

THE VOICE OF THE BROTHERS

JUST FOR LAUGHS



The secret of a good sermon is to have a good beginning and a good ending; and to have the two as close together as possible. --
George Burns

EDITORIAL

God gave himself to the world through the birth of Christ, so Christmas is a time for giving. It is a time to give one's life, one's time, one's love and reliving all the virtues that Christ came to give. So in this small booklet, we give you our thoughts and prayers and while wishing you all a 'MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A BLESSED NEW YEAR'.

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] provincialgha@gmail.com

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FROM ST. ARNOLD JANSSEN FORMATION HOUSE

PERSONAL INTRODUCTIONS



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



I'm Brother Pius Agyman, first Ghanaian divine word missionary. I studied liturgy, and I'm the founder and currently directing the Pastoral Liturgy and Sacred Music Ministry, also known as PALIMUS.



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



I'm Brother Mark Tachiona Mutero, in the second year of temporary vows. I'm studying Computers at IPMC.



The 31st of this year marks its end, the end of 2009. For some, it's the end of youth and some are becoming teenagers, while for those we have in mind, old age is catching up. The knees are becoming weak, hearing has become a problem and things are slowly becoming blare without the aid of spectacles. We invite you all to pray for the aged, that they may continue to age gracefully, accept and reconcile with their past, while looking forward to their remaining years. May God bless them all.

By Brother Mark/Lambert

NEWS

We would like to again welcome Fr. John Tumawu, who is a member our community. We welcome all his talents and gifts, to help our community continue to grow and become a home for all its members.

We wish our brother Peter Atuba all the best as he takes his one-year break from formation. May God continue to guide him, and give him all the wisdom he needs to continue his discernment. May God bless you all and have a merry Christmas!

By Brother Lambert Azieve

OLD AGE

There is a time when everything around you turns into mirrors, including the friends you made. Everything else becomes a projection of who you are, except yourself. Especially when you wake up one day and realize that you have just turned ninety. Your wife, who is the closest image of you, staggers around the kitchen, with her poor sight, while trying to fix you a plate, a treat especially for your birthday. The familiar sound of pots and pans tell you what she is up to. You think of her and miss the beautiful girl she once was, while appreciating the old lady she has become. How deceiving beauty can be though, just a skin to conceal what is underneath: difficult to maintain, but easily corrupted. The old lady continues her mission in the kitchen, a part of the old house she is so much familiar with. A place, for the past fifty years she has been practicing her ageing skill. She goes on with the cooking, slowly but sure, a clear sign that it has all become a ritual, though today is a special one. I guess there also lies virtue, and a sign of 'undying love'.

Nights and days have both been slowly becoming too long. Time has turned slow and full of inactivity. With few reasons to get out of bed and little to look forward to. Somehow, your days become numbered, slowly progressing towards the inevitable. For some, all thought seem to focus on the past, reviewing the past ninety years, with the years of infancy just a blare. Looking back and putting it all on scales, what has been achieved, what has not, and of course, counting the costs. And the most interesting thing is that, things become clearer, and events somehow become easily understood. All that seemed confusing become easily understandable, as if all it needed was a withdrawal, a further look from a different angle.

A WORD FROM THE PREASES

Greetings of peace, and happiness to you from St. Arnold Janssen Brother Formation House Tesano-Accra, Ghana. May this advent season be a time to bring Jesus to all. In our last edition we promised to continue to inform you about what is happening in our small world of St Arnold Janssen brother formation house.

This formation house at the moment has four brothers and a priest. Two of the brothers are in temporary vows.

Our formation house has been generously busy, hosting confreres and other religious from different congregations. In June 2009, the house hosted seven theology students from Tamale (CFC), while they were having a Spanish course for six months. In August 2009, four of our SVD Madagascan students also stayed with us for three and a half months while learning English.

The past month has been quite challenging, especially after the brother assembly recently held in Cebu-Philippines. The brothers, after studying and sharing the proposals and recommendations of the General Assembly on SVD Brother Vocation, have come to realize that more has to be done to lift the image of the brother vocation in the light of Prophetic Dialogue. In our recent Provincial Chapter at Adoagyri-Nsawam, a serious committee was formed to see to the implementation of the recommendations made at the General Assembly on the SVD Brother Vocation and Prophetic Dialogue. For the province, the general feeling is that the Assembly has awakened all confreres to respond positively to the dwindling condition of the Brother Vocation and that it is the responsibility of every confrere to play a role, either in the parish or any other apostolate he finds himself. Efforts are on the way to reach confreres and to share with them not only what has happened at the Assembly, but what individuals can also do to improve Brother Vocation.

The Assembly is yet to be discussed in an open forum, in both Ghana districts i.e. Yendi and Tamale.

May the good Lord who has started these objectives in us continue to see to their success, and we wish all confreres and benefactors a fruitful advent season and merry Christmas. God bless.

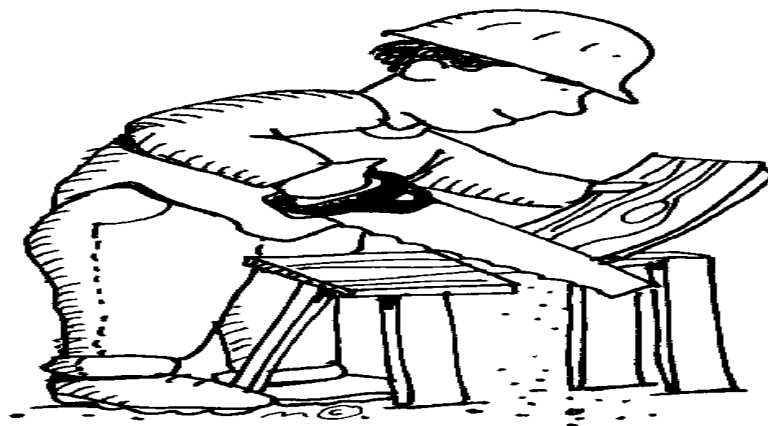
*Br. McDaniel Acquaah, SVD.
(Brother Formation Director)*

REFLECTIONS

Have Brothers a future?

One of the things that should be secretly worrying the church is the slow sliding of ‘brothers’ into ambiguity; their role in the church and if the future will still have a place for them in fifty years time. For the principle of nature, even in modern times still stands; what fails to keep pace with the change of times slowly dies away or becomes ‘extinct’.

To help in our reflection, let us briefly approach this subject from a few different angles for now. The first angle which no one, even myself, can ignore is the need to learn and excel past the previous world of ‘diplomas’. Success in this world, in twenty years time will have no place for the ‘illiterate’. For illiteracy, previously disguised as a form of ‘humility’, is slowly seizing to be a ‘virtue’. The second angle concerns profession and practice. Brothers should practice their professions, i.e. what they studied, in conformity with their talents and the needs of the society. Identity crisis for brothers is enough of a problem, there is no reason to add to its source. Brothers should practice and improve their skills and rank among the best at what they do. “For there is great contentment in doing what you’re good at” a journalist once said. Now back to our question, “Have brothers a future?” This question



seems to always trigger a lot of thoughts while raising many questions. But ‘yes’, brothers do have a future, in fact, a great future.

There are many more angles through which the subject can be looked, but we will mention one more as our last. And this last point comes as a result of the progress made through the two points we mentioned earlier.

There is great need to identify the marks of distinction between a brother and a priest, and to realize that the differences are not necessarily levels of hierarchy, but peculiar religious duties they each perform. The roles played during mass should not be sources of a hidden conflict, but of identity, marking the peculiar ways in which a priest and brother both contribute towards attaining the graces from our highest form of worship, called the ‘Holy Eucharist’, while serving the people of God. But not forgetting that it is the priest who celebrates the mass, not the brother. Like we said in the beginning, this is just in brief, yet we hope it will serve the complete purpose of helping all of us to reflect and find more convincing answers to the question ‘have brothers a future?’

By Brother Mark Mutero