned for the new structure are: First, to promote and animate Arnold Janssen Spirituality and our Congregations’ rich Spiritual heritage among members of the Arnoldus Family, lay partners, and others. Second, to foster the

contextualization of this spirituality into today’s reality. Thirdly, to form and train spiritual animators. Fourth is to reflect research and prepare materials, publication of articles. And fifth, to promote the ongoing interchange of information/ideas between other related disciplines or dimensions within the Arnoldus family.

Due to difficulty of air travel during the COVID pandemic and with two of the members of the ICT were working outside Europe at the time of their new appointment, the team was only able to meet in person last November. Now that the team has started its mission, one of the immediate tasks is the establishment of the AJSN Extended Team by connecting with and empowering persons who already coordinate/represent spiritual animation at the Zonal/Continental level.

We look forward to a dynamic network of collaboration. As we hope that the involvement of the lay partners in spiritual animation will continue to grow and by deepening the legacy of our Founder our collaboration may be strengthened. Together we pray that the Holy Triune God may be a constant source of inspiration for us as we serve, collaborate and create a network for spiritual animation.

Members of the AJSN-ICT





## Culinary Trip Around the World

### Coffee (Kaffeetrinken) from Germany - Mole cake

After a break in the last issue we will continue now our culinary trip around the world. EUROPE will share a typical central- and north European meal: Coffee ("Kaffeetrinken") from Germany.

Drinking coffee ("Kaffeetrinken") is not just having a coffee, it is another meal on Sundays and holidays. Traditionally, lunch is eaten at 12 noon, coffee at 3 pm and dinner between 6 and 7 pm. But people also arrange to meet for coffee in a café. Cafés are only open from early noon to dinnertime and offer only small snacks at lunchtime, in addition to a large selection of cakes and tarts.

#### Ingredients:

##### Dough

- 125 g butter
- 125 g sugar
- 4 egg whites
- 50 g flour
- 10 g cocoa
- 4 level tsp baking powder
- 4 egg yolks
- 75 g ground hazelnut kernels
- 100 g dark chocolate chips
- 1 sachet vanilla sugar

##### Filling

- 2 bananas
- 1 jar of sour cherries (drained weight 350 g)
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 600 ml cream
- 25 g sugar
- 1 packet ground gelatine



#### How to make it:

##### For the dough

1. Beat the egg whites until stiff and a knife edge remains visible.
2. Beat the soft butter until smooth, add the sugar and vanilla sugar, stirring until a thick mixture is formed.
3. Gradually stir in the egg yolks.
4. Mix flour with cocoa powder, baking powder, hazelnut kernels and grated chocolate and stir into the butter/egg mixture in two portions.
5. Carefully stir in the whipped egg whites.
6. Pour the batter into a 26 cm cake tin and smooth it down.
7. Bake in a preheated oven (180° C) for 30 minutes.
8. After the cake has cooled, mark a 1-2 cm border on it with a knife.
9. Scoop out the centre to a depth of 1 cm with a tablespoon.
10. Crumble the pastry pieces in a bowl.

##### For the filling

1. Drain the cherries well.
2. Peel the bananas, cut in half lengthwise, sprinkle with lemon juice and place on top of the hollowed out cake.
3. Spread the cherries between/over the bananas.
4. Whip the cream with the sugar until stiff.
5. Prepare the gelatine according to the instructions on the packet and fold into the cream.
6. Spread the cream like a dome on the fruit and sprinkle with the breadcrumbs (press down lightly if necessary).

Chill the cake for at least 1 hour.

Enjoy your cake at Kaffeetrinken!

Sophie Wego  
SVD-Partner, GER



## In Memoriam

For God so loved the world,  
that he gave his one  
and only Son,  
that whoever believes in him  
should not perish,  
but have eternal life.



**Lorenzo Leones**

† October 2021

SVD Lay Partner PHC

Gone from our sight, but never from our hearts.

We will miss you!

Rest in Peace





## Prayer

Good God, we long to live together in peace.

When selfishness and injustice become rampant,  
when violence breaks out between people,  
when reconciliation seems impossible,  
it is you who give us hope for peace.

When differences in language, culture or faith make us forget  
that we are your creatures  
that you have entrusted creation to us as our common home,  
it is you who give us hope for peace.

When people are pitted against each other,  
when power is used to exploit others,  
when facts are twisted to deceive others,  
it is you, who gives us hope for peace.

Teach us to be just and caring with one another and to resist  
corruption.

Give us courageous women and men who heal the wounds left  
by hatred and violence on body and soul.

Let us find the right words, gestures and means to promote  
peace.  
In whatever language we call you "King of Peace",  
let our voices be heard loudly  
against violence and against injustice.

Amen.

Sr. Mary Grace Sawe, CPS

## Happy Easter!

*Susan*

*Sophie*

*Jawrae*

Matilda

*Daisy*

*Isabel*

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