

THE VOICE OF THE BROTHERS



**ST. ARNOLD JANSSEN FORMATION HOUSE,
GHANA PROVINCE.**

MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY



I'm Brother McDaniel Acquaah, currently the Brother Formation Director, House Preases and Vocation Promoter for the Ghana province



I'm Brother Pius, first Ghanaian Divine Word Missionary. I'm the founder and currently directing the Pastoral Liturgy and Sacred Music Ministry, also known as PALIMUS.



I'm Peter Atuba, currently in the second year of temporary vows. I'm studying electronics at Accra Technical Training centre (ATTC).



I'm Lambert Azieve, in the second year of temporary vows. I'm studying Building and Construction Technology at Accra Polytechnic



I'm Mark Tachiona Mutero, in the first year of temporary vows. I'm studying Computer Hardware and Networking and Software.

EDITORIAL

Many thanks to those who wrote the articles and we hope our readers will enjoy reading them and understand as well. For any views, suggestions and comments, please contact Br. McDaniel at mcdanielgh@yahoo.com or call him-0247212214. But incase you have donations, please contact Rev. Fr. Thomas D'mello [Provincial Superior-provincial@verbum.org.gh]

A WORD FROM THE PREASES



Greetings and love from saint Arnold Janssen Formation House; especially to confreres, friends and benefactors. This maiden issue of our newsletter is to help all to know what is happening in our formation house. At the moment we are five brothers in our community; three brothers in temporary vows and two finally professed.

This formation house has gone through a lot of changes, which started a decade ago, in order to create more rooms for brothers who study in the capital. The environment is conducive for both spiritual and academic growth. And we also welcome Catholics leaving around to participate in our daily morning prayers and Eucharistic celebrations; which is something that has gradually built the SVD spirituality in them.

Since its beginning, Saint Arnold Janssen Formation House has helped about fifteen to twenty finally professed brothers working within and outside the country. Currently the house can boast of five finally professed brothers working in different parts of the world.

This year has been challenging, it is a year that sees the dwindling of brother vocations. And this has prompted a brother assembly to that effect. I think the dwindling of brother vocations is not an individual problem but concerns all. In other words, it is an all-inclusive challenge and duty for every member of the society to contribute and promote brother vocations. Confreres working in the parishes, institutions and other specialized apostolate are to make the brother vocation visible and attractive. I strongly believe that, with love and enthusiasm, we can bring back the lost interest in the brother vocation to the youth. In Ghana, the call to brotherhood is still vibrant and just needs to be rekindled through conscious efforts for it to be back on its feet once again. May the darkness of sin and the night of unbelief vanish before the light of the word and spirit of grace and may the heart of Jesus live in the heart of all people. Amen.
Bro. McDaniel Acquah, SVD_

LENT AND EASTER MESSEGE



Are we predestined to sin?

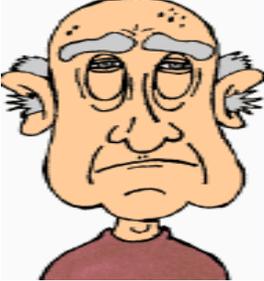
A trial is in session and Judas Iscariot is in court. His face looks sad and full of remorse. How could he betray the messiah, the son of God? After all he has done for them; the miracles, the food they ate and the scripture he taught them. How could he? The intimate moments they had by the beach, while he told them of his loving father and the kingdom that awaits them. The praises he sang them in

the beatitudes and all the promises he made, and after all that, he still betrays Jesus. He just can't believe it, and strongly wishes it is some long nightmare that will suddenly come to an end, waking him up and finding himself next to Jesus and the rest of the disciples basking in the sun by the Sea of Galilee. How he wishes he can turn back the hands of time, back to when they fed the five thousand and feasted on the left-over. "Those were the days", he whispers to himself. How can he trade all that for thirty pieces of silver. Trading the divine for thirty coins. He thinks of wailing to move the jury, and throw all the blame on the Pharisees who took advantage of his love for money, which they knew was his greatest weakness. But this was no time to blame others for his propensities, and besides, that can even lessen his chances. His only hope lies in the deceiving lips of his cunning lawyer. He throws a desperate gaze at Lucifer, who stands up in response to his client's plea. All dressed up in black, with a hat to hide his horns, and sagging jeans to conceal his tail. Lucifer stands and clears his throat to get ready to address the jury. He grins deviously at his client and turns to the jury with a smile, and begins to speak. "Was is not you who created Judas Iscariot, gave him knowledge of accounts and a quick mind for counting coins? Was is not you who placed him in Jesus' divine company? (Changing his tone) Who would have betrayed Jesus if it had not been my loyal client? Would Jesus have died if it were not for Judas? How else could have Jesus saved the world if it weren't for Judas' greed and love for money? Was it not in your plans that Judas had to be the bad disciple who would lead the Pharisees to Jesus' favorite garden? What should be made of a man who initiated salvation, without whom Jesus would not have died, if not a hero? (Turning to the judge) Whether Judas Iscariot is guilty or not, I leave that with you. No further questions your honor." Silence hits the courtroom, while the jury assimilates what has just been said. Judas, on the other hand, releases a sigh of relief though aware of his guilt. Lucifer, moved by his own words, sits back into his chair. He already knows Judas' fate and just wants to deceive him one last time, after all, desperate friends are easy to deceive. It works all the time, soon he will be thrown back to hell, with Judas in the grip of his arms.

The noise of the alarm clock woke me from my sleep. It was 4:30, it was still dark and the weather was so cold. I cursed the clock and rose with a sigh. I was still possessed by the dream and knew quite well that it had to be put on paper, and its meaning was left to me to interpret. I just hope the lawyer's words did not convince you. Truth be told, we are never predestined to sin, we have just become too predictable in the eyes of God and sometimes in the eyes of man. Even our friends can foretell some of our reactions. Have you not heard friends say "I knew he would do that, he's like that!" Virtues and vices have both become old, never new in the eyes of God, but only in the eyes of man. Generation after generation, God has watched us come and go, all behaving the same, like children of the same parents. When given authority, when given money, and when given privileges, almost all of us behave the same. We either become greedy or generous when given money, authoritarian or liberal when given authority, as for privileges, most of us misuse them by only serving our own. We justify ourselves by statements such as "that's how I am!" , while forgetting to ask ourselves if that is how God wants us to be. We are in lent, and will soon be entering Easter, a time to deeply reflect and renew our relationship with God. Let us do just that!

By Mark

Time and choices



We're all afraid of making mistakes, looking back seventy years from now and seeing nothing but err. And at certain times in our lives we find ourselves faced with choices, knowing that this is it, the moment our past has been preparing us for. And the familiar feeling always finds its way inside of us, a feeling of doubt, hesitation, but most of all, of fear. Fear of the price we'll have to pay if we err. A mistake that would not only haunt us today, nor tomorrow, but for the rest of our lives. And some mistakes can never be corrected, no matter how much we try. Life becomes so unforgiving, you offend it today, and you spend a lifetime apologizing. Feeling sorry for the rest of your life, and asking for pardon.

I guess this is part of the story we would hear, if we ask, from the old women and men we meet. Who walk around always muttering. The kind who talk too much, always having something to say, not only to others, but even to themselves. The remaining years of their lives having turned into a time of review and regret.

At times I think they're the best people who can tell us the truth, the value of time, and the true price of a day. It sounds unfair, doesn't it? Why the cost of our lives should be revealed at the end of it. As bills long overdue.

So don't rush, live each day at a time. Life is too precious to be lived in a hurry. Always be content with what you have, but don't hesitate to get some more if you can and when there is need.

By Mark

Pastoral at St. Margaret Mary



The three of us, as young brothers, used to go together to St. Charles Lwanga for masses on Sunday. We would most of the times leave the house together and sometimes sat on the same bench. We used to face almost the same challenges, had the same friends and did a lot of other things together. But with time, there was need to expand our presence and work in different parishes. That's how I came to work in parishes. That's how I came to work in Dansoman, while Brother Peter is at New Aplaku, and Brother Mark at St. Charles Lwanga, in Abeka. Having spent some time at Dansoman, I've grown familiar with many parishioners, and have made a lot of friends, especially the Sunday school kids. I just love kids. My love for kids helped me to work with them, and to be quite frank, kids just love me. I worked with the kids from September last year up to February this year. I joined the Sunday school teachers while they taught, and had opportunities to give short reflections to the kids. There were sort of short reflections, all summed up for their young minds to understand. Enough about kids! Since March I have been working

with the Parish Youth Council, commonly known as the P.Y.C. I participate in their meetings, attend their programs-the most recent being the launching of the World Youth Day which was on the last week of March, at Dansoman. Their next major program will be on the 12th April 2009 and they call it 'Gospel Dance'. The program is meant to raise some money for the Education Fund, sorely meant for the brilliant and poor kids. We have sold tickets and we are still looking forward to find more ways of raising the funds.

The youths at Dansoman are doing well, but like any other youth groups, they face their own challenges. There's need for spiritual growth and a change of attitude towards work. And in response to that, the Youth Executive has initiated meeting on Sundays for spirituals talks. All in all, my pastoral experiences have been enriching, I've learnt a lot and hope to learn more with time.

By Lambert

JUST FOR LAUGHS

A novice master and a novice were having an argument, and the subject of contention was the Biblical story of Jonah. The novice was convinced that Jonah swallowed the fish, while the novice master knew perfectly well that it was the fish that swallowed Jonah. To cut the argument short with a solution, the novice told the master, *"Incase I meet Jonah in heaven, I'll ask for the truth"*. But the master looked at the novice and asked him, *"But what if Jonah is in hell"*. Then with a smile the novice replied, *"Then you'll ask him!"*



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"The sad thing is, Jonah's so afraid of the water now, he won't even take a bath."

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