



Society of the Divine Word (SVD)

SVD Lay Partners



Newsletter - from Around the World

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First EUROPA Zonal Meeting, 2025

SVD Sesquicentennial Celebration - Jubilee Year from 8th September 2024 to 8th September 2025

Inside this Issue

EDITORIAL

SPECIAL TOPIC

- . First Zonal Meeting of the SVD Lay Partners of the EUROPA Zone 3
- . Statements From the Participants Concerning the Workshop 4

GROUP REPORTS FROM ...

AFRAM ZONE

- . Southafrica (BOT) – SVD Lay Partners, Malamulele 8
- . Ghana (GHA) – SVD Lay Partners 9
- . Zambia (ZAM) – SVD Lay Partners, Kabwe 10

ASPAZ ZONE

- . Indonesia (IDJ) – Soverdia Nagakeo 11
- . Indonesia (IDJ) – Soverdia 12
- . India (INE) – SVD Lay Partners 13
- . India ((ING) – Apostles of the Divine Word 14
- . India (INM) – DDW, Andheri, Mumbai 15
- . India (INM) – DDW, Bandra 16
- . India (INM) – DDW, Pune 17
- . The Philippines (PHC) – LSSAJ 18
- . The Philippines (PHC) – SVD Lay Mission Partners (SLMP) 19
- . The Philippines (PHN) – SVD-PHN Mission Partners 20
- . The Philippines (PHS) – LaMP-DW 21
- . Papua New Guinea (PNG) – SVD Friends PNG 22

EUROPA ZONE

- . Italy (ITA) – Cooperatori Laici Verbiti 23
- . Germany (GER) – SVD-Partner 24
- . Portugal (POR) – Diálogos 25
- . Slovakia (SVK) – Misijná Rodina (MRSVD), Bratislava 26

PANAM ZONE

- . Brazil (BRA) – Amigos do Verbo na Amazônia (AVA) 27
- . Panama (CAM) – Misioneros Laicos del Verbo Divino (MLVD) 28
- . Chile (CHI) – Alma Verbiti 29
- . Paraguay (PAR) – Laicos Verbitas del Paraguay 30
- . Paraguay (PAR) – Laicos Verbitas del Paraguay, Asunción 31

DIFFERENT TOPICS

INFORMATION FROM THE SVD

- . An Ever-Renewed Commitment to Mission 32
- . Divine Word College of Calapan 32

EXPERIENCE REPORTS

- . Walking in Faith: A Lay Partner's Mission in Tripura 33
- . Restoring Peace and Unity in Broken Homes in the Highlands of Papua New Guinea 34
- . Perpetual Rosary Movement (PRM) 35

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- . You are My Hope" – World Day of the Poor 2025 35

COLUMN

- . Jo's letter 36
- . Impressions from Pentecost in Steyl 36
- . List of lay partners' videos 37
- . Impulse / Imprint 38

Editorial

Rooted in the Word, Reaching the World – One Heart, Many Hands

As we celebrate 150 years of the Society of the Divine Word (1875–2025), we look back with gratitude and awe at a mission that began with a simple yet bold “yes” from St. Arnold Janssen. From those early days in Steyl to the vibrant communities across the globe today, God’s Word has been sown through hearts that were open, hands that were willing, and feet that were ready to go wherever love was needed.

This jubilee is more than a celebration of the past. It is a powerful reminder that the SVD mission is still alive – growing, moving, and reaching new frontiers. And it’s not a mission for priests, brothers, and sisters alone. It belongs to all of us, and especially we, the lay partners, who are called to share in this journey of faith and service.

As lay partners, we’re not just witnesses to the mission; we are part of it. We carry the spirit of those before us, not by replicating what they did, but by discerning where the Spirit is leading us today. This 150th anniversary invites us to look back with gratitude and look ahead with a renewed “yes” to the journey we share.

We are rooted in the Word, drawing strength from prayer, Scripture, and the Eucharist. But we are also called to reach out to the world, especially to those on the margins: the lonely, the hungry, the excluded, and the forgotten. Our ways may be simple: a kind word, a listening ear, a shared meal, but together, they reveal a deeper love at work in the world.

As we honour this 150-year milestone, let us celebrate the past, live the present with hope, and step into the future with courage. And on this Feast of the Assumption, we look to Mary, whose humble “yes” brought Christ into the world, as our model and companion in mission. Like her, may we be bearers of the Word, with hearts ready to serve and lives rooted in trust.

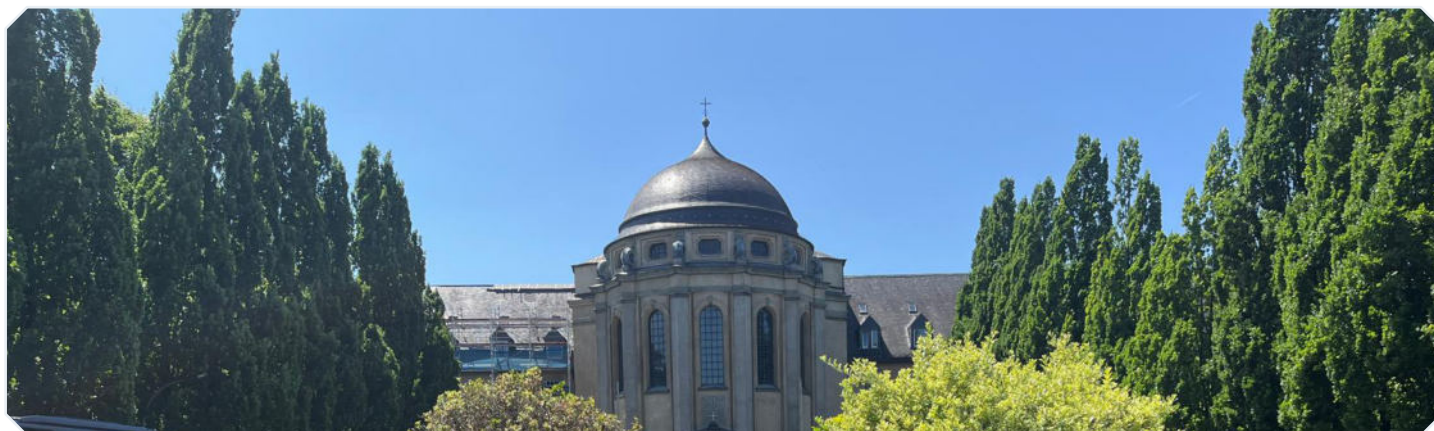
Let us walk in her footsteps with hearts that listen, hands that serve, and spirits that rejoice in God our Saviour. With one heart and many hands, we continue the mission. Different languages, different cultures, different gifts, but one shared purpose: to make God’s love visible.

There is still so much good to be done, and we are not alone!

Susan Noronha
Editor-in-Chief

First Zonal Meeting of the SVD Lay Partners of the EUROPA Zone

Sankt Augustin (Germany), June 2025



„We are gifted to give“

From 18th to 22nd June, participants from the seven SVD provinces of Spain, Italy, Slovakia, Hungary, Poland, Germany and the Netherlands/Belgium came together in Sankt Augustin for the 1st zonal meeting of the SVD Lay EUROPA Zone. Following the zonal meetings of the ASPAC Zone in 2019 and the AFRAM Zone in 2022, the SVD laity from Europe now met to network and further develop their cooperation with the SVD. The group was welcomed by Fr. Peter Claver Narh, Provincial of the German SVD Province, who also brought greetings from the Zone President Fr. Marek Vanus. The meeting was led by Zonal Coordinator Fr. Franz Helm and Zonal Mission Secretary Fr. Xavier Alangaram, who was responsible for most of the organization. The meeting was characterized by prayers, presentations and discussions. There was still time for a short trip to Cologne Cathedral and a cultural evening with songs and dances from all seven countries plus the Philippines because some participants have their roots there. The highlight was the one-day trip to Steyl, where, in addition to the SVD in St. Michael Mission House, the Blue and Pink Sisters were also visited in their motherhouses.



Presentations about Essential SVD Topics

Thursday and Friday were characterized by lectures followed by an exchange of thoughts and ideas in small groups or in the entire group. General Mission Secretary Fr. Marcelo Cattáneo spoke on “SVD Mission and Lay Partners”, Fr. Wojciech Szypula on “A Symphony of the Word; SVD Lay Partners and the Holy Scriptures”, Fr. Franz Helm on “How do we practice our SVD-Charism – JPIC in our life?”, Fr. Martin Üffing on “Mission Animation in Europe” and Fr. Xavier Alangaram on “Lay Partner and Fundraising”. It became clear in all the presentations and following discussions that this is not about the mission of the SVD or the Church, but about God's mission, his way to people. We can follow and shape this way because we are “gifted to give” by him. The task of God's mission is a common task for all and not a clerical prerogative. It is also implemented “glocally”, locally from a global perspective. National differences became clear in the discussions, but above all the participants learnt about the great commitment and wealth of ideas as well as the desire and will to make a difference together for the good of the people.



A Short Trip to Steyl

The group spent the last day together in Steyl, where Fr. Jürgen Ommerborn gave a brief overview of the beginnings in Steyl. He emphasized the important role of the laity in the founding of the mission house and the development of the SVD. He also

celebrated a Holy Mass with the group in the oratory of St. Michael's Mission House at the end of the day. In addition to a guided tour of the house and garden, the group took the opportunity to get to know the motherhouses of the Missionary Sisters and the Adoration Sisters. All the encounters of the day, especially the dialogue with two Adoration Sisters, were an inspiration and motivation for everyone.

“Met – and now what?”

This question was clearly answered in the final discussion before the departure on Sunday: The SVD laypeople will continue to meet at European level, exchange ideas and network. The first meeting will be held online on 10th September 2025. In just a few days, a group was formed that got on well and is travelling in Europe in the spirit of Arnold Janssen and the founding generation.

Maria Wego
Lay associate GER

Statements From the Participants Concerning the Workshop

While on the plane to Sankt Augustin, I was a bit worried, unsure of what to expect from the zonal meeting. However, on our way back to Madrid, I was filled with inspiration from the Holy Spirit, as I felt blessed with the gift of “knowledge.” Before the meeting, I was like an empty vase, but after the meeting, I was filled with grace and the Spirit – the Spirit that guides all SVD missionaries, priests, nuns, and the laity in the Way of the Lord. The meeting was not only an “eye-opener” for me, but it also opened my heart to be more aware of others’ needs, to stop and listen, and to be more mindful of the people around me. As Fr. Jürgen Ommerborn shared in his homily, lay partners should learn and love the holy work founded by St. Arnold Janssen, for it is not the SVD's mission nor the Church's mission but God's mission.

Maria Josela Somoza
Lay partner ESP

We are just beginners in Berlin. As a matter of fact we call our group “SVD-Lay Partners – Probezeit”*. But I'm personally interested to be one. So when Fr. Simon Boisier told us about the zonal meeting I was really excited to join. First of all I wanted to know what SVD lay partners do, how to start one, what must we do to become one? Secondly I was interested to meet the lay partners in other parts of Europe and hear about their experiences.

All these questions were answered by the different speakers, from the hand-outs/presentations given to us before and after the seminar and from our group sessions.

Fr. Xavier Alangaram did a very good job with the organization. It was thoroughly planned. There was time for everything. There was no boring moment. And the speakers presented their

areas of concern with passion and conviction. I found it remarkable that the visitation of the three congregations of St. Arnold Janssen was included in the program.

I was also impressed by the interactions and cooperation of the lay partners. It was as if we knew already each other for such a long time. During our get-together/cultural presentations, we all had fun.

For me it was a gift and a grace to witness the ordination of an SVD priest to conclude the 5-day zonal meeting.

It was indeed a Spirit-filled meeting – very informative, enriching and inspiring. God's hand was at work. Praise Him forever.

May the good Lord continue to bless all our efforts to support the Arnoldus Family build God's kingdom here on earth.

Gloria Lange
Lay partner GER

* Probezeit = trial period

The zonal meeting for SVD lay partners in Sankt Augustin was an interesting and enriching experience, very well organized. It was a good opportunity to exchange, to ask questions using what everyone already brought from their experience and thus encouraging new ideas and new impulses together with the presentations of the SVD missionaries with committed and dynamic participants. A successful meeting

Lourdes and Rudi Scholz
Lay associates GER

"Earlier I took part in workshops, but those belonged to my job. I was looking forward to this meeting with great anticipation. What will I learn first about the mission animation? Who will I meet? What kind of atmosphere will there be?"

During the workshop, I got a clearer picture of the difference between civilian helpers and SVD lay partners. We belong to a multicultural community and we SVD lay partners are united by the Holy Trinity. The same faith. Our mission is to use and pass on the gifts we have received from God and to use them to serve other people. We do it not alone, but in a diverse, multicultural community as a partner of SVD.

This meeting gave us the opportunity to meet new friends and, with a grateful heart, joyfully and cheerfully, thank God for the five days spent together."

András Szlávik, Imre Szabó, Zsuzsa Seregely
Lay partners HUN

The Europe zonal meeting for SVD lay friends, partners and associates held from June 18th to 22nd was a hundred percent successful.

Everything was very well organized, the topics were interesting and fully explained. I personally have not experienced an instant of boredom. I may not agree with a few statements, but the level of attention was always kept high.

I cannot mention my favourite topic since everything was said kept my eyes, ears, mind and heart wide awake, but the subject that interests me more is the history of the Founding Generation, so I particularly appreciated the reflections of Fr. Jürgen Ommerborn.

The interaction with the others, either SVDs or LP was inspiring and gave me the opportunity to reflect and to challenge my bias.

I wish that more people could be able to live such moments of formation, communion, prayer, interaction. In less than five days I have changed a bit, I notice that my thoughts and my attitude are more "disarmed" and tolerant compared to my usual and this is definitely a SVD miracle.

Yours in the Divine Word

Isabella Gargiulo
Lay partner, ITA

My impression in our zonal meeting was so educational and fruitful. I am so grateful that we started this meeting already. Looking forward to the next time.

Rose Valino Perez
Lay partner, NEB

The zonal meeting was a very inspiring experience that sparked new ideas, fostered meaningful connections, and left everyone feeling empowered and motivated to take their next steps with confidence, faith and clarity.

Judit Kolster
Lay partner NEB

Participating in the meeting of SVD Lay Partners in Sankt Augustin was an incredibly inspiring and empowering experience for me. Meeting people from various European countries showed me how much we have in common – a shared mission, a spirit of openness, and a desire to serve others. I felt like part of something greater, a community that, despite the diversity of languages and cultures, speaks the same language of faith and commitment. It was a time not only for sharing experiences but also for deep reflection on my role as lay person in the Church's mission. I left with a sense of gratitude, renewed energy, and the conviction that together we can achieve more.

Joanna Dziemiańczyk
Lay partner, POL

Although I didn't know what to expect from the gathering, the program made it clear that it would be a very intense time. And it truly was – not only in terms of information and group work, but also as a time of mutual discovery and enrichment, warm encounters, encouragement, and, of course, spiritual renewal, rest, and even fun.

Fr. Xavier Alangaram created a space for us to experience all of this. For me personally, the very first evening was particularly powerful. Even though we arrived a little late, we still managed to catch the meditation on giving and receiving.

Both are incredibly important, yet it's often easier to give than to admit that I, too, need help – and to be willing to receive it. It also reminded me that we need to "come down to the same level" – not to look down on others if we truly want to serve them.

Veronika Šubjaková
Lay partner SVK

Thank you for everything that we shared during the meeting on these few days.
GOD BLESS US ALWAYS.





GROUP REPORTS





AFRAM ZONE



South Africa (BOT) – SVD Lay Partners, Malamulele

Journeying Together in Faith Across Borders



Online Meetings: Staying Connected

The Malamulele SVD Lay Partners group remains committed to its mission despite the challenges of coordinating physical gatherings. Due to the members' busy schedules and involvement in various pastoral and community activities, our meetings are predominantly held online. While we miss the warmth of in-person fellowship, the virtual platform has become a valuable tool in sustaining our collaboration and growth as lay partners in mission.

AFRAM Zone Lay Partners' Report

We participated in the task of compiling the AFRAM zone lay partners' report to be read at the assembly held in Madagascar. Contributing to this report deepened our sense of unity and collaboration with lay partners from different countries.

Weekly Scripture Reflections

Our Provincial, Fr. Joseph Vadakkan continues to share online Scripture reflections with us every week. His insights inspire us to live out our faith more deeply and stay connected to the Word of God in our daily lives.

150-Year Celebration in Johannesburg

Two of our lay partners had the privilege of representing the group at the 150-year SVD Jubilee Celebration held in Leondale, Johannesburg. Their presence was a joyful expression of our solidarity with the wider SVD family, and they returned enriched by the experience and fellowship.

Spirit of Solidarity

In a spirit of solidarity, the lay partners visited and joined in the Sunday service at a small, struggling outstation, – St. John the



Baptist, Makumeke Village – bringing encouragement and fellowship to the local community.

Preparing for Francistown 150-Year Celebration

Preparations are underway for the main celebration of the 150th anniversary of the SVD foundation, to be held in Francistown, Botswana.

As a group, we also came together to celebrate the birthday of our priest, expressing our gratitude for his dedication and guidance. Some of our members actively participate in the liturgy and lead novena prayers in support of various parish activities.

Thandi Mazibuko



Ghana (GHA) – SVD Lay Partners

The SVD Lay Partners in God's Mission



National Congress

From 21st to 23rd March 2025, the SVD lay partners of the Ghana Province held a congress at the Divine Word Catholic Conference Center in Adoagyiri-Nsawam. The event centered on the theme "The SVD Lay Partners in the Church's Mission," aiming to deepen the understanding of the call and commitment of being a dedicated SVD lay partner.

The congress was organized into three parts. The first featured a speech by Fr. Emmanuel Danso Abeam, who discussed the history of the SVD lay partners and the teachings of St. Arnold Janssen. He highlighted Arnold Janssen's involvement with the "Apostleship of Prayer" and St. Michael's Mission House, stressing the importance of forming lay faithful to help spread the Gospel.

Fr. Abeam reviewed the SVD lay partners' history through General Chapter (GC) documents. The 16th GC acknowledged their appeal to the SVD charism, the 17th as part of the Arnoldus family, the 18th emphasized sharing the charism, and the 19th called for an action plan to support them. The SVD greatly values its lay partners.

Fr. Samuel Adu educated the lay partners on the main theme: the role of the SVD lay partners in the Mission of the Church. He stressed that the mission is of God (Missio Dei) and encouraged lay partners to actively participate in God's mission wherever they may be.



Fr. Titus Tuoyintir shed light on the SVD's trinitarian spirituality and commitment to the Divine Word, highlighting our role as missionaries. The congress was notably enriched by our Provincial, Fr. Cyprian Kuupol, who actively engaged in discussions and clarified points throughout the sessions.

During the congress, the National Executives were elected:

Agnes Cobbinah – President
 Thomas Toyibu Imoro – Vice President
 Irene Atignongo – Secretary
 Christiana Mba – Assistant Secretary
 Martin Kumedzro – Financial Secretary
 Matilda J. A. Baah – Treasurer
 George Akansi – Organizer

As participants departed, they felt inspired to spread the Gospel and support the SVD mission, becoming dedicated missionaries in a wounded world.

Lectio Divina

On 24th May, a Lectio Divina workshop was held in all parishes for SVD lay partners to deepen their understanding of scriptures.

Pentecost Sunday

On Pentecost Sunday, 24th June, they were consecrated to the Holy Spirit during Mass in various parishes as part of the Arnoldus Spirituality.

Fr. Emmanuel Danso Abeam, SVD
 Christiana Mba and Irene Atignongo



Zambia (ZAM) – SVD Lay Partners, Kabwe

One Mission, Many Voices: Lay Partners in Action



SVD Lay Partners' Workshop

The workshop on 22nd to 23rd February 2025, organized by Fr. Klemens Siamukwele aimed to introduce SVD lay partnership to new members and provide ongoing formation for existing members in Kabwe. It included activities like adoration, discussions on the foundation and global impact of SVD lay partners, resource mobilization, and strategic planning, equipping participants with tools for fundraising activities.

Africa Freedom Day with Novices

On 26th May, we celebrated Africa Freedom Day. The SVD lay partners spent the day with the novices as we shared insights about different cultures from various countries. The aim was to highlight our interculturality. The event highlighted interculturality and fostered mutual understanding through meaningful dialogue and shared insights.

First Profession of Vows

On 4th and 5th July, the SVD lay partners actively participated in key events. On 4th July, they witnessed the first profession of vows by ten novices, contributing to the liturgy by taking on roles such as readers and other assigned tasks.



A Historic Ordination: Welcoming Three New SVD Deacons

On 5th July, the Kabwe Diocese celebrated the ordination of three SVD deacons, a historic moment as it was the first time only SVD deacons were ordained. Lay partners contributed to both the event's preparation and the liturgy, actively supporting this milestone occasion.

Crossing Borders in Mission

Five lay partners from Kenya visited to support our two deacons who studied theology in Kenya. They are godparents to our newly ordained priests. The Lusaka and Kabwe lay partners warmly welcomed them, promoting peace and unity. The visit was marked by meaningful exchanges, shared insights, and the giving of souvenir gifts, celebrating our strong spirit of collaboration and gratitude.

Ndalia Chileshe





ASPAC ZONE



Indonesia (IDE) – Soverdia Nagekeo

Soverdia's Mission in Waibalun and Nagekeo



New Soverdia Sub-District: A Joyful Beginning

On 29th June 2025, the Soverdia sub-district of Waibalun was officially established during the feast of Saints Peter and Paul. The inauguration and installation of leaders took place at St. Ignatius Church, Waibalun, during Mass celebrated by Fr. Daniel Nara Gere, Rector of the Larantuka District and Pastor of Ritaebang Parish.

The celebration was graced by Fr. Yanus Lobo (Mission Secretary, Ende), Fr. Hubert Tenga (Parish Priest), Don Suban Garak (Soverdia Team), and Elfrin Hurek Making (Nagekeo District). Twenty-seven founding members were inducted, contributing to the of eight Soverdia districts/sub-districts in the Ende Province. Fr. Daniel expressed hope that other parishes in Larantuka will follow suit and announced plans to launch the next sub-district in Ritaebang.

The celebration ended with a joyful lunch featuring traditional Flotim dishes and introductions of new members. Guests later departed for Maumere and Mbay.

English Class for Kids in Nagekeo

Since May 2025, Soverdia Nagekeo has been running the "English Class of SVD" for children aged 4–13. Held every



Sunday, the sessions are led by Fr. Anton Hayon, and Ms. Rista, with twenty-five children currently enrolled.

The program blends English learning with faith formation, helping children pray in both Indonesian and English while introducing them to the SVD missionary spirit.

This simple yet impactful initiative reflects Soverdia's commitment to nurturing young hearts in faith and education.

Faith and Action

Soverdia Nagekeo continues regular activities that reflect deep faith and care for creation:

- Monthly prayer meetings – held in members' homes foster spiritual growth and community.
- First Friday Mass – keeps the Eucharist at the heart of our mission.
- Post-Mass clean-up – members collect roadside plastic near the SVD Pondok in Danga to show their care for the environment.

Simple yet meaningful, these efforts embody Soverdia's commitment to prophetic dialogue through faith, fellowship, and stewardship.

Don Suban Garak
Elfrin Hurek Making



Indonesia (IDJ) – Soverdia

Celebrating 150 Years of SVD



Soverdia Journey

To commemorate the 150th SVD anniversary, Soverdia organized activities to renew missionary spirit and strengthen collaboration with the SVD. Notable events included a “Joint Study Day” on 28th June in Bali, Lombok, and a “Joint Discussion” on 27th June in Jakarta. A virtual recollection series titled “Witnessing to the Light: From Everywhere for Everyone” led by Fr. Aurelius Pati Soge (9th June, 14th July, and 18th August) from SVD Bible Center, Batam.

Collaborating with SVD Brothers and Seminarians

On 19th April, Soverdia members of Malang, East Java, in collaboration with the SVD Brothers and seminarians of Surya Wacana Major Seminary and the Stela Maris Postulate, served as choir and lectors in the Seven Words Service at the Queen of the Rosary Parish, Kesatrian Malang.

Jubilee Pilgrimage to Porta Sancta

The year 2025 is a jubilee year, during which various SVD lay partner groups participated in a Pilgrimage of Hope to Porta Sancta in their dioceses, accompanied by their Spiritual Directors. Groups included Queen of Rosary – Malang, visiting Porta Sancta at Malang Cathedral; Bali Lombok District, at Denpasar Cathedral; and West Kalimantan, traveling by Navy Bus to several locations including St. Francis of Assisi Church,



St. Maria Nyarumkop, Christ the King Church in Sambas, and St. Joseph Church in Pemangkat.

Ahead of the journey, members attended catechesis, including a session in Bali–Lombok on “The Sacred Heart of Jesus, The Source of Divine Mercy” led by Fr. Laurensius Ketut Supriyanto.

Holy Week Services

Members participated in the Holy Week Services – from Jeruju, Pontianak, and St. Yoseph Denpasar served as the choir for Palm Sunday Mass.

Praying across Provinces

Soverdia members held a virtual Rosary Prayer for Mission, attended by participants from Java, Ende and Timor Leste Provinces.

Charity Visits to Caritas Nursing Home

Soverdia members of St. Arnold Janssen, Bekasi, visited Caritas Nursing Home to celebrate Holy Mass and anoint the elderly.

Paulina Suharsi



India (INE) – SVD Lay Partners

INE Lay Partners' Workshop



Celebrating SVD @ 150

From 22nd to 23rd March 2025, the INE Mission Secretary, in collaboration with the AJSN Coordinator, organized a province-level lay partners' workshop at the SVD Provincial House, Jharsuguda, Odisha. The event focused on the theme: "Celebrating SVD @ 150 – SVD Lay Partners in the INE: Witnessing to the Light."

The workshop opened with scripture, prayer, and a traditional lamp-lighting ceremony. Fr. Anuranjan Bilung, Provincial, gave the keynote on the role of lay partners. Sessions by Fr. Dixon D'Souza, Fr. Eusebius Crasta, and Fr. Rasal Xess, highlighted the biblical, spiritual, and social dimensions of lay involvement in mission, prayer, and JPIC ministries.

A documentary on the Indo-Bangla subzone's 93-year history offered rich insights into SVD contributions across the region. Annual reports shared by participants revealed inspiring stories of lay commitment in action. The program included moments of joyful fellowship, games, and songs led by Sr. Florentina Xess, SSpS.

Rooted in the Word and impelled by the Spirit, the workshop renewed the lay partners' zeal for mission in the spirit of St. Arnold Janssen.



Day-Two Highlights

The second day began with the Eucharist presided over by Fr. Sunil Damor, Vice-Provincial, INE, who encouraged lay partners to respond fruitfully to God's love through lives of renewal and discipleship.

Key sessions included:

- Sr. Florentina Xess, SSpS, on the Spirituality of St. Arnold Janssen.
- Fr. Dixon D'Souza, discussing Trinitarian Mission Spirituality and its roots in SVD Constitutions.
- Peter Baa, a lay partner, presenting a Synodal Approach to Bible Reading for transformation through shared faith.
- Fr. Luis Ronald Pereira, emphasizing the need for collaboration in building missionary parishes.

Action Plan

An action plan was proposed that integrated SVD spirituality, key dimensions, financial sustainability, and community growth. The seven participating lay groups and their spiritual directors discussed and drafted plans for further reflection and implementation in their communities. The workshop concluded with a vote of thanks from Mr. Ignace Hasda, President, Disciples of the Divine Word, Sundargarh.

Fr. Dixon Lawrence D'Souza, SVD



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

A March for Peace and Gratitude



Tribute to Pope Francis

Holy Spirit Parish organized a peace rally to commemorate the funeral day of Pope Francis. The solemn event reflected the community's deep respect and affection for the late pontiff. The rally began at the church premises, proceeded to the local village panchayat office, and then returned to the parish.

Fr. Ivan D'Silva, led the faithful in prayer before the march. In a world driven by wealth and power, Pope Francis left not material riches but a legacy of humility and service – a moral inheritance. He was a pope of the heart, showing that to live simply is to reign differently.

ADW Leads the Way: A Community United in Mourning

The march was primarily led by members of the Apostles of Divine Word (ADW), the Parish Pastoral Council (PPC), and the youth and women's commissions, with participation from children and other members of the community. Many ADW members were actively involved, and the idea for the peace rally came from Kamal Debbarma, Anjana Bongcher, Pannalal Halam, Dr. Asok, and others. Participants walked silently, holding portraits of the late pope, and paused intermittently to sing hymns and recite prayers for the repose of his soul.



A Final Farewell: Candles, Flowers, and the Holy Mass

Upon returning to the church premises, parishioners offered floral tributes and lit candles before a portrait of Pope Francis. The event concluded with a Holy Mass celebrated inside the church, uniting the faithful in prayer and remembrance. Nearly 300 people participated in a peace procession held in honour of Pope Francis.

The rally was a heartfelt gesture by the local Catholic community to honour the life and legacy of Pope Francis, who was known worldwide for his humility, compassion, and dedication to serving humanity.

Kamal Debbarma
Anjana Bongcher



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

Healing and Mission: A Grace-Filled Journey



Healing through Grace

On 15th June 2025, members gathered at Atma Darshan for a grace-filled day of reflection. Fr. Gregory Pinto, shared insights on the Holy Trinity as a model of unity, reminding us that through the Eucharist, God invites us to transformation and communion.

The core session, “Hurt: Journeying Towards Healing,” was prayerfully led by Jayesh George. Using the image of a broken plate, we reflected on how life’s cracks, though painful, can still be held together by God’s love and grace. Members wrote personal wounds and surrendered them into a basket before God. Heartfelt sharing followed, with members speaking of forgiveness, healing, and peace.

A reflection on Jesus, the Wounded Healer, reminded us of His response to pain, betrayal, and abandonment, with compassion and forgiveness.

“Letting go of past hurts brought me peace and clarity.”
Daisy Mathew

“Releasing long-held pain allowed me to feel truly free.”
Stella Rebello

The session concluded with the burning of the slips, a symbolic act of letting go, healing, and grace.



Extending Support to Mission Projects

DDW Andheri continues to strengthen its missionary partnership with the SVD through support to key projects in the India subzone.

DDW is actively involved with the Tala Mission, INM, which provides education and social upliftment to marginalized tribal communities. It also supports St. Arnold’s Degree College, which offers academic excellence. This collaboration is a proud milestone for both the SVD and the Archdiocese of Bombay, affirming the Church’s commitment to shaping Christ-centered leaders.

A Sacred Space for ING: Supporting Naricamp Chapel

In the ING Region, DDW Andheri supports the construction of the Naricamp Chapel Building, a sacred space for worship and community gathering.

We remain grateful for the grace-filled opportunities to be co-builders in God’s mission.

Jayesh George
Susan Noronha



India (INM) – Disciples of the Divine Word (DDW), Bandra

WOW! Four Evenings with the Word of God



Basic Bible Seminar at St. Theresa's Church – A Spiritual Awakening

The members of DDW, Bandra, organised a Basic Bible Seminar (BBS) at St. Theresa's Church, Bandra, offering parishioners four enriching evenings to journey through Scripture and encounter the living Word of God.

The seminar, held over consecutive weekends, was led by Fr. Jolly Mudakkampurathu, whose engaging approach made the Bible come alive. The event was enriched by the active participation of our parish clergy – Fr. Antony Puthumana, Fr. Nicolau D'Costa, and the newly ordained Fr. Sandeep Selvaraj – each of whom brought unique pastoral insights and personal reflections. Though the Parish Priest was absent due to a family emergency, his support was deeply felt.

From Genesis to Revelation: Encountering the Living Word

Guided by the words of St. Jerome, "Ignorance of Scripture is ignorance of Christ", the seminar took participants through the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, unveiling God's salvation plan in a manner that was both profound and easy to understand. Thoughtfully prepared presentations and handouts helped participants follow the sessions and reflect more deeply.



These evenings were not just lectures, but spirit-filled encounters, inspiring many to approach the Bible with renewed devotion and to live its message more practically in daily life. Participants shared how their hearts, like those of the disciples on the road to Emmaus, were set ablaze with new zeal for Scripture.

The seminar concluded with a special ceremony during the SVD Mission Sunday Mass presided over by Fr. Tomy Thomas Perumprayil, INM Provincial. Participants received certificates, underscoring their commitment to growing in God's Word.

A Hunger for the Word Continues

A joyful fellowship meal allowed participants to share their experiences. The positive feedback highlighted a strong desire for regular Bible seminars and follow-up sessions, reinforcing the belief that "The Word of God never returns empty but accomplishes what it is sent for" (Isaiah 55:11).

Fr. Jolly Mudakkampurathu, SVD



India (INM) - Disciples of the Divine Word (DDW), Pune

Compassion, Charity, and Mission



Visit to the Missionaries of Charity

On 7th June 2025, members visited St. Mother Teresa's home for the destitute and were warmly welcomed by the caring sisters. The experience was moving, as we interacted with joyful inmates despite their hardships. We sang, danced, and provided dinner, leaving us with a deep sense of satisfaction and spiritual calm. Each inmate left a lasting impression, making it a truly blessed experience.

Providing Dry Ration

On 14th June, we provided dry rations to twenty-five families affected by HIV/AIDS. Each family received a hamper. We identified these families through Fr. Sundar Magimai, the Director of Sarva Seva Sangh. We found joy and fulfillment in providing hampers to families in need, and felt satisfaction knowing that God, in His divine providence, used us as instruments to nourish the less fortunate.

Feeding the Hungry

We continue to feed the hungry once a month on the streets of Pune and also assist Divine Word Seminary in conducting monthly retreats. Congratulations to Godfrey Fernandes, a



member of DDW Pune, for designing the logo for SVD Lay Partners.

Retreat at Divine Word Seminary

Every fourth Saturday, our SVD Fathers conduct retreats for lay people from all Pune parishes. As members of the Disciples of Divine Word, we assist with registration, ushering, serving tea and lunch, and choir support, welcoming 150–200 retreatants each month. We have been serving the SVD for the past three years.

Sponsoring SVD Seminarians

Over the past three years, DDW members and friends have sponsored the education of nine seminarians across the INM and INE provinces. Two members had the joy of attending their spiritual sons' ordination and the Mission Cross ceremony at Divine Word Seminary, Pune.

May the heart of Jesus live in the hearts of all people. Amen.

Leena Xavier



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

LSSAJ in Action



The first quarter of 2025 was marked by a mix of activities and new developments. Under the leadership of Tyrone Cimafranca, Coordinator of the SVD-PHC, and representatives from the ten member organizations, planning began for a year-long celebration of SVD's 150th anniversary.

The event scheduled for 7th September at the Divine Word Seminary, Tagaytay City will bring together members from: the Lay Society of St. Arnold Janssen, Divine Word Institute of Mission Studies Lay Mission Partners, Heart of Jesus & Mary Community, XVD Association, Perpetual Rosary Movement, Arnold Janssen Foundation Alternative Learning System Friend, Manus Dei, HELP-C, and Divine Word College of Calapan. Participants can expect surprises, festive activities, informative sessions, and more. Stay tuned for details!

Quarterly Highlights

On 22nd March, LSSAJ held its first quarterly assembly at Christ the King Mission Seminary, centred on the theme of "Faith Transforming Life". Chairman Charlie Avila urged attendees to reflect on current times and their role as the "salt of the earth" and "light of the world." He encouraged the group to renew their commitment to a "faith-transforming life" during Lent.



Transforming Faith into Action

On 31st January 2025, during a nationwide rally with the Clergy and Citizens for Good Governance (CCGG), LSSAJ stood in solidarity with Filipinos against corruption. They called on the Holy Spirit for strength to begin a new revolution of faith that transforms lives and ends a system that favours a few while harming many. LSSAJ urged unity, declaring that where people gather in God's name, Jesus is present, and a united people cannot be defeated.

Call to Unity and Justice

On 13th April, a massive fire near Sacred Heart Parish prompted an immediate response from LSSAJ, which implemented post-fire rehabilitation and a feeding program for victims.

Retired judge Gabby Ingles, an LSSAJ BOT member, supports social justice and good governance through pro bono education programs for newly appointed members of the Supreme Court and the Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP).

Daisy Leones



The Philippines (PHC) – SVD Lay Mission Partners (SLMP)

Introducing New Group



Empowered for Mission: The SLMP DWIMS Journey

The SVD Lay Mission Partners (SLMP) of the Divine Word Institute of Mission Studies (DWIMS) Tagaytay Chapter was originally formed through a formal training program called the Certificate in Mission Studies (CMS). The CMS is a two-year, non-degree program offered by DWIMS for laypeople interested in working with the Church's mission in the context of the New Evangelization.

Lay Partners Living the Mission

Additionally, DWIMS alumni contribute to the institute through fundraising activities. With the SVDs, they also participate in celebrations such as Mission Sunday, ordinations, and other gatherings. Furthermore, they initiated a tree planting project at the SVD Laudato Si Farm.

Daisy Leones

From Classroom to Mission Field

Upon completing twenty-four units, students receive a Certificate in Mission Studies, which is officially recognized by DWIMS, an institution affiliated with the Royal and Pontifical University of Santo Tomas. Graduates of the CMS who dedicate themselves to ongoing formation with their spiritual director, Fr. Edgar Javier are supported in becoming fully committed members of the SLMP DWIMS Tagaytay Chapter.

The CMS class graduation took place on 24th May 2025, at the Holy Spirit Chapel, Divine Word Seminary in Tagaytay City. On 23rd November 2024, the SLMP DWIMS conducted a medical mission to support the SVD community in Tagaytay and the families of their co-missionaries.



The Philippines (PHN) – SVD-PHN Mission Partners

Unearthing This Genuine Treasure: The “Unsung” SVD Lay Mission Partners



From the Margins, with Love and Service

Former Superior General Fr. Heinz Kulüke stated in his homily to participants of the 1st International SVD Lay Partners Workshop in Nemi in October 2017: “From the very beginning, the SVD has recognized lay partners as a true treasure. We must be careful not to bury this treasure again.”

The SVD Lay Mission Partners represent those often overlooked in the mission, referred to as “the unsung,” and those in the margins. At the PHN Province, the 1st SVD-PHN Lay Partners Workshop in 2019, following the 2017 Nemi workshop and the 2024 SVD-PHN Mission Partners Manual, emphasizes that mission partnership involves working with and from the margins. As we celebrate SVD @ 150, we reflect on the vision of St. Arnold Janssen, who championed this inclusivity from the beginning.

Hidden Hands, Humble Hearts

Meet Helen Fornolles and Dina Bayudang Valdez from Malibcong, Abra, the farthest SVD mountain parish in the region. Helen, a retired Municipal Health Worker, continues to provide pastoral care and medical assistance as a volunteer despite her health challenges and limited resources. She also welcomes SVDs and mission partners into her home. Meanwhile, Dina has dedicated over thirty years to serving in



the kitchen at the SVD Provincialate in San Fernando, La Union, fulfilling her duties with joy and gratitude.

Helen and Dina are among the many unsung SVD-PHN Mission Partners who selflessly contribute to the mission, embodying co-responsibility in their own unique “little” ways.

SVD-PHN Jubilee Churches Launched

As we celebrate the Jubilee Year 2025 and the 150th anniversary of the SVD, seven parishes in the PHN Province have been designated as Jubilee Churches. This declaration was made by the SVD General and his Council and will be effective from 15th March to 31st December 2025. The SVD Cagayan District is organizing a pilgrimage to visit SVD churches on 10th and 11th June 2025.

Mike and GeeO Paderon



The Philippines (PHS) – Lay Mission Partners of the Divine Word (LaMP-DW)

SVD Lay Mission Partners Second Annual Assembly



Renewing Missionary Zeal in the Jubilee Year

From 11th to 13th June 2025, the SVD Lay Mission Partners (LaMP) from Bohol participated in the Second Annual PHS Assembly of Lay Mission Partners in Cebu City. This gathering brought together lay groups from various parishes and institutions where the Society of the Divine Word (SVD) is present, each animated by the charism and spirituality of St. Arnold Janssen. While these groups operate independently, the assembly provided a vital space for communion, sharing, and collective reflection on their mission and journey as lay partners.

Spiritual Milestone

The 2025 assembly was made even more meaningful as it coincided with the 150th jubilee of the SVD, making the gathering both a spiritual milestone and a communal celebration. Hosted by the SVD communities at the University of San Carlos (St. Raphael and St. Michael residences) and the Shrine of St. Arnold Janssen, the event featured a rich program of activities including daily Eucharistic celebrations, spiritual inputs, pastoral community visits to SVD outreach areas, moments of fellowship, and a pilgrimage to historic Catholic churches in South Cebu.



Witnessing to the Light

Approximately forty participants attended, representing lay groups from Bohol, Cebu, and Agusan parishes. United under the jubilee theme, “Witnessing to the Light from Everywhere for Everyone,” the participants deepened their commitment to the SVD missionary spirit and shared stories of faith and service in their respective communities.

Renewed Inspiration

As LaMP Bohol returns home, it carries with it renewed inspiration and a stronger resolve to support the SVD mission as faithful partners in God’s work. May all lay collaborators continue to be witnesses of the Divine Word, bringing light and love to every place and person they encounter.

Nanelyn D. Wate



Papua New Guinea (PNG) – SVD Friends PNG

SVD Lay Partners in Enga Province Embrace Healing and Renewal



Revived in Spirit, Reunited in Mission

In one of the strong SVD mission provinces of Papua New Guinea, the lay partners of Par Parish in the Highlands region (Wabag, Enga Province) came together once again for a spiritual renewal and reconciliation weekend at the Holy Spirit Senta Par from 28th to 30th May 2025.

Weekend of Healing and Hope

The gathering was led by Fr. Herman Kunow, Vocation Director of PNG, who guided the lay partners through a weekend of reflection, prayer, and renewal. The sessions focused on deepening faith in God, the power of prayer, and fostering reconciliation and love among members.

A Journey of Reconciliation and Renewal

The Par Parish SVD lay partners, formed in 2019 by Fr. Vincent Wasaring (then JPIC Coordinator), had gone through a challenging period marked by internal disagreements, lack of cooperation among members and leaders, and misunderstandings with the parish priest and other parishioners. These struggles led to the group's inactivity since early 2024.



Thanks to the leadership of the new parish priest, Fr. Pierrot, who recognized the need for revival, the lay partners were invited to awaken their mission spirit. His initiative to bring Fr. Herman as a spiritual refresher was a turning point.

From Division to Unity

The weekend was a moment of grace and spiritual nourishment. Hearts were mended, relationships were renewed, and the sense of purpose was restored. The program concluded with a joyful Commissioning Mass followed by a shared meal, symbolizing unity and new beginnings.

Dony Daniel Lakan



EUROPA ZONE

Germany (GER) – SVD-Partner

Mosaic Stones from the Work of the SVD-Partner



Mosaic Stone 1 – Zonal Meeting of the SVD Laity EUROPA Zone

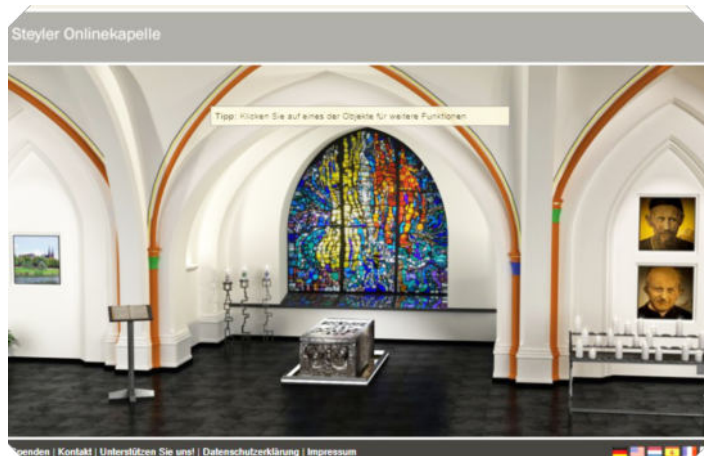
SVD-Partner supported Zonal Mission Secretary Fr. Xavier Alangaram in the organisation of the zonal meeting in Sankt Augustin. This included, above all, discussions about the programme and arrangements for the visit to the founding place in Steyl. Four members of SVD-Partner took part in the meeting. As a gift for participants and lecturers, the group received honey from the beekeeper and SVD-Partner, Rudi Scholz.

Mosaic Stone 2 – Jubilee

To celebrate the 150th anniversary of the SVD, members joined the Pentecost Holy Mass in Steyl, led by Fr. Xavier Thirukudumbam. They will also attend celebrations in Steyl and Sankt Augustin on 7th September, with one member participating in the Rome celebration on 8th September.

Mosaic Stone 3 – Online Devotions

The online devotions, held monthly, focused on various themes. In Lent, the emphasis was on the senses (sight,



hearing, smell, taste, touch, balance, and deep feeling), while from May to August, four early Christians were highlighted: a magician (Acts 8:9–13), a centurion (Acts 10:1–35), a purple merchant (Acts 16:9–15), and a prison guard (Acts 16:27–34).

Mosaic Stone 4 – Novena

From 30th August to 7th September, everyone is invited to pray a jubilee novena. It is up to each person to decide at what time of day he or she prays. The novena texts will be available online in German on the website svd-partner.eu can also be read on mobiles via the "Teamup"App.

Mosaic Stone 5 – World Day of the Poor

Pope Leo XIV announced the motto for the World Day of the Poor 2025: "You are my hope" (Ps 71:5). The World Day of the Poor was established by Pope Francis in 2017 and takes place on the Sunday before Christ the King. This year it is 16th November. SVD-Partner will publish texts for the church service or personal prayer online in good time. If you would like to be informed, you can register here:

[Registration](#)

Maria Wego



Italy (ITA) – Cooperatori Laici Verbiti

Sharing Christ's Fragrance in Albania



Beginning with the Eucharist

A small group from the SVD parish of S. Benedetto in Rome visited the SVD mission in Albania, accompanied by Fr. Juraj Cibula. From the outset, we noticed that, despite our geographical proximity, we were immersed in a vastly different context. In this area, Christian Catholics are a tiny minority.

Witnessing Love in Action

After attending Mass celebrated by Fr. Sunil Horo, at the church of S. Luigi Gonzaga in Vlorë, we travelled to the village of Babicë. There, we met a group of Alcantarine sisters who work with the local orphanage and welcome the children of the village.

Fr. Gorazd Kohút explained that these children are Muslims, and the main goal of their activities is to teach them human values like gratitude, solidarity, and forgiveness, with evangelization coming only afterward (which is very difficult). The regime and state atheism that existed until a few decades ago, along with the harsh repression of all religions, have left their mark on the population.



The Language of Love

We later visited a local family where we shared smiles, prayers, and experimented with "love is truly the language understood by all people."

Hearts Aflame in Orikum

In Orikum, we spent time at the House of the Sisters of Our Lady of Sorrows, where volunteers entertained children. We spoke with an Albanian woman, one of the few baptized, who said, "We are very few, but we've got fire in our hearts." Her words left a lasting impression on me.

Carrying the Fragrance of Christ

The next day, we travelled south to Saranda, where we observed the stunning coast and felt the truth of the saying: "The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few!". Still, our hope in God remains firm.

Even in the most difficult places, even when people are not willing to listen, "we can reach them creatively, with perfume, that good fragrance of Christ".

Isabella Gargiulo



Portugal (POR) – Diálogos - leigos SVD

Diálogos – 25 years of Spreading Smiles!



From Prayer to Mission, Embracing Culture

The group Diálogos – leigos SVD is celebrating 25 years of a journey marked by faces, places, experiences, and many smiles. It all began with the prayer meetings of a small group of young people at the Divine Word Seminary in Lisbon, who dreamed of growing in a true missionary spirit.

Strengthened by prayer, formation, and missionary outreach, the group launched volunteer projects in Portugal and the *Ad gentes* initiative “Open Paths” in Angola. These experiences deepened their spirituality, expanded their vision, and led to a lay commitment in a global Church. In response to current needs, they also introduced Missionary Weeks to live out the mission locally.

Deepening Roots in Steyl

The pilgrimage to Steyl was a special experience that enriched the group's connection to its spiritual roots. In response to the evolving needs of civil society, the group organized itself as an association, which enhanced its capacity for action. Today, Diálogos serves as a mission partner with the family of St. Arnold.



Remembrance and Gratitude

To mark this milestone, the group dedicated a year to remembrance and gratitude, reconnecting with former members who helped shape its journey. Celebrations began with a Thanksgiving Eucharist and social gathering in the parish that hosted the first African Dinner in Guimarães twenty years ago, supporting missionary projects.

A formation session on the spirituality of St. Arnold also commemorated 75 years of SVD presence in Portugal.

Celebrating Together

Three main events are still planned: a family-friendly walk, a social gathering to unite everyone who is a part of this journey, and the traditional African dinner, which will joyfully conclude the celebrations, bringing together all the friends who have supported us and continue to be part of the Mission.

Another ongoing initiative is the sharing of testimonies, reflections, and personal moments from members of Diálogos. All this and much more on our BLOG. <https://dialogossvd.blogspot.com/>

Davide Duarte



Slovakia (SVK) – Misijná Rodina (MRSVD), Bratislava

Highlights of Our Activities



There are two groups of lay partners – Misijná Rodina (Missionary Family – MRSVD) operating in the St. Arnold Janssen Mission House in Bratislava: the St. Arnold Janssen Group (seniors) and the St. Joseph Freinademetz Group (youth).

This year, we participated in many activities, some of them mentioned here.

Mission Coffee

Our regular activities include "Mission Coffee" after Sunday Masses, which creates a space for meeting people, having pleasant conversations, and building community.

In January, we participated in the preparation of the feast of the patron of our church, St. Arnold Janssen. there was a solemn Holy Mass followed by an agape in the Mission House.

Pilgrim with Moses

From 20th to 23rd March, members of the MRSVD from Bratislava and Nitra gathered for spiritual renewal with the theme "Pilgrim with Moses". It took place in the SVD Spiritual Retreat House in Nitra, led by Fr. Thomas Tulung.



Walking with Arnold

Some members of MRSVD participated in a pilgrimage to the tomb of St. Arnold Janssen in Steyl on the 150th anniversary of the SVD.

Gathered in Prayer

Other regular activities include adoration, which takes place every third Thursday of the month. The reflections for these sessions are prepared by members of the MRSVD, accompanied by worship music. Additionally, during the jubilee year, a 24-hour adoration event was held on 28th March with the theme "Hope Anchored in the Promises." During adoration, each participant received a piece of paper with a promise, serving as a reminder that God is faithful and has good plans for us.

The all-night Pentecost Adoration Vigil took place under the theme "The Holy Spirit in My Life." During the event, the gifts of the Holy Spirit were symbolized as sails on a sailboat. Attendees were invited to place a lit candle on the water, representing our collective journey together.

Veronika Šubjaková





PANAM ZONE



Brazil (BRA) – Amigos do Verbo na Amazônia (AVA)

Towards SVD 150 years: Your Life, Lord, Is Our Life. Your Mission Is Our Mission!



St. Joseph Freinademetz District

Living and witnessing the mission in the heart of the Amazon, the Divine Word Missionaries join with lay associates to celebrate the patronal feasts of communities. The presence of the AVA is especially meaningful during liturgies, where symbols representing the Congregation are used, highlighting and honouring the rich culture and artistry of the local people. The group also organized formation sessions and visits to families.

Maria Elza Gama and Diana Sá

Sister Dorothy District

To celebrate the 150th anniversary of the SVD and forty-five years of its presence in the Amazon, Holy Trinity parish received the relics of Saint Arnold Janssen and Saint Joseph Freinademetz. It was a historic moment of deep prayer, devotion, reflection, sharing, and joyful remembrance of our founding saints. For AVA, it was an honour to celebrate their legacy in evangelization and the promotion of God's love, as their relics visited our communities for the first time. From all peoples to all people – we became one family!

Maria França



St. Arnold Janssen District

AVA, in the St. Arnold Janssen District of Santarém, PA, which includes four SVD parishes, São Raimundo Nonato, Santo Antonio – Laginho, Nossa Senhora do Rosário, and São Mateus, celebrated the 150th anniversary by honouring the patron saints. Highlights included a 150-year banner, the SVD globe, and images of Saints Arnold Jansen and Joseph Freinademetz. The offertory was marked by the donation of food, either used in traditional dishes or as part of basic food baskets for those in need. All AVA members stood out in their special 150th anniversary shirts.

The district also organized a tree-planting activity on 21st April in the São Jorge community of São Mateus Parish, with support from the SVD priests. The aim was to promote care and responsibility for the environment.

Diana Clotides
Antônio Figueira

Compiled by: Pedro Rodrigues



Panama (CAM) – Misioneros Laicos del Verbo Divino (MLVD)

Moments of Mission and Grace



Embracing Hope in a Wounded World

On 27th April, Fr. Luis A. Vergara, led a session on the meaning of Easter. He reminded us that Easter is not merely an event of the past, but a living reality of hope in our wounded world. Through his reflections, we came to appreciate how the Risen Lord continues to transform our daily lives, inviting us to meet Him “in the Galilee” of our everyday encounters. In a world rife with uncertainty and pain, Fr. Vergara encouraged us to be men and women of joyful assurance, confident that the Risen Jesus accompanies us through the Holy Spirit.

Mission House-to-House Visits in Colinas de Villa Grecia

We went into the streets of the Colinas de Villa Grecia neighbourhood (Medalla Milagrosa Parish), where no chapel yet stands, to share the living Word of God. Going door to door, we listened to the joys and struggles of our neighbours and offered prayers. Our outreach concluded with the celebration of the Holy Eucharist.

Archdiocesan Eucharistic Gathering

1st June marked a grand occasion at the Archdiocesan level, where several SVD missionaries joined with local clergy and lay



faithful to celebrate the Eucharist in thanksgiving for our shared ministry.

Planning and Celebrating as a Community

On 15th June, our community gathered to plan for the next three months of mission activities. After prayerful discussion and collaborative brainstorming, we finalized schedules for formation workshops, outreach initiatives, and parish celebrations. We also celebrated Father's Day, honouring the fatherly love of God reflected in the dedicated service of our priests, missionaries, and lay collaborators. As we look forward, may we continue to walk together in faith, hope, and love, ever guided by the Risen Christ.

Rubiela Ramírez de Rodríguez
Rogelio Rodríguez-Pizza



Chile (CHI) – Alma Verbita

Second Subzone Meeting of SVD Lay Partners



With One Heart, the Southern Cone in Action

From 2nd to 4th May 2025, the lay partners of the Southern subzone, which includes Argentina, Paraguay, and Chile, along with lay representatives from Divine Word communities in Chile, gathered for the Second lay partners meeting of the Southern subzone at the Divine Word Retreat House, Chile.

The meeting, which kicked off with the slogan "With one heart, the Southern Cone* is in action," was organized by Alma Verbita. It was supported and attended by Provincial Superior Fr. Yuventus Kota, Mission Secretary Fr. Lamberto Lalung, and our Spiritual Advisor Fr. Gino Jimenez.

Celebrating Culture and Mission

We gathered to learn about our congregation, spirituality, and the current realities of our regions. It was a valuable opportunity to reflect on our desires, strengths, weaknesses, and challenges as laity of the South subzone. Over three days, we received formation on various topics relevant to our missionary work.

Exhibition of the history, mission, cultural and culinary richness of each region through various stands. They are bearers of faith and action.



Led by the Spirit, Embraced by Mary

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament offered a moment of deep reflection and prayer, enhanced by Fernando Leiva, a renowned singer and songwriter. He guided us to connect with our inner selves, encouraging profound prayer and joy in the presence of God and our community.

Another great moment of prayer was led by the Argentinian brothers, where the image of the Virgin Mary was present, and we could feel her loving embrace.

United in Prayer and Looking ahead

Each delegation showcased its talents and creativity, bringing much-needed joy to the mission. A document with the conclusions of the meeting was created and sent to the provincials, Fr. Nevil D'Silva (PANAM zonal coordinator), and all participants.

See you soon, subzone South!

Elena Ortiz

* Southern Cone - The region of South America comprising the countries of Paraguay, Uruguay, Argentina, Chile, and southern Brazil



Paraguay (PAR) – Laicos Verbitas del Paraguay

Strengthening Faith and Mission in Paraguay



Bible Course at San Miguel Arcángel Parish, Saltos del Guaira

For the past seven years, the Bible Course at San Miguel Arcángel Parish has been a source of spiritual formation and community engagement. Meeting weekly on Mondays from 6:30 to 9:00 p.m., the course has seen fifty-four participants, with fifteen dedicated members. The catechists and worship leaders play a crucial role in nurturing faith, supported by the parish priest and the Verbo Divino-Paraguay biblical animation team.

United in Mission: PANAM 2025 Subzone Meeting

With the slogan “With one heart, the Southern Cone is in action”, the PANAM subzone meeting was held from 1st to 4th May, with the participation of more than sixty SVD lay partners and ten priests from Argentina, Chile, and Paraguay.

The main objectives were to enhance the communion and shared mission between the laity and the Society of the Divine Word (SVD) in the Southern Cone region through experience exchange, reflections on pastoral realities, and the development of common evangelizing paths. Six SVD lay partners from Paraguay, accompanied by Fr. Kornelius Boli Provincial, participated in this significant meeting.



Parish Visits and Lay Partner Engagement

To enhance the development of the SVD lay groups in Paraguay, the national coordination team has established a goal to visit the laity in various parishes. The primary purpose of these visits is to understand the unique realities of each community and to present the work plan and activities scheduled for this year. Additionally, these visits aim to encourage participation in the events planned throughout the year.

In May, we visited the parishes of the Jasy Cañy and San Pedro del Paraná communities. During our visit, we emphasized the mission of the SVD lay partners and shared information about the SVD, its founder, and the various dimensions of our work.

Jorge Sienkawiec



Paraguay (PAR) – Laicos Verbitas del Paraguay, Asunción

Waiting and Preparing for the 150th Jubilee



Jubilee Year Encounters and Reflections

As we await the great day of the SVD's 150th anniversary, God blesses us with moments of grace: gatherings rooted in unity and commitment, healing and renewed commitment.

We are deeply enriched by the insights and articles shared by our spiritual leaders and contributors, as well as by the preparatory activities for the upcoming celebration.

The training sessions centered on continental zones – organized by subzones and provinces – continue to nourish us, fostering growth in both knowledge and spirituality.

The moments shared with our brothers and sisters from Argentina, Chile, and Paraguay subzone were truly special. We are living a time of conversion, a sacred journey of seeking and offering forgiveness, praying for one another, and speaking words of life to those yearning to experience God's love.

Weekly Gatherings and Jubilee Celebrations

Our weekly meetings, where we share our daily lives and mission experiences in the light of the Word, have become a space of deep connection. They help us grow in love and understanding, embracing one another's strengths, weaknesses, and imperfections. We are truly living a time of



conversion: a season of mutual forgiveness, prayer, and speaking life into those longing to know God's love. The eighth of every month has now become a much-anticipated moment of joy and celebration.

We prepare the liturgy and celebrate the Eucharist with a special intention. Afterwards, we gather as a community to share food from various places, including traditional dishes, and enjoy artistic and cultural performances together.

This jubilee year invites us to share, live in holiness, and seek healing in our personal, family, and community lives. It is a time to practice love more deeply. Truly, we are living a year of grace. Blessed be the Lord our God!

Blanca Garcia de Duarte



❖ Information from the SVD ❖

An Ever-Renewed Commitment to Mission

It was a God-given opportunity to join the SVD Characteristic Dimensions' Coordinators of the AFRAM zone. We met in Kinshasa, D.R. Congo, from 1st to 8th June 2025. The four Generalate coordinators were present, each accompanying their respective partners. I'd like to share a few insights from this enriching experience.

First, it is always an overwhelming experience of diversity, interculturality, and God's given gifts. We do have committed SVD missionaries assigned to different mission stations in this vast continent.

Second, there is a growing understanding of the interconnection and complementarity of the four Dimensions. Since these are family traits of every SVD, not of some specialists, each single ministry, pastoral service, or apostolate must be marked by our being God's Word rooted, witnesses to the Good News, God's mission-oriented, and carers for God's creation.

Third, every participant of the activity realized once more that the present mission challenges urge us to strive for a teamwork mission approach and strategy. Much of our resources (human, pastoral, and material) can be maximized if we walk as testimonial missionary communities.

Fourth, lay partner groups are accompanying the SVD mission in many places, which is a fundamental support for our missionaries who face a series of difficulties in their ministries. Little by little, more groups are emerging, and they are being assisted in terms of purifying their motivations to join the SVD

mission. Without the commitment of the lay people, the mission in Africa would not be possible.

Lastly, our sharing during the four-day meeting left us with a sensation of gratitude to God, for He has made us protagonists in His mission. At the same time, we embrace the need to deepen our conversion and commitment to Jesus' Gospel. Walking and serving our people, we are very much aware of our limitations and lack of a more profound enculturated journey. The path to keep up with our mission as wounded healers is widening our perspective, deepening our spirituality, and letting our lay communities help us.

Fr. Marcelo Cattáneo, SVD
General Mission Secretary



The Philippines Central Province – Divine Word College of Calapan (DWCC)



DWCC Marks SVD 150 with a Celebration

On 31st January 2025, the Divine Word College of Calapan launched a year-long celebration of the 150th anniversary of the Society of the Divine Word (SVD). The festivities began with a Bible Quiz Bee themed "Witnessing to the Light: From Everywhere, for Everyone," uniting the community in celebrating Scripture and the SVD's legacy of mission and evangelization.

United in mission: Creativity, Community, and Celebration
Organized by the Center for Spirituality and Mission with the SVD Youth Campus Ministry, the event brought together thirty-seven teams from various levels, with Computer Engineering taking home the championship title.

A standout poster by a Junior High School student impressed with its powerful message and artistry, while the joyful award ceremony wrapped up the event.

An ongoing Mural Competition, eagerly awaited by the DWCC community, aims to create a lasting symbol of this year's theme and SVD values.

The project is a collective effort to create a lasting visual representation of this year's theme and values of the SVD. The DWCC community looks forward to its completion, as it will serve as a permanent symbol of this year's celebration.

Classroom to Churches: Pilgrimage of Hope

On 16th May, religious education teachers and members of the SVD-Youth Campus Ministry participated in a pilgrimage to five parish churches in Mindoro Oriental: St. Joseph in Bongabong, St. Augustine in Pinamalayan, St. John the Baptist in Pola, Good Shepherd in Victoria, and San Nicolas de Tolentino in Naujan, concluding at the historical Simbahang Bato. Each church visit included praying the rosary, reflections, sharing experiences, photo-taking, and passport stamping.



Anchored in the Word

Participants noted that these reflections fostered self-awareness, personal growth, and a closer relationship with God, making the experience a meaningful journey of faith rather than just a church tour.

Daisy Leones
Shirley Ignacio Mendoza

❖ Experience Reports ❖

Walking in Faith: A Lay Partner's Mission in Tripura



A Forest Ranger by Profession, A Missionary by Heart

As a SVD lay partner and member of the Apostles of the Divine Word (ADW), I have been blessed to walk with people in faith and share the Word of God across villages and parishes in Tripura. Though I serve as a Forest Ranger Assistant by profession, my heart beats for mission, especially in conducting retreats, animating Holy Hours, and leading praise and worship. Each experience has brought me closer to God and deeper into the lives of the people I serve.

Proclaiming the Word

On 7th June 2025, I participated in a powerful prayer program at St. Mary's Church, Twikarma Parish, with nearly one hundred parishioners. Fr. Thomas Parara led the Holy Hour, and I shared a Gospel reflection during a day filled with preaching and

worship, alongside my mission team. The response was full of faith and joy.

The rain stopped, God's Word flowed

A week later, on 15th June, we visited Killa Catholic Church in Khumlung Parish for a retreat. Around thirty people attended. During the session, heavy rain suddenly poured down, drowning out our voices. We paused and prayed with one heart, asking the Lord to help us. In just ten minutes, the rain stopped—a clear sign of God's presence. We continued the program peacefully, and the faithful rejoiced in hearing the Word. "Alleluia! Praise the Lord!"



Mission across villages: One step at a time

Various retreats and village visits occurred in Jampuijala, Bisramganj, Agartala Cathedral, and churches in Kumarghat, Khumlwng, and Twikarma parishes. We visited ten village churches where I led praise sessions, shared the Gospel, and was touched by the people's spiritual hunger.

These experiences have taught me that when we step out in faith, God takes care of the rest. I may not have formal training or a title, but I carry within me the conviction that I am called to

proclaim Jesus—and I do so with joy. As St. Paul declares, “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!” (Romans 10:15).

May we, as SVD lay partners, continue to walk this path, rooted in the Word, reaching out to the world, and proclaiming Christ with courage, joy, and love.

Subhash Debbarma
ADW member, ING

Restoring Peace and Unity in Broken Homes in the Highlands of Papua New Guinea

Walking the Path of Suffering and Healing

On 11th March 2025, a rare and significant ceremony of peace and reconciliation happened in Kamboo village of the Gena Tribe in Kerowagi in Simbu Province transcending cultural barriers and promoting unity among different factions of people divided for two decades on issues related to Sorcery Accusation Related Violence (SARV), Gender Based Violence (GBV) and Drug and Substance Abuse.

The event was complemented by the Stations of the Cross, with the actual ceremony happening at the fourteenth station. Affected families and community members walked, carried the cross, and prayed together for the first time before finding peace and reconciling with one another.

"We promised before God, the community, and the very essence of this land that we would never pass on these unfortunate and inhumane stories to our younger generation. We will not speak of sorcery suspicions ever again in our family or community," declared a young leader and local perpetrator. "Please forgive us for we do not know what we've done back then," he said.

Landmark moment of peace in Kamboo village: Forgiveness and hope

The survivors accepted the apologies and came to terms with forgiving them as they looked into a future filled with hope and love.

Themed “Forgive and Forget,” the ceremony was led by Diocesan Priest Fr. Christopher Yer Onguglo, the Kendene Parish Priest and Chairman of the St. Christopher Alive Association, which supports drug addicts seeking change. Fr. Christopher collaborates with the Melanesian Institute (operated by SVD religious and lay partners in Goroka) to promote peace and justice in communities.

Greg Yule
SVD JPIC Lay partner, PNG



Perpetual Rosary Movement (PRM)



United in Prayer: The Perpetual Rosary Movement

The Perpetual Rosary Movement (PRM) was born from the deep devotion to Mama Mary shared by former SVD seminarians, inspired by their formation with the SVD fathers at Christ the King Seminary and other SVD

seminaries nationwide. Guided by Spiritual Advisor Fr. Jerry Orbos, the PRM's mission is to keep the Rosary prayed 24/7 across the world—uniting hearts in continuous prayer.

Milestones in Marian Devotion

Since its foundation in 2010, marked by a Rosary Procession and Mass at the Grotto of the Annunciation in Christ the King Seminary, Quezon City, the PRM has inspired thousands through monthly Marian Masses, processions, and grand celebrations like the "Marikit na Ina" Fiesta Mass in Marikina attended by over 2,000 faithful.

From its early days, first conceived as a physical Marian shrine, PRM evolved into a virtual community, first through its website and now through a vibrant Facebook page that connects 5,000 members globally with Marian reflections, updates, and shared devotion.

PRM's mission continues through Life in the Spirit Seminars, First Saturday Marian Celebrations at Christ the King Seminary, and Masses with special Marian processions at the Shrine of the Divine Word. During the pandemic, PRM innovated by offering nightly Rosary prayers via Zoom, fostering unity despite physical distance.

Keeping the Flame Alive: Digital Innovations and Daily Prayer

We warmly invite everyone, especially SVD lay partners, to join as a community in praying the Rosary every evening at 8:00 PM, Monday to Saturday. Together, under the protective mantle of Mama Mary, we remain one in faith and love. With prayers, our individual and communal projects will prosper and be successful, to further God

Join us via Zoom

[Zoom-Meeting: Daily Rosary](#)

Meeting ID: 214 241 6608; Passcode: 103699

For the SVD lay partners as a community that prays together, stays together, united in Christ and Our Blessed Mother!

Samuel Yap
LSSAJ, PHC

❖ Announcements ❖

"You are My Hope" – World Day of the Poor 2025

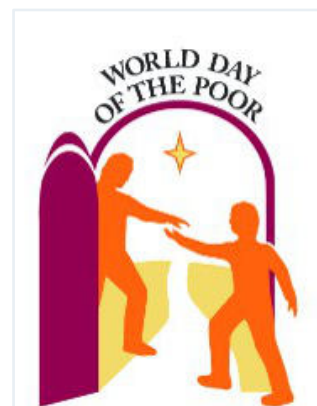
SVD-Partner Germany invites you to pray together on the 8th World Day of the Poor
Sunday 16 November 2025

You will find texts and prayers on the website from the mid of October

[SVDLP Website](#)

[Message of Pope Leo XIV](#)

Maria Wego
SVD-Partner, GER



❖ JPIC Column ❖



Dear friends,

Ten years of the encyclical Laudato Si and Laudato Si Movement and five years of Si Action Plan - this is not only a reason to celebrate, but also to be grateful that so many people around the world are working for creation!

For all those who are familiar with the encyclical but not yet with the other initiatives: The Laudato Si Movement is a community of Catholics responding to Pope Francis' call to action in the encyclical. They mainly want to raise awareness within the Church about the urgency of climate action in light of Catholic social and environmental teachings, support global solidarity on the current ecological crisis, and advocate with those in poverty who are on the frontline in bearing the brunt of the effects of climate change.

[Learn more](#)

The Laudato Si Action Plan is a program and public commitment for various institutions to begin a 7-year journey to total sustainability in the spirit of Laudato Si. The seven goals are: response to the cry of the earth, response to the cry of the poor, ecological economics, adoption of sustainable lifestyles, ecological education, ecological spirituality, and community resilience and empowerment.

[Learn more](#)

Not there yet? Then join and get active!

Start an initiative during the Season of Creation from 1st September to 4th October 2025. Motto: Peace with Creation!

[Motto](#)

Jo

❖ Impressions from Pentecost in Steyl ❖



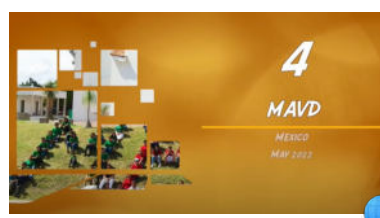
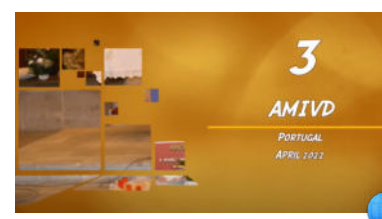
List of Lay Partners' Videos

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 here. At the moment there are no new videos.

Klickt auf die Weltkugel, um das Video zu starten. Since Febru



Mehr in der Produktion





Prayer

Gracious God,
let us follow the example of Saint Arnold Janssen
and continue on the path of charity.

Let us remain connected with all our brothers and
sisters,
regardless of their skin colour or beliefs.

Let us be courageous and consistent examples of
our faith to others.

Give us the confidence that, with our own strength
and abilities,
we can contribute to greater humanity in our
society.

We ask this through Christ, our Lord.
Amen.

(From the Parish St. Arnold Janssen in Goch)



Imprint

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