



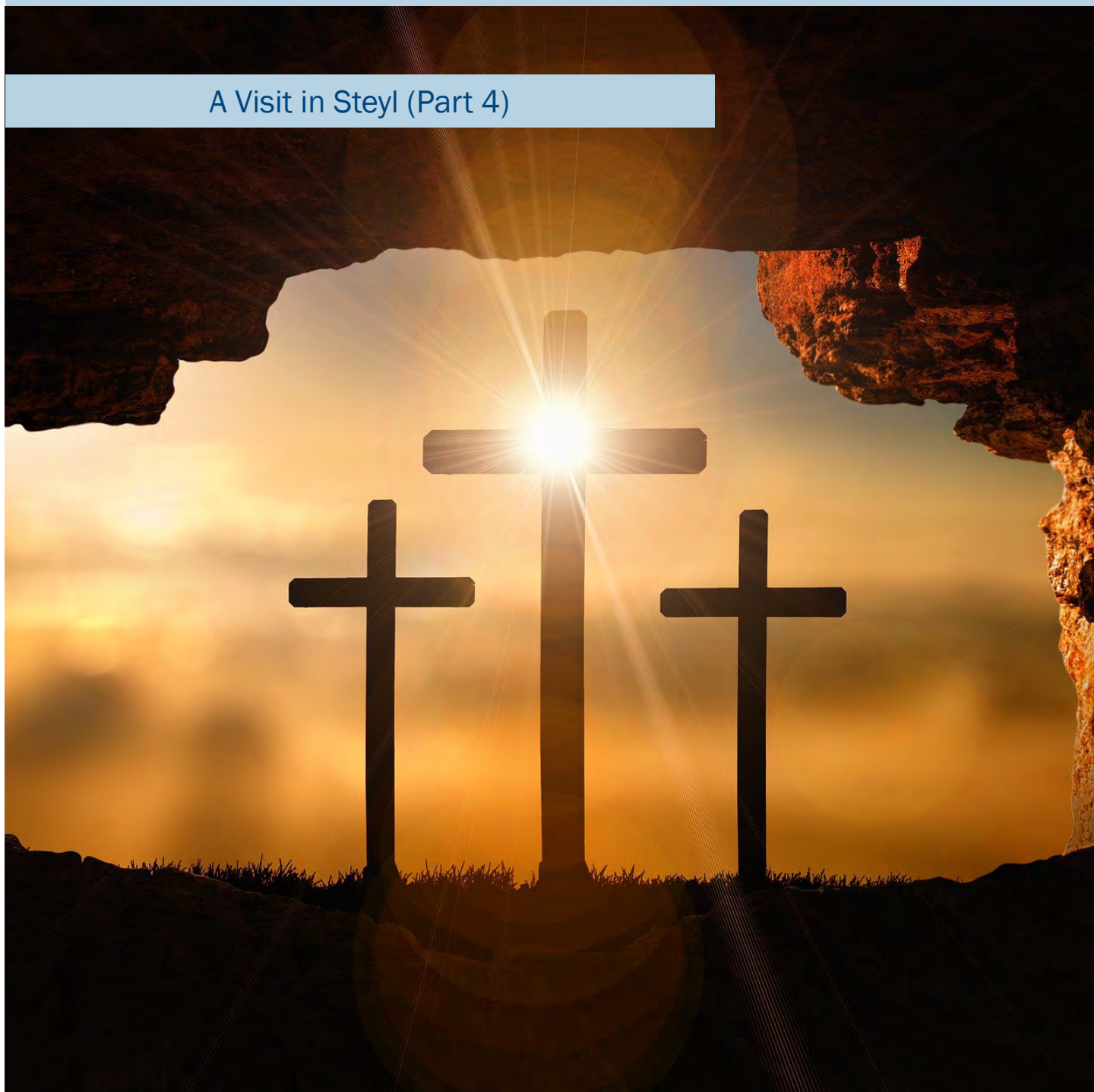
Society of the Divine Word (SVD)

SVD Lay Partners

Newsletter - from Around the World

Issue 21, April 2023

A Visit in Steyl (Part 4)



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Editorial

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Editorial

RABBONI!



It was an answer like no other! RABBONI! The one-word response represented the richness of realities that defined Mary Magdalene – faith, conversion, love, joy, friendship, courage, discipleship, mission, etc.

Mary was from Magdala, a village on the shore of the Sea of Galilee. It was a busy fishing village. When she met Jesus, Mary had big problems in her life; the Gospels tell us that Jesus cast seven demons out from her (Mk 16:9, Lk 8:2). She met Jesus, was healed by him and discovered in him her teacher, friend, Lord and Savior. Not only did she become his follower, but also one of his staunchest disciples. She followed Jesus to Calvary, stood at the foot of the Cross and was among the women who approached the tomb after his death. As she discovered the tomb was empty, she cried, unable to understand what had happened to his body.

And then came that unmistakable voice: “Mary” followed by her unforgettable reply, “she turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, “RABBONI!” (which means “Teacher”)” (Jn 20:16). Mary knew him by his voice. This reminds us of John 10:27, when Jesus said to his disciples, “My sheep hear my voice [...]” Mary knew his voice and recognized that it was her Shepherd standing before her.

Jesus's first interaction out of the tomb is a personal conversation with a friend. Conversations are what Jesus constantly had with his disciples, both while he was in the world and after the resurrection. Mary is a profound example of this becoming and being. She allowed herself to be moulded by Jesus to become the first missionary of the resurrection: “Go to my brothers and say to them [...]” (Jn 20:17).

Conversations are what we need to have today. They are the building blocks of togetherness. The breakdown in global conversations is causing major flashpoints in many corners of the world. The breakdown in domestic conversations is leading to collapse in our personal lives, our families and our communities. The post-resurrection invitation of Jesus, “Come and have breakfast,” (Jn 21:12) is an opening for conversation, an opening for understanding and an opening for deepening relationships.

If only we would listen and talk! If only we would converse! Mary listened. She listened and she recognized the voice. The story of the resurrection needs to become our story too. As recorded for all eternity; first comes the call of the Master and then comes the very personal and profound answer: “RABBONI.”

May this joyful season of Easter fill your heart with renewed faith, hope, love and peace.

Susan Noronha
 Editor-in-chief

A Visit in Steyl

Part 4: Sacred Heart- and Holy Spirit Monastery – The Motherhouses of the Two Female Congregations

After a break in the last issue, we continue the tour of the monastery village of Steyl. We start with some impressions of the Motherhouse of the Missionary Sisters, the Sacred Heart

Convent. The following visit to the Holy Spirit Convent, the Motherhouse of the Adoration Sisters, will complete the tour of Steyl.



The Sacred Heart Convent, built in 1904, was initially a double convent for the Missionary and Adoration Sisters, who lived to the right and left of the church. It can still be recognised today by the two entrances. Despite its size, it quickly became too small, so after merely 10 years the Adoration Sisters got a separate convent at the river Meuse.

A view through trees of the large park towards the entrance and below the



front view and the statue of the Sacred Heart.





The convent church and side chapel with the sarcophagus of Blessed Mother Mary (Helena Stollenwerk) and Blessed Mother Josepha (Hendrina Stenmanns) the co-founders of the Missionary Sisters.



In all houses of the Arnoldus family built at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century had big clocks in the corridors calling the inhabitants every 15 minutes to the Quarter Hour prayer.

Few of these clocks still exist. One of them is the one below with the impressive clockwork in Motherhouse of the SspS. It's still working but no longer reminding quarterly to prayer.





The monastery houses two small museums. The younger museum was designed in 2014 on the occasion of the 125th anniversary of the Order and deals with the history of the congregation.



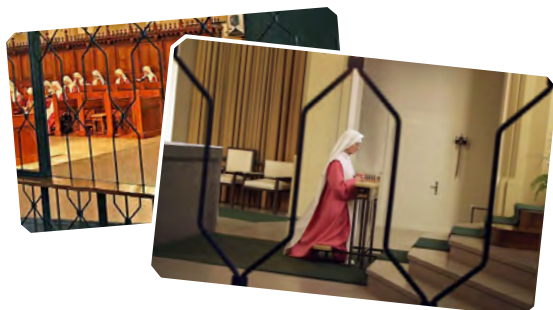
The older one shows exhibits brought or sent from the mission countries. A classic mission museum of the beginning of the 20th century.



Leaving the Sacred Heart Monastery of the Missionsisters the visit in Steyl will end with impressions of the Holy Spirit Monastery of the Adoration Sisters. Also in reality we can have only a look from outside and visit a sidechapel of the church. Thanks the SVD we have also a view inside the church.



Views of the front of the Holy Spirit Monastery and the back form the banks of the Meuse.



View from the sidechapel to the altar and down from the organ tribune into the church.





AFRAM ZONE



Zambia (ZAM): Zambia Mission Lay Partners

Action Plan and Zambia Mission Assembly

2023 Action Plan

The Lusaka Lay Partners gathered for their first meeting of 2023 to discuss the activities of 2022 and to implement the 2023 Action Plan. The turnout was excellent.

The planned first visit of the Kabwe lay partners a week after Easter Sunday last year generated a great deal of interest. The invitation from the Zambia Superior to the Mission Assembly in Lusaka in early March was the other very interesting event to occur. While reviewing the 2022 activities, we saw that most activities had been completed, with the exception of the visit to the SVD Formation House, where we had intended to plant trees. This is something we plan to do this year.

A lot of time was invested in planning the visit to the Kabwe lay partners. We visited them in July 2022. They will make a

weekend visit to attend a workshop with their members from Lusaka. In this regard, a lot of logistics had to be worked out. The excitement was great and the inputs were fruitful.

Zambia Mission Assembly

The meeting also discussed the gathering of the Zambia Mission Assembly to be held in Lusaka in early March. SVD lay partner representatives from Kabwe and Lusaka are invited to attend on the first day only. We have been requested to present our reports before the Assembly.

We are looking forward to a fruitful year with renewed vigour.

Mildred Sodala



Democratic Republic of Congo (CNG): Fraternité SVD

The SVDLP Youth in DR Congo



Our young *Fraternité SVD*

One of our AFRAM Zonal Assembly's recommendations was to encourage young people in our community to join the *Fraternité SVD* in Congo. In fact, our group existed for more than 10 years without much involvement of young people. A nation finds its life in its youth and a family survives through its children, so our group ran the risk of disappearing without young people's involvement.

It is with joy that we greeted the efforts of some members who sensitized the youth and on Sunday, 22nd January, 13 young girls and boys began the Initial Formation as young lay partners of *Fraternité SVD*. During our first meeting, I discovered that these young people had a lot of energy and willingness to discover and follow Christ according to the spirituality and charism of the SVD.

Listen to God and talk to Him

Make the Word of God the primary source of our life. To take five minutes of one's day to "listen to God and talk to him"



could seem amusing. Yet, as time passes, we realize that giving the Lord a few minutes of our time to read the Bible, is putting ourselves at his disposal. God talks to us in the solitude of focusing on God's Word and we listen to him. As we listen to him, we feel compelled to reply and tell him about ourselves and our life. This is prayer.

The youth have already begun their Formation experience, culminating in a formal commitment to the *Fraternité SVD* after six months. They were sent in small groups to the three SVD Institutions in Kinshasa (St. Amand, St. Felix and *Notre Dame d'Afrique*) on the third Sunday of Lent to gain missionary experience that will help to prepare them to become Christ's disciples for our society and the Church.

Our prayers are for this new pastoral experience in Congo.

Jean-Paul Nico Luketo Musete



Ghana (GHA): Friends of SVD

Various Meetings



Arnoldus Family meeting

The SVD Novitiate at Nkwatia in Ghana held an Arnoldus Family meeting with parents and relatives of the Novices from 21 to 22 January 2023. The purpose of the meeting was to involve parents in their children's Formation and to help them understand the decision the novices made to become SVD religious. There was a total of twenty-one Novices from seven countries: Ghana, Togo, Tanzania, Kenya, Madagascar, the D.R. Congo and Mozambique. The program started with an opening prayer by one of the novices. The Assistant Novice Director, Fr. Joseph Bidu SVD welcomed all. The Novitiate has three Formators; Fr. Titus, the Novice Director, Fr. Joseph Bidu, the Assistant Novice Director and Br. Ashun SVD.

Presentations on different topics were given by Fr. Titus and Fr. Cyprian Kuupol SVD, the Provincial Superior. The presence of SVD lay partners was an inspiration to the visitors from the Krachie region in Ghana, who expressed the desire to have lay partner groups formed in their area. The entire community showed their heartfelt gratitude and appreciation for the various support and contributions they receive from the lay partners.



Visit to Kintampo Municipal Government Hospital

Friends of SVD from St. Joseph Parish, Kintampo in the Techiman Diocese, visited the Kintampo Municipal Government Hospital on 12 February 2023 as part of their annual program. The visit was also part of the group's activities to celebrate World Day for the Sick. The lay partners made donations to the children's ward. We prayed with and for the children and distributed the various items. The youngsters were filled with excitement as a result of the good gesture.

We wish to thank God for the lives of our SVD lay partners and to serve God with them as we carry out our missionary work.

Fr. Danso Abeam, SVD
Daniel Lamprey



Kenya (KEN): Friends of SVD

Joy and Grief - Close to Each Other



Annual Convention

Since the beginning, this has been one of our most important activities, although we had suspended it due to COVID-19 for three years. Members from the three districts come together and each group is given the opportunity to present the annual activity report. Thanks be to God that we were able to have it this time. We were hosted by the Friends of SVD of Holy Spirit Parish, Langas, Eldoret District. The lay partners from Nairobi, Arusha and Eldoret Districts attended.

Fr. Jerome Olianga, SVD, Mission Secretary and Fr. Honore Karo, SVD were present. Fr. Jerome and the members who represented us at the First AFRAM Zone Lay Partners' Workshop in Congo were given the chance to share what they had learnt. We hope to hold our next convention in Arusha District, Tanzania

Special visit to CFC

On 28th January, we visited SVD Common Formation Centre (CFC) and interacted with the SVD seminarians. They told us how they live together in the community, embracing each other despite the fact that they come from different nationalities. Later, we joined them in the celebration of the Holy Eucharist.



Feasts of St. Arnold Janssen and St. Joseph Freinademetz

In all three districts, our groups celebrated the feasts of St. Arnold Janssen and St. Joseph Freinademetz in a variety of ways at their local parishes. May they pray for us and guide us to be true lay missionaries of the Word.

New uniform

We have a new uniform, a white shirt on top of the green T-shirt. New members who joined the association recently wore it.

Sad demise

With sadness, we share the demise of Jane Kimunto, a member of Saint Barnabas Kimumu Parish in Eldoret District, who died on 22nd January 2023. We will remember her for her active participation and commitment.

Blessed and happy Easter to all!

Grace Akinyi



Mozambique (MOZ): Leigos Associados com Verbo Divino (LACVERDI)

Growth and expansion



Leigos Associados com Verbo Divino (LACVERDI) was officially recognized in Mozambique on 8th September 2018. Since then, the group strives to implement its strategic plan. One of them is the growth and expansion of the group to other Dioceses, especially where the Divine Word Missionaries are working.

The celebration of the SVD Silver Jubilee in February 2022, which was graced by the presence of the Superior General, Fr. Budi Kleden was a turning point for some of the guests. A delegation from the Archdiocese of Beira was inspired by the commitment and dedication of the lay associates in Maputo to the cause of SVD spirituality and apostolate. They expressed an interest in joining the Arnoldus family. In collaboration with the mission secretary and spiritual director, our confreres in Beira planned seminars for the new group.

On 15th January 2023, at the feast of St. Arnold Janssen, twenty-three members were integrated to be part of LACVERDI. The celebration was led by Fr. Fabian Kalaluka SVD, the Vice Regional Superior and the Spiritual Director of this group in Mozambique, along with other concelebrants. In addition, we also had the presence of some religious sisters and Lúisa Alexandre and Mr. Celso, representatives of LACVERDI from Maputo. The celebration was very well organized and was animated by LACVERDI from Beira.

On 29th January, the SVDs together with SSps from Beira, Franciscans sisters of Our Lady and LACVERDI celebrated the feast of St. Joseph Freinademetz in a community of Sixmaile-



Beira. The celebration was very meaningful and was animated by the community choir. After the Eucharistic celebration, the LACVERDI conducted some games for the children and distributed notebook kits to the children from the 3rd to 9th class while the Sisters organized catechism for the people in the Chapel.

Fr. Fabian Kalaluka Mate, SVD
Br. Bernardo Fernandes SVD





ASPAC ZONE



India (ING): Apostles of Divine Word (ADW)

New Group



First meeting

On 19th February 2023, Agartala SVD District in ING (India Guwahati) officially formed the SVD lay partners group called Apostles of Divine Word (ADW). Lay associates from three parishes - Ambassa, Kamranga and Khwmlung of Agartala Diocese came together in Ambassa and joined the Sunday Eucharist. Later, the members assembled for an official meeting. Out of twenty-two members, only thirteen could come together for the half-day conference.

The meeting started with the hymn to the Holy Spirit and the Reading from the Prologue of the Gospel of St. John. Fr. Maxim Rodrigues, SVD, the Regional Superior welcomed everyone and explained the statutes of ADW. The group decided to meet once three months. With few modifications, the group passed the statutes of ADW. Fr. Jeevan Kennedy the Vice-Regional explained the membership profile and objectives of the group.

Another major event that took place was the office bearer's election. Pradip Debbarma (Khwmlung parish) was elected as the president, Kamal Debbarma (Khwmlung) as vice-president, Anjana Bongcher (Ambassa parish) as secretary and Milan Halam (Kamranga parish) as treasurer as the office bearers for three years of ADW. Fr. Ivan D'Silva, SVD was appointed by the Regional council as Spiritual Director for the SVD lay partners of the Agartala SVD District.

On 19th March 2023, twenty-two lay partners from the three parishes gathered in Ambassa Parish and made their commitment prayer at the Sunday Mass in the presence of the Regional Superior and faithful. We are grateful to Susan Noronha and Anupama Subodhanan, SVD lay partners from Mumbai for their visit to ING and inspiration towards forming the ADW group.

Fr. Ivan D'Silva, SVD



India (INM): Disciples of the Divine Word (DDW), Mumbai

God's Mission



Mission ING

On 15th January 2023, Anupama Subodhanan and Susan Noronha, SVD lay partners from Mumbai, participated in the SVD Mission Day at the Holy Spirit Catholic Church, Ambassa, Tripura in the India Guwahati Region (ING). The parishioners from four SVD parishes joined in the Eucharistic Celebration. Later, we talked to the congregation about our experience and love for the mission as SVD lay partners. A new SVD lay partner group from Tripura will soon be functional in ING Region. Connecting with the people and being able to witness the initiation of the first lay group gave us immense joy.

Word and His Way a reality. Divine Word School, Chayang Tajo is a five-hour drive from Seppa (Arunachal Pradesh), through a twisting hill track and across the lush green mountains. Two hours' drive down the slope is the Divine Word School, Nari Camp. People in Chayang Tajo and Nari Camp are from the *Nyishi* and *Puroik* tribes. To be accepted by these communities, one must strive to be one of them and our confreres have adjusted to their way of living here.

There is no doubt that our founder discovered the living Heart of Jesus in every human being and that his missionaries may reach the most remote places to announce the good news of support and hope to people.

God's mission

We visited a few SVD communities and experienced the passion for God's mission. Despite limited resources and competition from other Christian groups, our confreres remain optimistic and determined to provide education and spiritual guidance to the people, particularly children. Young confreres and seminarians from many tribes, cultures and belief systems, let ordinary people like us appreciate the wonderful energy vibrating around.

The journey by road to the remote SVD missions has etched a deep and grateful place in our memory. The confreres strive every day through the challenges they face, to make the Lord's

Susan Noronha
Anupama Subodhanan



India (INH): SVD Fraternity

Interaction with the Superior General and Other Activities



Interaction with the Superior General

On the sidelines of his visit to St. Charles Apostolic School's (Minor Seminary) Diamond Jubilee Celebrations on 12th May 2022, Superior General Fr. Budi Kleden had an interaction with the SVD Fraternity. He was accompanied by Fr. Stanislaus Lazar, General Mission Secretary, Fr. Lazar Gnanaprakasam, Fr. Bali Reddy Chennuru and others. They were welcomed with a *Mangala Arati* and the ceremonial lamp - *Kuthu Vilakku* was lit by them to mark the auspicious occasion. Mr. Rajkumar, youth coordinator welcomed the guests. Dominic Roche, Joint Secretary presented a brief report on SVD Fraternity covering its activities.

Thanking the Superior General, K. R. Lazar, the President of the group underscored how their activities almost came to a standstill due to COVID-19 and how they are now gathering steam. He went on to place a specific request to him that we be called SVD Fraternity officially - a term that has a calm dignity about it unlike lay partners or SVD friends. Fr. Stanislaus Lazar shared some of his experiences and added that both terms are liberally used globally and have gained acceptance.

A Tanjore copper plate with a facsimile of Fr. Karl Ritz, the young German Missionary who surmounted many geo-linguistic barriers to found St. Charles Seminary was presented to Fr. Budi Kleden. Fr. Budi Kleden was pleasantly surprised to hear of the group's diverse activities. He appreciated their commitment, activities, involvement and love for the Society.



Dr. Arulraj, General Secretary honoured the dignitaries with *Anga Vastrams*, the ethnic towel donned on the shoulders and then, the Superior General presented one to each of the participants. The session drew to a close with prayer and blessings. Fr. Budi along with others visited the servants' quarters under construction which is being funded by the SVD Fraternity.

Leaving the beaten track, we opted for an area where a good number of our SVD Ex-Seminarians may be living and had a General Body Meeting at Karaikkudi on 16th October.

Solidarity with the grief-stricken family

The members visited the grief-stricken family of Dr. Arulraj who lost their grown-up son in a mishap, to spend quiet time in solidarity with them in sharing interspersed with prayer.

Pleasant surprise

The Parish Priest, surprisingly an ex-SVD and eight new members joined the Holy Mass celebrated for SVD missionaries, SVD Fraternity and the departed souls of their dear ones.

New welfare scheme

K.R. Lazar presented to the House a scheme for the upliftment of a few deserving catholic boys by sponsoring their certificate/training courses in refrigeration, air-con repair and other skills that are constantly in demand and may immediately add to the family income. Thomas Xavier was nominated to head the sub-committee that would choose the candidates. The scheme is to be bulk-funded among others by the President and the General Secretary (in memory of his departed son) and is likely to go on stream in March 2023.

Dominic Roche

Indonesia (IDE): Soverdia Nagekeo

Ecological Conversion in the Light of Laudato Si



Recollection

The title of this article is the theme of the Nagekeo District Soverdia Recollection on Saturday, 25 February 2023, at the SVD Danga Pondok Hall, presented by Fr. Vande Raring, SVD and Fr. Hubert Tenga, SVD. There were forty-two participants, forty lay people and two SVD priests.

The Recollection began with a talk by Elias Tae who represented the board of Soverdia Nagekeo. This was followed by *Doa Suku Jam*, a Prayer song to the Holy Spirit - *Veni Creator Spiritus*, introduction from the Mission Animation team and JPIC of SVD Ende Province. Prior to input, Fr. Hubert Tenga showed a video, 'Environmental Damage by Waste'.

Some important points:

- The Encyclical Laudato Si, published on the day of Pentecost 24th May 2015 by Pope Francis, specifically talks about caring for the earth as our common home. Pope Francis based the life of St. Francis of Assisi as the inspiration for the birth of the Encyclical.
- By contemplating the Encyclical, we are invited to look at the current condition of our earth today where there are seven problems faced by humans, including pollution and climate change, water problems, loss of biodiversity, decreased quality of human life, moral decline and global inequality.



- Laudato Si offers a concept of thinking and a harmonious perspective to improve the current conditions.
- Ecological issues must become a serious concern for all of us by placing humans not as masters or kings over created nature but on an equal footing with other created creatures, positioning humans as real humans and treating the earth as a common home.
- Through this revolutionary movement, we need to have a new awareness and lifestyle as well as responsible actions towards caring for nature as our common home.

The meeting was followed by silent prayer, Mass and dinner as one family of SOVERDIA.

Elfrin Hurek



Indonesia (IDJ): Soverdia

Time Full of Activities



A Memory Book for the departed members

A virtual "All Souls Mass" for the members who have died and also for the souls of the Soverdia family members, was celebrated by Fr. Lukas Gewa Tiala, SVD on 20th November 2022, attended by members from all Regions in IDJ Province. A 'Memory Book' is in the making listing deceased Soverdia members, which will be used during Mass in each district and/or in the SVD community (SVD Lay Partner Group Statute Chapter VI, art.5). The Provincial Superior of IDJ has approved this initiative.

Fundraising

We are actively involved in various fundraising activities to support SVD Formation and Mission activities. On 6th November, SVD lay partners from St. Bartolomeus, Bekasi were involved in a fundraising event for the SVD Major Seminary of St. Paul in Ledalero. Likewise, the groups from Denpasar - Bali, Soverdia Malang, St. Bartolomeus - Bekasi and several other groups in IDJ Province are active in raising funds for the SVD mission work through the "Coin for Mission" movement.

Continues to grow

We are a total of twenty-two SVD lay partner groups in IDJ Province with around 650 members. God continues to expand



our membership. On 15th January, a new group from St. Theresia, Tangeb – Bali has been established and Rosa Ni Putu Dian Adiari is the Chairperson of the group.

Care and share

Sharing and solidarity are real attitudes that make us dare to get out of our comfort. We visited the Kerobokan Prison in Bali, providing donations for the Christmas celebration in the prison. SVD lay partners of Lombok District distributed groceries to the community in the Pancasari-Bedugul SVD plantation area. This is an activity that is carried out regularly in collaboration with the SVD Bali Lombok District.

Advent reflection and recollection

We held a virtual Advent Reflection and Recollection guided by Fr. Aurelius Pati Soge, SVD. This 'Ongoing Formation' activity helped us to be able to deepen and understand better our identity as SVD lay partners. At the district and parish level, our members organized Recollections with themes and objectives personalizing to their needs.

Liturgical celebration

SVD lay partners participate actively in liturgical celebrations, such as preparing novenas for the feast of St. Arnold Janssen and St. Joseph Freinademetz, in their respective parishes - in Teraju, Denpasar, Tuka, Tangeb, Tenggarrong, Jeruju, Meliau, Martubung, Malang, Surabaya, Bekasi and several other parishes.

Paulina Suharsi



Indonesia (IDR): Persaudaraan Misioner Sang Sabda (PMSS)

Celebrations and Pilgrimage



Celebrating 33rd Anniversary

The 33rd anniversary of *Persaudaraan Misioner Sang Sabda* (PMSS) was celebrated on 29th December 2022. Wearing our yellow uniform, we attended the celebration which started with the Eucharistic celebration presided by the founder of PMSS, Fr. Frans Pora Udjan, SVD and concelebrated by the Provincial of IDR Province and PMSS Moderator Fr. Vitalis Hiburdin, SVD. Addressing the congregation Fr. Paulus Tolo wished that the 33rd anniversary of PMSS is a sign of rebirth and continues to grow with the presence of the young generation that will decorate the life of the lay group. In his closing words, Fr. Vitalis invited all participants to the reception while reminding them that in the coming year, we will attempt to discover more means to encourage others to join PMSS.

World Day of the Sick

We celebrated World Day of the Sick at the *Renceng Mose* Rehabilitation Centre on 11th February 2023. The celebration started with Holy Mass celebrated by Fr. Vitalis Hiburdin who prayed not only for the members of the community but also for individuals who are physically and psychologically ill all across the world. Later, we distributed groceries, toiletries, milk, etc. to the inmates, most of them coming from Flores Island.



Golo Lusang Grotto

Visiting the Marian Grotto is one of the traditions of catholic people in Manggarai, especially during the month of May and October. On 30th October, members of PMSS went on a Marian Pilgrimage to *Golo Lusang Grotto* and celebrated the Holy Eucharist and prayed the Rosary. During Mass Fr. Vitalis encouraged the members to have faith in Mary, encouraging them to entrust their lives to Mother Mary's care because she is our loving Mother.

The joy of life may be found in how we spend our lives serving others, particularly those in need.

Fr. Vitalis Hiburdin, SVD



Indonesia (IDT): Paguyuban Soverdia Kupang

Meeting the Scavenger Community and Public Speaking Training



Meeting with the Scavenger Community

On Sunday, 29th January also celebrated as SVD Timor Day, the group of *Paguyuban Soverdia Kupang*, together with the mission secretary of IDT Province, visited the scavenger community. Thirty households have already enrolled to obtain food. They greeted us with what it feels like to be beneath a tent. Their dwelling appears to be modest and little. There were piles of rubbish everywhere. They live on other people's land since they come from diverse places.

Josep Blikololong, the scavengers' coordinator, explained that they had been living in that location for several years. They leave the house early in the morning and search the city for waste. Some people use carts, while others use sacks to keep

waste. They return home in the afternoon and begin sorting the garbage. Collectors buy old bottles, cans and chunks of iron. They make little money to survive.

Isidorus Lilijawa, the coordinator of *Paguyuban Soverdia Kupang* and Fr. Roni Daesoro, SVD, mission secretary, spoke to the community about hard work and never giving up. We learn from our scavenger friends what it means to suffer in life. We hope our being here might lift your spirits. *Paguyuban Soverdia* is prepared to give hope to these friends by visiting them every month for worship and spiritual experiences.

Public speaking training for the Novices

From 20 to 25 February 2023, Isidorus Lilijawa gave public speaking training to the thirty-five young novices of Saint Joseph Nenuk Novitiate in Atambua. Isidorus was a novice from 1998 to 2001. He was happy to share his expertise and experience with the newcomers. He said, "St. Joseph Nenuk Novitiate has evolved and improved. Being an alumnus of this novitiate, I am privileged to be able to come and motivate the novice brothers." Fr. Karnisius Doman, SVD, novice master, expressed that public speaking skills are very important because they support pastoral ministry and mission. They thanked Isidorus for his teaching and guidance.

Isidorus Lilijawa



The Philippines (PHN): SVD-PHN Mission Partners

Examples of the Work of Lay Partners



Unearthing this genuine treasure

For most of 2022, the SVD-PHN mission office under Mission Secretary Fr. Emil Pati, SVD and SVD-PHN mission partners coordinators couple Mike and GeeO Paderon took every time and opportunity to visit the five Districts of SVD-PHN to intensify the unearthing of the genuine treasure, the SVD Lay Partners; in small and large activities, organized and spontaneous get-togethers, during assemblies and meetings.

“Right from the beginning already, the SVD has discovered lay partners as a genuine treasure [...] we have to be careful not to bury this treasure again,” SVD-PHN Provincial Superior Romy Fajardo would affirm his commitment to this partnership borrowing former SVD Superior General Fr. Heinz Kulüke’s words.

The visits allowed us to look closer at the immensity and richness of this partnership in the areas of existing SVD lay partners groups, the youth mission partners and the unsung SVD lay partners. One of these groups, the Agnus Dei Catholic Community Base at the Divine Word Retreat House, Baguio City was founded 38 years ago by an SVD and continues to be partners in mission with the SVDs in several capacities.

Youth mission partners

For the SVD lay mission partners to keep growing, the involvement of youth mission partners is vital. Not simply as



recipients but as protagonists. The Philippine Northern Province is blessed to have such young people.

The unsung mission partners

Over the years of the SVD mission, we have hundreds of lay partners who have quietly but generously dedicated their lives to the mission. In this article, we take the example of Helen Fornolles and Josephine Idao. Helen and other community workers from Malibcong, Abra, traversed trails and rivers to provide medical assistance, welcomed into their home SVD and lay mission partners in need of a place to stay. Josephine Idao from Abra, on the other hand, worked in the laundry at the Divine Word Seminary in Tagaytay for over 40 years and later volunteered for several years as a cook at St. Therese Parish in Malibcong. Helen and Josephine are just two of the hundreds of unsung SVD lay mission partners.

Rambak Misyon Abra

On 15th January 2023, there was Rambak Misyon Abra 2023, a musical event honouring St. Arnold Janssen featuring SVDs, mission partners and local talents. Organized by the SVD Friends Abra Chapter in collaboration with the SVD-PHN Mission Office and SVD-PHN Mission Partners, the musical concert was a celebration of deep gratitude and giving back to the mission given us through St. Arnold Janssen and the Society of the Divine Word. Proceeds of the concert will fund the repairs of the SVD Abra District House damaged by the 27th July 2022 earthquake.

Mike and GeeO Paderon



The Philippines (PHC): The Lay Society of St. Arnold Janssen (LSSAJ)

Unusual Christmas party



The 11th of December 2022 was a day to remember for the entire community of Hesus Nazareno Parish, an SVD Parish located in Dasmariñas City, Cavite City. Instead of the usual Christmas party in Manila, the Lay Society of St. Arnold Janssen (LSSAJ) made it more memorable by sharing what we have with our brothers/sisters who were most deserving of our love and care.

The day was filled with gift-giving parlour games, music and frolicking among the youth, children, the elderly and the entire community. It was a day filled with faith-transforming life experiences and spreading holiday cheer.

A nativity crafting contest was held among the youth. LSSAJ officers led by Chairman Charlie Avila, President Cris Lim, Corporate Secretary Mayette Tamondong graced the occasion. LSSAJ Dasmariñas Chapter President Emma Flores together with other Chapter officers/members took time and effort to make the event a memorable one for all. Fr. Teofilo "Popo" Perey, SVD, Parish Priest, together with Fr. Rafael De Santa Maria, SVD, Assistant Parish Priest concelebrated the Holy Eucharist, thanking God for his bountiful blessings in the midst of the pandemic.

Parlour games brought so much joy, laughter and excitement among the youth. The winner of the nativity crafting contest presented their nativity scene using recycled materials.

Daisy Leones



Papua New Guinea (PNG): SVD Friends PNG

Meeting with the Generalate Visitor



The SVD PNG Province had a Special Visitor from SVD Generalate from Rome, Fr. Xavier Thirukudumbam, SVD a General Council Member who is visiting Papua New Guinea Province (PNG) from 8 February to 23 March 2023. He is in PNG on General Visitation.

The SVD Friends PNG at St. Martin De Pores Parish, Par, Enga Province were honoured and privileged to have Fr. Xavier visiting their Parish on the 24th February 2023. He was welcomed warmly and was presented with some gifts. A cultural event was organized by the SVD lay partners of Par Parish, followed by a fellowship meal. It was a memorable moment for us and we appreciate Fr. Xavier's visit to our Parish. We are grateful to Fr. Bao Nguyen, SVD, our Parish Priest, our Spiritual Director and all other SVD fathers who organized this meeting with the General Visitor for us.

Later on, Fr. Xavier visited Holy Cross Parish, Pompabus and met the SVD missionaries. He also met and spent time with the SVD priests and seminarians at Divine Word College, Catholic Theological Institute, Bomana, Port Moresby.



We are once again grateful to Fr. Xavier for meeting us and listening to us. We assure him of our prayers.

Dony Lakan
Clement Kunandi Victor



EUROPA ZONE

Germany (GER): SVD-Partner

SVD-Partner Starts with a Feast and Many Ideas into 2023



2023 began with a feast for the SVD-Partner

On Arnoldus Day, Sandra Kuhn made her first commitment at the Holy Mass in Steyl. Six SVD-Partner renewed their commitments; two had already done so in October, also in Steyl. This means that now seven women and two men belong to the Lay Associates of the Divine Word Missionaries in Germany. Together they have a lot of plans for 2023.

Group Meeting in Steyl

After the feast, they went straight back to work. At the first meeting in Steyl from 24 to 26 February, the group discussed with Spiritual Fr. Jürgen Ommerborn SVD about "The mission of the intercultural Arnoldus Family at the time of violent conflicts between states and political groups". In addition, the contents of a training manual were discussed during the weekend, as all lay groups worldwide are currently working on.

Ongoing work

- Since the outbreak of the war in Ukraine SVD-Partner pray for peace and maintain regular contact with a Caritas Spes staff member.

- SVD-Partner participated in the International Day of Prayer against Human Trafficking on 8th February.
- The monthly online prayer will continue. During Lent, weekly invitations will be extended again
- The first meeting with another lay group, the Disciples of the Divine Word from Mumbai/India, is currently being prepared for Pentecost in Steyl.
- SVD-Partner want to break new ground this year with a digital calendar for the novena of the World Day of the Poor in November.
- The group will produce a video in the coming months to present themselves in the series "SVD Lay Partner around the World".

Since the group members live in different places in Germany, they are of course also active in their home and parish communities. We will be happy to report on this later in another issue of this newsletter.

Maria Wego





PANAM ZONE



PANAMA (CAM): Misioneros Laicos del Verbo Divino (MLVD)

Meeting with the Superior General and Changings in the Provincial Leadership



Meeting the Superior General

Our Superior General, Fr. Paulus Budi Kleden visited the CAM Region in the month of February 2023, visiting the different parishes of Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Panama. We thank God for his sharing with the MLVD Panama and SVD confreres.

In our sharing with Father Budi, the message that encouraged us the most was to continue to make real the Four Characteristic Dimensions that characterize us as SVD missionaries: Mission Animation, Biblical Apostolate, Communication and Justice Peace and the Integrity of Creation (JPIC).

Once again it reaffirms that we are created, loved and saved by God. That is our identity. We have to live in faithfulness to God and to the mission, to live in community as church and family. We are responsible for each other. We are called to care for each other and to know that we need each other. Jesus proclaims his Gospel with actions and deeds that cross borders, Mission is our vocation to go out and to reach out to others, Jesus invites us to open our hearts to forgiveness in order to walk together by being true disciples of the Word incarnated in our hearts.

New Regional Superior and New Spiritual Guide

Since January of this year, we have a new Regional Superior, Fr. Mateo Yeng, SVD and Spiritual Guide, Fr. Bau Van Nguyen, SVD. We extend our warm welcome to them and we pray for them.

Rubiela Ramírez de Rodríguez
Rogelio Rodriguez-Pizza



Argentina (ARE): Misioneros Socios Laicos Amigos del Verbo

Formation Meetings and SVD Family Fiesta



Formation Meetings

On Sunday, 30 October 2022, the First Formation Meeting for *Misioneros Socios Laicos Amigos del Verbo* was held at St. Therese of the Child Jesus Parish in *Aristobulo del Valle, Misiones*. Under the motto “One Heart Many Faces”, about 140 lay partners participated in the event, representing the communities of *Posadas, Pampa del Indio, San Javier, Aparecida, Eldorado, Puerto Rico, Colonia Aurora, El Soberbio, Azara, Obera, Santa Rita* and *Aristóbul del Valle*.

The meeting began with a prayer and welcome from Brother Raul and coordinator Aurora Galarza. Following that, we presented symbols and prayers that represent us. Formation talks were given by Fr. Mario Selvan and Brother Néstor Benítez enriched us.

The members of the Coordinating Team introduced themselves and presented the activities carried out in each community, as well as the activities that are planned for the future. After the presentation, the participants gathered for a group photo. The Mass was celebrated by Fr. Fernando Reis, Parish Priest of St. Therese of the Child Jesus Parish, concelebrated by the

Provincial, Fr. Hector Maldonado and other priests. The meeting ended with lunch.

The second meeting took place at the *Parroquia Cristo Rey de Oberá*. Discussing the material sent by the Generalate, we reflected on “Your Light Must Shine Before Others” (Mt 5:16). We are all invited to strengthen our connection with the source of Light, through prayer and so that our light shines before others with strength, love, generosity and humility.

SVD Family Fiesta

We participated in the SVD family feast, with prayer at the SVD cemetery in Fatima, praying for our pioneer missionaries. Their legacy continues to inspire us.

We are grateful to our Provincial Superior, Mission Secretary and all those who guide and support us in our journey.

Aurora Galarza



CHILE (CHI): Alma Verbita

We Continue with Our Journey ...



We Continue with Our Journey ...

Our community, Alma Verbita continues to grow with new members coming in.

With new leadership and new challenges, we truly thank Elena Ortiz, our hardworking and conscientious coordinator for twelve years, who patiently supported us in all our activities. With new members, new voices, new ideas and new opportunities, there is much hope to look forward to. Carrying the fruits of our labour from the past years, hand in hand, we will continue this journey together. In a lunch with our Provincial, Fr. Juventus, SVD, we were assured of continuing connectivity and collaboration with the SVD community. We thank Fr. Juventus for his willingness and welcome.

We are also reformulating, after a long time, our Mission and Vision. This is being done through guided workshops.

Radio Maria's Special Mission Show

We were featured in Radio Maria's special mission show for the month, sharing our work. We thank Fr. Marcelo Oyarzún, for the invitation.

El Esfuerzo – Thank you Mrs. Raquel and congratulations Fr. Gino

We will soon complete our mission to offer spiritual and financial support to the residents of *El Esfuerzo* in the town of El Monte, which has been ongoing for a while now. Mrs. Raquel, who welcomed us with such affection and facilitated our work there, will be honoured at the end of the mission. It is also an opportune day to celebrate the priestly anniversary of our Spiritual Advisor, Fr. Gino Jimenez.

May the power of the Holy Spirit as well as the strength and perseverance of our Founder continue to encourage us!

Elena Ortiz



Mexico (MEX): Misioneros Auxiliares del Verbo Divino (MAVD)

National Coordinators Meeting



National Coordinators Meeting

From 4 to 5 February 2023, our National Meeting of Coordinators (MAVD) took place in the retreat house *El Tepeyac* in the spring forest of *Verbum Dei* located in Zapopan, Jalisco.

It is worth mentioning that this meeting is one of the most significant events in the life of our organization. And as its name indicates, it gathers all the coordinators of the base groups, Regional and National. The meeting was a time for reflection, prayer, awareness, communion, friendship, maturity, information, guidance and response. This was based on a dynamic evaluation of the program and the work done, as well as raising and following up together the work plan 2023 under specific objectives and goals. This helps us to unify and strengthen our charism, consolidating fruits for the missionary work that identifies us as the MAVD family and reinforcing the commitment of each member to the church's mission.

During the meeting, we lived together, smiled, laughed, had fun and shared food, experiences and of course, the Word of God along with the SVD priests and SSPS sisters. They shared their knowledge through different topics, prayers and celebrations.



Salt and Light of the Earth

The meeting culminated with Holy Mass presided by Fr. Martin Tali Meta, together with the members of Region A and the MAVD choir. We are invited to continue to be the salt and light of the earth, sharing what we have experienced and touching the hearts of those with whom we live a life of faith in every mission.

We give thanks to the Lord our God for His presence at all times and for sending us the Holy Spirit who guides us to take the right decisions for the MAVD.

María Lucero Ileana Pérez García



United States (USW): Misioneros Laicos del Verbo Divino – MLVD

Various Activities



MLVD leading an RCIA Retreat for St. John XXIII Catholic Church in Fontana, California

Grateful to God, for opening doors for evangelization, we rejoice in having participated in a retreat for adults of RCIA of the Parish of St. John XXIII in Fontana, California which is thirty-three miles from where we are located in Riverside. The program coordinator invited us to lead the retreat with fifty participants and the retreat was conducted in Spanish and English with fourteen presentations that were led by Esmeralda Castillo, Gabriel Flores, Mariana Flores, Edith Flores and Marlene Guerrero. The participants were very happy and grateful for the experience as they prepare to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation this coming May.

important to us because we acknowledge the great impact it has had in our own lives. We don't consider ourselves preachers but instead, we are witnesses sharing our faith and helping others as they are encountering Christ our Lord, who has transformed our lives and so we strive to share this wonderful experience with them.

As the Holy Father St. John Paul II says in the Apostolic Exhortation *ECCLESIA IN AMERICA* "The lay faithful should thus be conscious of their baptismal dignity. For their part, Pastors should have a profound respect for the witness and evangelizing work of lay people who, incorporated into the People of God through a spirituality of communion, lead their brothers and sisters to encounter the living Jesus Christ. The renewal of the Church in America will not be possible without the active presence of the laity. Therefore, they are largely responsible for the future of the Church (157)".

Mariana Flores

Bible studies

We continue to hold Bible studies every Wednesday night at Kairos, our evangelization center, where we have participants from Riverside, Los Angeles and Banning present at the location and connected online through Zoom. On Thursday nights we continue to offer Bible classes for the community of St. Kateri Tekakwitha in Banning, California.

It is very fulfilling to be able to persevere throughout the years and to respond to the needs of the Parishes that open their doors to us. Sharing the Good News of the Gospel is vitally



~ Last but not Least ~

Culinary Trip Around the World

Lunch from South Africa - Mopani deli and Chicken with Pumpkin and Mielie Pap

After a longer break we will continue our culinary trip around the world. AFRAM will share a typical lunch from South Africa

Mopani deli (Masonja)

Ingredients:

- 500 g Mopani worms
- ½ cup cubed onions
- ½ cup cubed green pepper
- 1 teaspoon garlic
- 2 tablespoons oil of your choice
- Salt

How to make it:

1. Soak Mopani in hot water 30 minutes before cooking to let them raise or swell to their original size as they are kept dry.
2. Put everything to boil, let the water cover the Masonja and stir once in a while until the water is absorbed. Then the pot is ready.



Roasted chicken

Ingredients:

- Slaughtered chicken
- Salt
- Any spice of one's choice

How to make it:

1. Apply salt and spice to the chicken.
2. Bring the chicken to a boil in an open saucepan.
3. When it is about done, then let it roast itself a bit.
4. Keep adding small measures of water, taking care not to burn the meat.
5. Let it roast till the desired golden brown. The dish is ready to serve.

Pumpkin vegetable

Ingredients:

- Pumpkin leaves and flowering buds (about 1 litre bowl)
- ½ cubed tomato
- 4 teaspoons ground peanuts
- Salt

How to make it:

1. Bring green leaves, flowers and tomato to boil for 30 minutes.
2. Then mash or crush with a wooden spoon.
3. Add ground peanuts and let it cook for extra 5 minutes.
4. Then mixed thoroughly. Remove from fire and serve hot



Mielie pap (Soft maize meal porridge)

Ingredients:

- 4 cups maize meal
- 1 litre water

How to make it:

1. Bring water to a boil.
2. Take one cup of cold water enough to mix one cup of maize meal and stir.
3. Let it boil like soft porridge.
4. When done, start pouring the remaining *mielie meal* in very small portions while mixing with a wooden spoon.
5. Reduce heat and let it cook well. Turn or mix again.
6. Let it simmer for 5 minutes. Soft maize meal is ready to serve.

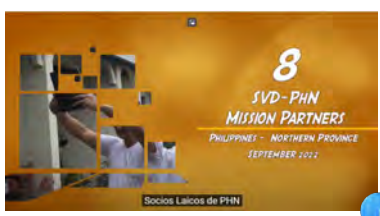
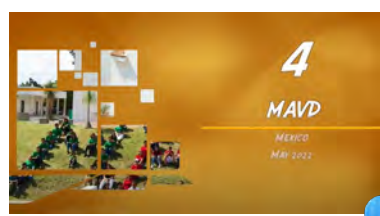
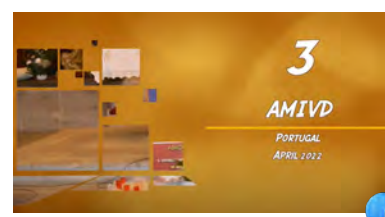
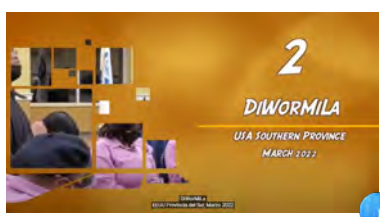
List of Lay Partners' Videos

Published by SVDMissionTV on YouTube

Since February 2022 SVD lay partners all over the world present themselves and their work in small videoclips published by SVDMissionTV on YouTube. Since issue no. 20

you find the complete list of all existing videos on the last page of the section "Last but not Least". In this issue are added the videos from Panama and Vietnam.

Click on the globe to start the video.



More in production

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.



Anonius Hendry Weijnen

† 18.09.2022

SVD Lay Partner, IDJ



Elisabeth Wiharjo Seputra

† 02.12.2022

SVD Lay Partner, IDJ



Christianus Bernadus Yanto Listono

† 09.01.2023

SVD Lay Partner, IDJ



Jane Kimunto

† 22.01.2023

SVD Lay Partner, KEN



Fr. Dante B. Venus, SVD

† 29.12.2022

PHC
Valued friend and supporter of the Philippine lay
partners.

Gone from our sight, but never from our hearts.
We will miss you!

Rest in Peace

Obituaries



The Philippines

In Loving Memory of Fr. Dante B. Venus, SVD (21 May 1949–29 December 2022)

The unexpected passing of a beloved SVD missionary - Fr. Dante Venus, SVD on 29th December 2022 while accompanying Filipino pilgrims in Jerusalem, there were more reasons to celebrate a life lived with so much generosity, great kindness and profound goodness.

Former Superior General Fr. Antonio Pernia, SVD, a classmate of Fr. Venus shared, "We often hear in the Gospel, 'Whoever keeps his life will lose it; whoever loses his life will keep it.' (Lk 9:24). This, I think, is what happened on 29th December when our beloved Fr. Dante passed away from us. When death came that day, it found nothing to steal away from him. As we all know, Fr. Dante was a genuinely generous and self-giving person. Daily, he gave his life to God and to others - his family, relatives and friends, his confreres and the people he ministered to as a priest, religious and missionary."

And in an unprecedented manner, six SVD lay groups – Christ the King Mission Seminary (CKMS) High School batch 1965/AA 1967, the faculty, staff and students of Divine Word Institute of Mission Studies (DWIMS), the Lay Society of St. Arnold Janssen (LSSAJ), the Perpetual Rosary Movement, the SVD-PHN Mission Partners and the XVD came together as one, to organize a memorial to honor his memory on 12th January 2023 at the Finneman Building of CKMS in Quezon City.

Fr. Dante Venus was a staunch believer and advocate of lay mission partnership especially evident during his three terms as Provincial Superior of the Philippine Northern Province from 1987 to 1996. He was ahead of his time. Examples of these were inviting three lay leaders of the SVD Youth Ministry and the Biblical Apostolate of the Province to the 1994 Provincial Chapter and appointing lay people as coordinators to these ministries.

During his wake and funeral, CKMS witnessed by far the largest in attendance to pay their respects.

You may click on these links to watch the videos as a tribute to his memory.



Mike and GeeO Paderon



Indonesia

Antonius Hendry Weijnen

Member of SVD Lay Partner Group of St. Yoseph Denpasar, Bali passed away on 18th September 2022. He was one of the members who had been very supportive to SVD Lay Partner Group in Bali.

Elisabeth Wiharjo Seputra

A member of SVD Lay Partner Surabaya passed away on 2nd December 2022. She was one of the founder and very much involved in the formation of SVD lay partner in Surabaya – the first SVD Lay partner group in IDJ Province.

Cristianus Bernadus Yanto Listiono

Member of SVD Lay Partner St. Yoseph Denpasar, Bali passed away on 9th January 2023. He was one of the members who had been involved since the beginning of SVD Lay Partner Group in Bali



Kenya

Jane Kimunto

Member of St. Barnabas Kimumu parish in Eldoret district passed away on 22nd January 2023





Impulse

RABBUNI

YOU called me
by name!
YOU know me,
You make yourself known to me.

YOU have called me
by name!
I understand the good news:
YOU are alive!

YOU called me
by name,
this moment of recognition
burnt into my whole life.

YOU called me
by name!
Not that I should stay.
Not that I should remain silent.

YOU have called me
by name,
so that before all men
I testify to YOUR name.

Happy Easter!



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Imprint

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