

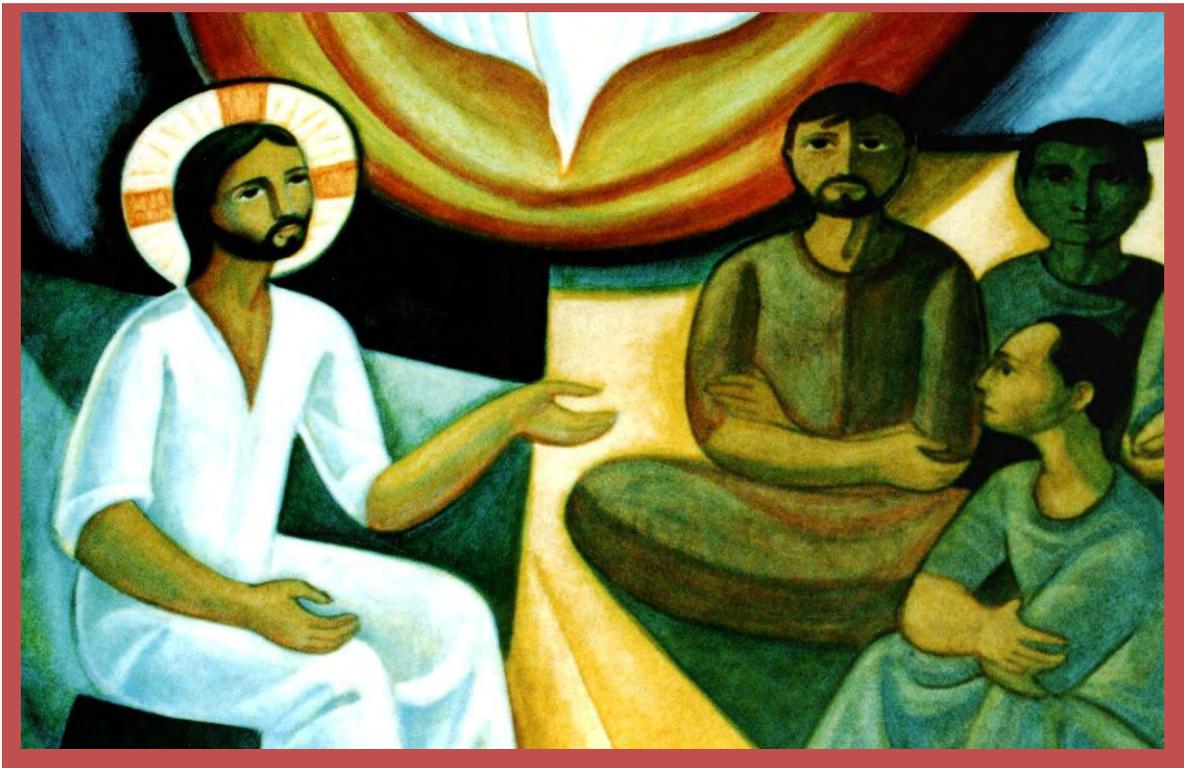


# SVD BROTHERS

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**NEWSLETTER**



*Theme: Inspired by Our Leaders*

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# FOREWORD

Br. Roberto Duarte, SVD - Generalate's Brother Coordinator

I believe that we are living in a hopeful and very important times both at the ecclesial and SVD levels. Pope Francis` testimony and also the missionary witnessing of our SVD Superior General, Fr. Heinz Kulueke, invite us to return to the Gospel of Jesus and like him walk as Brothers side by side with the poor. These leaders are reminding us what is essential in our option which perhaps we had lost or replaced within the labyrinths of anti-evangelical institutions.



Pope Francis and Fr. Heinz`s witnessing and actions are of vital importance to the vocation of the Brothers because this vocation is characterized by its sensitivity to the human being, both at the personal and the social level. Most of our SVD Brothers around the world are serving and promoting life in dangerous situations where human dignity and ecology are in deterioration. We try to live as Brothers of all living creatures as Francis of Assisi showed us. I believe this is also the Holy Father`s plan for the entire ecclesial community.

Our SVD spirituality, through the Characteristic Dimension of JPIC, wants to make present in all humankind the centrality of seeking and building a world that is more just, harmonic and habitable. With the new momentum coming from the Church, as well as from our Congregation, we SVD missionaries, especially the Brothers, are invited to strengthen our spirituality, and hence, our commitment to the poor and the marginalized in the places we are living at the present moment. We do this not so much as social agents or service providers but most of all as companions, friends and brothers of the little ones and the more vulnerable in our societies.

The resolutions of the last General Chapter are in line with this new evangelical sensitivity and, at the same time, provide us time frames and deadlines. Through these time frames we can project ourselves and share what we have done so far at the Provincial and Zone level. There is a new hope that is felt in many places. Do we feel connected to this new hope? Do we find ourselves serving and supporting the initiatives which promote a decent and evangelical life? Our fraternal spirituality lived out as Brothers must be a sign that it is possible to develop healthy relationships in this new impetus of going back to Jesus, in his life and message. Our Superior General invites to live what he calls a "faith in action".

We will continue to be in contact with every place and gesture that create life and continue the prophetic mission of Jesus.

## 2. Recent activities of JPIC –ECU

In recent times, one of our main concerns in the JPIC pastoral of the Province is to work on issues related to this Characteristic Dimension. In the annual meeting of the SVD parishes in ECU lay people, religious sisters and the SVDs participated in this gathering. The objective is to create awareness of the commitments related to JPIC, one of the axis of our missionary activity in different contexts. We note enthusiastically that slowly these gatherings are strengthening for example our "Proyecto Arnoldo " (Project Arnoldo). This project reaches out and helps young people and their families affected by drug addiction and delinquency.

Furthermore, we are committed as VIVAT members to denounce and condemn a serious situation in Esmeraldas, a place located in the northern part of the country. Its northern border is being devastated by the indiscriminate gold mining, human, arms and drug trafficking. The place has become a "no man`s land" controlled by national and international mafias. In this place, the religious men and women, are receiving death threats for raising their voices against this situation and for creating awareness in their local communities. The greatest danger brought about by the mining is the pollution of the rivers, the source of life work and health of the Afro communities. We have produced booklets to deal with this issue. We have also began an awareness campaign in the government official agencies and within the Church itself.



I am sending some pictures related to the effects of mining in the area.  
1. Shrimps with tumors because of the contaminated water. 2. The use of mercury to polish gold. 3 Wells for mining have invaded the forest, the source of life for the people.

## TEAM-WORK IS NEEDED

Br. Oswald Bangfo (GHA)



I would like to reflect on our new leaders and the impact of the vocation to the Brotherhood on them. Our new leaders have a simple and practical lifestyle. As SVD Brothers, our vocation and our mission are based on that. So to me I am sure that with these two leaders we as Brothers have a model and should not have any reason to fail in our missionary work. Also as a JPIC coordinator, I have been drawn to the reality of life. I realised that the issues of JPIC can not be done by an individual but must be collaborated. In Ghana apart from the provincial JPIC coordinator, we also have district coordinators. Also in most of our communities and parishes our confreres are involved in JPIC matters. In fact, since JPIC is very complex we try to form an inter-congregational JPIC coordinators group. I have sent you attachments of what we do. I am not so good with the computer, so I was not able to send some pictures. I hope to work on that next time.

## THEY RAISE OUR AWARENESS

Br. Mike Decker (USC)



Pope Francis and Fr. Superior General Heinz Kuluke have raised our awareness of our social concern and action with the poor and people different from us. This gives many SVD priests and Brothers who do ministry in JPIC or are involved in social issues daily more energy and focus to reflect upon and take further action for the poor and the marginalized.

## WITNESSES AND NOT SIMPLY TEACHERS

Br. Stephen Bonsu (GHA)



Justice, peace and integrity of creation (JPIC) is an integral part of Christian spirituality. JPIC is to remind, renew the activity of SVD Brothers. Without JPIC, evangelization and mission cannot be effective. The consecrated life in general and the SVD life in particular, have made us become more aware of the need for a preferential option for the poor. This has come about due to a reflection on our vow of poverty and on the demands of the new evangelization. As SVD Brothers we cannot close our eyes to the reality of poverty that affects so many millions of human beings. We need to understand the truth of poverty in all its dimensions: extreme poverty, oppression, its victims, and social exclusion with its consequent violence and disintegration. We SVD Brothers must also know the mystery of poverty. When we submerge ourselves in the world of poverty (inner-city or rural), we cannot explain or describe everything. We meet a poverty culture, with the values lived by the poor: their capacity for resistance, solidarity, hope and celebration (that tremendous mystery that always characterizes the hope and happiness of the poor). This is the experience of the gospel and of life with god among the poor. There are many other mysteries that are part of this world that we will never fully understand.

The Church is at the service of the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom project, enunciated by Jesus when he stood up in the synagogue is also our mission: “The spirit of the lord is upon me; because he has chosen me to: bring good news to the poor, proclaim liberty to captives, announce that the time has come when the lord will save his people” (luke 4, 18-19). In order to make this kingdom a reality, we as SVD Brothers need a religious, interpersonal, political, and ecological conversion (John Paul II).

Jesus’ goal is that every person and the whole of creation might ‘have life, and have it to the full’.

*Cont. Br. Bonsu*

(John 10:10). The Kingdom of God is justice, peace and joy in the Spirit (Rms. 14:17). Desmond Tutu said: "If you see injustice and say nothing, you have taken the side of the oppressor." Mother Theresa said: "If we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other." JPIC is part of our form of life; that we SVD Brothers must strive to live all of them in conjunction and in the spirit of minority; and that the work of JPIC must begin in our own lives. Only in this way will we be "witnesses" and not simply "teachers;" only in this way will we be true protagonists of justice, peace and the integrity of creation, "overcoming evil and doing good."

## A UNIQUE PERSPECTIVE

Br. Brian McLaughlin (USC)



In years past, the various dimensions of the society have met separately, each dimension discussing its own activities among the coordinators. This year, however, the various dimensions, also including formation and administration, met together in Quito, Ecuador back in February. What I found especially encouraging in this meeting was to see how many Brothers are coordinators in the various dimensions and also key leaders in formation. In our group, we were at least 10 Brothers, which illustrates, I believe, that the dimensions and formation work are truly ministries for the Brotherhood.

Within the ministry of the various dimensions, I think Brothers add a unique perspective. As an example, let me refer to my own work in JPIC. The people in the community and the Church value the priesthood but are plagued by clericalism. The Brothers add a voice for the marginalized. As a result, we can identify with the disenfranchised of our society and the church. From the marginalized, we can clearly see the issues of

justice and have a keen perspective for taking action to help alleviate those problems. This perspective, in turn, adds to and enriches the work of justice.

Now that we are at a time of great social sensitivity with a new pope and superior general, I personally hope that more Brothers will come forward and embrace the work of JPIC, communication, biblical apostolate, formation, administration, and mission animation. Brothers can take leadership in these roles and help the church move forward at a time that calls for a greater social awareness.

## DOWN-TO-EARTH ENTHUSIASM

Br. Muktal Ekka (INE)



The wonderful gift from God to the world and to the SVD in particular is that everyone feels very much encouraged and spirited by knowing about these two great personalities.

About the new Pope's mission and vision, I have only read and heard and watched on television. He is deeply down-to-earth, committed and well focused on his vision. I feel proud that he is a Jesuit. I have a very high regard for the Jesuits. In the middle school and in high school, I grew up under their care and guidance. Yes, I feel more proud that I had great Jesuit uncles - a bishop, just older than my dad, and a priest, the youngest one. My parents and these two dear ones are all deceased.

The Jesuits make a tremendous difference wherever they are, and I can say that our beloved Pope is born to be the leader of the Church. He teaches us to be fearless and to stand for the people. The entire world appreciates his washing of the feet of women during the Holy Week. During his visit to Pope Emeritus Benedict, praying together in the same pew was so fascinating to see. His humble request to the Swiss Guard to be at ease on duty,

Cont. Br. Ekka

shows his love and concern to everyone. May he live long.

We are equally proud of our Fr. General Kulueke. Yes, I feel proud that I have met him, had a good interaction with him and closely learned about his mission at night with prostitutes and street children in 2009, when we had the SVD Brothers Convention in Cebu City. His zeal and enthusiasm for the betterment of the needy is amazing. In him we have another great man who is down-to-earth. He is full of spirit and love for everyone. I salute his concern for the downtrodden and the needy. I dream to see him in person soon.

We Brothers have plenty to learn from these two great personalities. These two great hearts speak everything without saying anything. Both are God's men of actions. In our own given situations, let us try to emulate what they do, especially "love the love (God's people) that loves us".

## SOUND COMMUNICATION PROMOTES OUR SOCIAL AWARENESS

Fr. Georg Pierk (GER)



Based on my experience in various countries and in the most diverse communities, and finally my experience of the last 7 years in Steyl, I like to congratulate you for your initiative to stimulate this kind of communication among confreres.

I am convinced that sound communication among ourselves and a continuous renewal of mutual relationships in our communities, everyone trying to be a living word (John 14,23) wherever he is living or working with a priority option for the poor, will keep us in touch with a "new" social awareness and will mean a blessing for all our missionary involvement.

## THE JOY OF THE GOOD THIEF

Br. Bernie Spitzley (USC)



As a response, I am sending you my Good Friday reflection from Bower Bank community. Bower Bank is a great place if you want to move up in life. It is because this is the only direction one can move up. It's hard to find a place with such abject poverty, despair, and apathy. After the stations of the cross, I visited this community where we established a Bible sharing center. We work here to invite members to join our faith community. Fresh from the service I reflected on how our brother Jesus died between two thieves, one good, the other evil. It is not easy living in the slums where there are so many thieves. Most people define a thief as an evil man. But for Christ there is the good thief and the bad thief. God knows, I have met bad thieves: totally selfish men who are bound up with power, who exploit their own poor, who are violent and arrogant. They abuse, damage and destroy women, young girls and innocent children and have no sense of responsibility for their actions or to others. They use others to satisfy themselves. They are living a life of denial, escaping reality with smoke, drink or hard drugs. But God also knows, I have met good thieves. Many people in the slums are good thieves. They try to eke out a life from the squalor of everyday despair. I have met compassionate, gentle, and yes, charitable people in destitution. Are they willing to rob you? Take advantage of you? Yes, they are! Are many willing to battle against hunger, starvation, death for the poor? Definitely! Absolutely! I believe if many were willing to hang on the cross with Jesus, in the slums, they would discover with amazement, the beauty of the good thief.

Life is rich with feeling. Good and evil are palpable in the slums. Poverty, dire poverty is there. Yet I experience the resurrection in my life here in Bower Bank. The texture of life from day to day is joy and sorrow, despair and hope. So many of the poor are bound up with their struggle and tears. They might be

Cont. Br. Spitzley

swallowed up by the dreadful suffering of poverty which hammers away day after day on their hands and feet. They might become embittered and hardened, and some do, but others joke and laugh at whatever work is offered to them. They do bring a unique special joy, joy only found in the good thief.

## WHAT WE CAN DO FOR JPIC?

Br. Peter van der Wiel (NEB)



*I was privileged to participate in the 3-week seminar of the SSs Sisters' seminar on JPIC in October last year in Steyl. There was another Brother from the USA (Brian McLaughlin) and two SVD priests (from India and DR Congo) and we were happy to send a report to the General Council. We received a thank-you note from the secretary and perhaps it was discussed in one of the council meetings.*

*Below is my effort to involve my -mostly older- confreres on JPIC, which the Indonesian SSs Sister from the Netherlands and myself put together, in order to 'awaken' my confreres a bit to the issues of JPIC. As one gets older, it gets more and more difficult to do something practical, but I think these 12 points can contribute something practical to all communities. Maybe it's all a bit theoretical, but I hope some confreres will take it to heart.....*

What can we do in our situation (here in Leuven/NL) – a reflection of Br. Peter van der Wiel

1. Asking oneself what is JPIC, one can be informed about what is happening in the world, close by and far off. One can read the newspapers, listen to radio, watch television and surf the internet; then to bring these to the table or meeting, in order to become aware of and learn from each other about good or bad situations.
2. In order to understand a situation well, it is good to follow some steps of the way to analyze and to learn these steps: see, judge and act. We can study the documents of the social teachings of the Church,

while the spirituality of our Congregation can also inspire us anew as we take up a book or two.

3. We talk about the signs of the times. These signs are neither good nor bad; they are part of the world's progress. But they can result in good or pretty bad situations, with which we must work or battle with all the energy we have.
4. At social and cultural levels there are many mistakes, and we must try to discover the causes; try to remain positive in our conversations and keep the hope alive that something good can come out of petitions to be signed or to participate in actions, protest-marches and prayer services, because we trust that the Lord will hear our prayers and the cry of the poor and needy.
5. Enjoy and admire everything in nature. Protect flora and fauna; develop a lifestyle that takes as much as one needs and does not waste food and drink. One can be satisfied with the things we get, while we find ways to care for the way we use energy for heating, lights, machines and appliances. Because all of creation is bound together, as we discover more and more that we all come forth from one atom or cell! So take care of one another, Especially the less mobile and the less gifted of our fellowmen, women, children, and grandparents.
6. As religious missionaries, we can live the spirituality of the Holy Trinity. We can shine forth and live God's message of unity and companionship with peoples of all kinds, language and nations. We should assist in building up God's kingdom with faith, hope, love, and forgiveness as well. We should reach out to people of all walks of life, accept each one's uniqueness and encourage the development of joy and peace in our communities and neighborhood.
7. During our waking hours, we should find time for contemplation and time to reflect on God's will and intentions. Remember the prophets of today and pray for them and also take action if possible and make sure you are part of a group effort for positive action.
8. Jesus is, of course, the example of care for and struggle with the marginalized people of society. He

tackled issues of injustice and the absence of peace.

9. We can learn from Jesus' way and respond to cries for help and assistance. Making the world a little bit better every day is a challenge, which we can face together, within a group of like-minded activists here in Steyl.
10. Each one of us has some hurts and unredeemed pains and hang-ups. We are invited by the forgiving Lord to reconcile and give these pains a place in our lives. We may ask for redemption, but not every pain can be healed. So by giving it a place in my being, I can remain positive and possibly help others with their pains too.
11. Over the years the popes and their theologians have given out documents that stress the social teachings of the church. These are important for us and for all who promote JPIC. We can read some of them again; we can share the contents with friends and neighbors; stories of certain saints, recent and from the past can inspire us; attend meetings and take part in events that try to make these teachings practical and part of people's lives.
12. Our founders (SVD and SSPs) have undertaken many initiatives that have to do with people's rights, settling disputes and caring for the environment. We can read this in books and articles and these stories may encourage us to keep trust in the Holy Spirit. And so we can support the active missionaries far and near in their endeavors while we also pray for the many volunteers.
13. JPIC is serious business, but we must also learn to be realistic. Do not forget the humor that can keep us afloat, while we strive for a good relationship with god and our fellowmen as well as with all living things in nature. Be positive and patient. Persevere and be honest. Remain open to the spirit.

## OUR GREAT CHANCE TO CONTACT "PEOPLE OUTSIDE".

Br. Stefan Würth (GER)



During the visitation of Fr. General and his Council at Steyl, I had the pleasure to drive them to the Düsseldorf Airport. There I took advantage of the occasion to Fr. General about a possible cooperation of Divine Word Missionaries with social workers in Germany. I told him about a new project that the former German Provincial, Fr. Bernd Wehrle wanted to start together with me. Fr. General was enthusiastic about our project. He also wished all the best for the project.

There are two ways to be active in social work in Germany. First, there are persons who cooperate in projects based on their qualifications. Second, it is possible to organize a project on your own initiative, but complying with all legal conditions and provisions. This might be easier in so-called mission countries, but in Germany, there are clear compulsory specifications in this regard.

It was our objective to present my qualifications (master gardener and social worker) to different organizations, in order to realize, what kind of chances I could reach for social work. I had the opportunity to meet representatives of Caritas Hamburg for an interview. They showed great interest in my educational background, since they were using several measures for "Integration through Work" in the green field to assist long-term unemployed people. Finally, a contract was entered by the SVD German Province and the Archdiocese of Hamburg.

Cont. Br. Würth

Since Mid-December, I have been working here in Hamburg which belongs to the southern part of the big Northern German city of Hamburg. I lead a group of "20 citizen workers". It is my job to help them grow to a correct rhythm of work and life. I have to motivate them, to make them fit for the labor market, to care for them, to get acquainted with them, and to gain their confidence, professionally and humanly. This group has to fight with many problems: alcohol, drugs, health problems, problems in the own environment, with partners, abuse in childhood, depressions, aggressions, incapability of getting along in life.

Basically, this is a "dream job" for me as religious Brother. I can come closer to these fringe groups. After 5 months of working here, I realize that before assisting them, we have to build up a human contact to these people, since they live in their own special world that they do not want to leave, for different reasons.

**I really appreciate this chance for getting in touch with these "poor" people. In fact, such activities based on the required educational background might give a new orientation for the Brother vocation in Germany. We could be more connected with the fringe groups. Moreover, our cooperation with different organizations might show a good example and perhaps attract new religious vocations. At any rate, an important exchange takes place: a Giving and a Taking!**

At this time, I did learn a lot. Through social work, religious Brothers achieve a great chance to contact "people outside". Gone are the days when our religious life was characterized by cloistered religious houses and professional education. We have to take on new challenges. Social work belongs to them.

## THEY STRENGTHEN MY HOPE

Br. Karl Wiszniewsky (BRS)



I am deeply impressed by Pope Francis. I try to get all kinds of media information about him. For me, it is a great joy and inspiration to see and to hear him.

There is a deep pastoral meaning in his sentences, while saying: "Jesus knocks at you: not only from outside, but also from inside. He wants to reach the people." Therefore, instead of a fear of contact, we have to accept the stale odor of the sheepfold. For me, this is an encouragement to get close to the people. Even if I live together with them in all 24 hours of the day, I still feel the statement of Francis: What a distance! I help, but do I look at the face of my partner in need, do I grab his hand touching Jesus with that? In fact, I need to do more here, in order to become a better witness of the love of Jesus.

Fr. General Kulueke was able to realize this in his work during many years. I appreciate that beyond his teaching activity at the University, he was striving to implement his convictions in practice. Sorry to say, I find too little understanding among my priest confreres and people "outside" towards my social work. So, I frequently remain alone with my commitment. Thus there is the controversial motion, too!

Pope Francis makes me cry, since I feel how far I am from his great commitment that I totally support! I also admire Fr. Heinz, my classmate in 1979, because he is so much further than I am. Both of them, Pope Francis and Fr. Kulüke give me a strong hope due to their statements and their authentic life. It is worthy to labor for the Reign of God and for the Poor!

Cont. Br. Wiszniewsky



In our own work, we managed to restructure the Kolping families with their Formation Center and its members, so that the consciousness grows and the people

learn to fight for their rights.

PICTURES: Formation among indigenous people. Introduction into communal production for self-sufficiency of the indigenous people. Br. Karl with the leaders of the Cooperative Reform works at our Formation Center (page 9)



>Br. Karl as welder (top)  
> Dance course (bottom)

### VENTURE INTO NEW PROJECTS!

Br. Gebhard Rahe (GER)



Our new superiors, Pope Francis and Fr. Heinz Kulueke, SVD both turn to the poorest and to the weakest people. For example, the Pope does not live any more in the Papal Palace. Through his simplicity and his humanity, the Church gains again authority, presence and charisma.

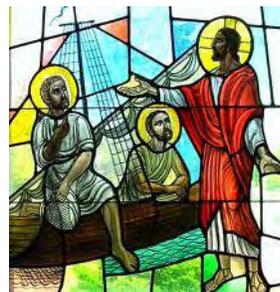
Our Fr. General has proved through his work in the Philippines that he is so much committed to the poor. He was living with scavengers and supporting victims of human trafficking like prostitutes. He made a simple, human impression

on me, avoiding all kinds of big external representations.

Instead of looking for a special meaning for us SVD Brothers, we should rather understand that social sensitivity affects the whole SVD society! There would be a suggestion on my part: we do not need to insist on old things like houses or institutions, but we should also venture into new projects.

### ENCOURAGE BROTHERS FOR JPIC!

Br. John Daton (BOL)



The way Pope Francis and Fr. Heinz Kulueke, SVD are promoting the JPIC issues is very interesting. According to my own experience, I think the contribution of the SVD Brothers to JPIC is minimal. However, I am sure we will have a room for improvement since Justice and Peace issues are quite relevant for all of us. It is a Dimension that allows us to participate in the lives of the people and work with them to overcome situations of injustice. We support, help, and encourage the people who are suffering and having a lot of difficulties in their daily lives so that they can improve somehow their conditions.

Every Province/Region/Mission has the presence of SVD Brothers. The Brothers should be given the possibilities to work in these areas and have activities related to JPIC. We can see and feel with our own hands that there are many problems in our societies today such as poverty, street people, abortion, discrimination, injustice, damage to the environment and nature. We, as SVDs, have a lot of opportunities to work with the people in order to help solve these problems. SVD Brothers who have professional degrees should be ready and willing to do many things in this specific mission of our Congregation. Brothers can also work together with SVD priests in each Province/Region/Mission.

*Cont. Br. Daton*

Two months ago there was an activity in Indonesia in which SVD Brothers, living and working in Ende Province, were involved in JPIC issues by helping lay people in their preservation of nature. They sent messages telling me about this important project for the Province. Provincial and Regional JPIC coordinators should pay more attention to Brothers and invite them to participate in activities concerning JPIC. It is a good sign of witnessing to others that we work as a team in the JPIC Dimension. Working alone to help and support those who are in need is very difficult and contrary to Gospel values.

## **A NEW SIGN OF HOPE**

**Br. Ivo dos Santos Fiuza (BRC)**



1. I see with a lot of hope in these two new leaders namely Pope Francis and Fr. Superior General, Heinz Kulueke, SVD. Both of them show a deep sensitivity to the poor and a keen interest in social justice issues. I can see in their gestures, without any doubt, a great witnessing and an encouragement for our SVD Characteristic Dimension of JPIC. To me, a new sign of hope is shining for the Church and our Congregation. I believe Pope Francis will be more of a pastor who welcomes the poor and the suffering. He will seek ways in order to open the Church so that it can give answers to the so many questions of the postmodern world. These questions challenge us every day.

2. I continue with my mission among the Quilombo people–African Brazilians– in the Province of Vale do Ribeiro belonging to BRC Province.

At the moment, we are facing many challenges that come from a project of the Brazilian government. This project wants to make Brazil, at any cost, a world class economy, a developed country, and

richer and as of now the fifth largest economy in the world. However, in order to achieve this, the Brazilian government is not taking into consideration the situation of traditional peoples like the Quilombolas, indigenous peoples, ribeirinhos (communities living at the river side), etc. Instead of listening to their plights, the government favors the big projects of the hydroelectric and mining companies that are destroying the local cultures and makes our mission even more difficult. This is the context where I do my mission in line with the JPIC Characteristic Dimension. I try to defend and promote the religious, cultural and family values of the people. I support their struggles towards a better life.

## **JPIC: CHALLENGE AND HOPE**

**Br. Miller Hernandez (GHA)**



When will be the day that Justice and Peace hug each other? When will we be able to cry out that Justice is being made Bread and the Bread made out of Justice?

These are not questions I intend to answer in this short reflection but they are rather daily thoughts that cross my mind, especially in moments of prayer and meditation. Believe me, it is a challenge to live this way: longing for Peace and Justice and at the same time asking myself about the Characteristic Dimension of JPIC and my involvement in it as an SVD.

The long-awaited hug between Justice and Peace is the daily image that pushes me to improve my interpersonal relationships in the place where I do my missionary work. I accept every encounter with others as an integral part of the divine revelation of God in my life. Let me put this clearly. This revelation does not make me unique or the only possessor of the truth but it helps me understand my vocation, my calling and my

*Cont. Br. Hernandez*

concrete mission as an SVD Brother. Similarly, I find that this revelation challenges me to experience my faith, in a context that is largely Islamic here in Tamale, northern Ghana. The divine revelation of God in my life also shows me that the religious aspect is a key element in the promotion of Peace.

I am convinced that Peace without Justice simply remains a dream. I firmly believe that we must start being just persons in our own communities. One of the ways to walk towards the Peace of Christ as brothers is by promoting Justice *ad intra* and *ad extra*, i.e. from the very core of our mission. The biblical tradition, in the words of St. Paul, tells us that: "these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God" (1 Cor 2: 10). From this passage, I understand that God's Spirit communicates an intimate message which we must be attentive to receive, understand and live. This is the first challenge.

How can we cry out for peace when sometimes unjust deeds take place primarily in our own communities?

It is necessary that we open our hearts and let God's revelation, seen as a communication experience of His intimacy, challenges us and sends us into the world of being with the other. This is something so deep that only God can give because of His great love, a love that transforms us into multipliers of good news. It is definitely a high level of deep analogous communication. If we do not use these communication channels, we cannot live and enjoy the much longed peace. This is more complex than it seems but I just want to mention it to open a path for the reflection on the issue of peace seen from what God tells us in our daily life.

On the other hand, the serious efforts of contemporary theology invite me to reflect on the Justice made Bread and Bread made out of Justice as components of the social dimension of the Eucharist. They open us to the need of taking seriously the Eucharist as "a life engine" and promoter of peace. The Eucharist expresses the greatest act of Justice meaning a banquet for all. It is a

celebration in which many are called but no one is rejected. Hence, to know the real meaning of the Bread of Life is to commune with the saving mystery of Jesus, the Divine Word. It is truly powerful when we believe in the Son of God as savior and liberator. From my own understanding, it is precisely in the Eucharist where Justice *ad intra* and *ad extra* emerges in great abundance for a Christian Catholic. It brings people together fraternally, and at peace with one another specially to those who have freely accepted to experience this Banquet of Christ's love.

In the Gospel of John when the Jews ask Jesus what they shall do in order to do the works of God, the answer He gave was to believe in Him whom He has sent (Jn 6, 28). Jesus also adds that the bread from heaven that their ancestors received was not actually given by Moses but by his Father: "My Father who gives you the true bread out of heaven. For the bread of God is that which comes down out of heaven, and gives life to the world. Then they said to Him, 'Lord, always give us this bread.'" (Jn 6, 32-33). When we repeat these words "LORD, ALWAYS GIVES US THIS BREAD" and understand the works of God that we should be doing, then we can cry out that Justice is being made Bread and Bread being made out of Justice. This is the Bread we must learn to multiply making it available to everyone and at the same time, giving thanks to God for all the gifts we have received from Him.

Finally, I just want to mention that a human being who is peaceful, just and an advocate of God's plan is a person who listens to voice of the Spirit of God, breaks and shares the Bread of Life made Justice, and walks hand in hand with Justice made Bread. He or she is a person who, as servant of God, makes his/her way of life a commitment to the cause of God. To be an advocate of God's plan is not an easy task but it is possible. What it is not possible is to understand God's plan, without having a self-understanding of ourselves, recognizing how limited we are and the need for God in our lives as Brother among brothers.

I must understand that I have been called to a specific vocation as an SVD Brother in order to take the next step which is to understand that I am called to live the

Cont. Br. Hernandez

Word of God promoting Justice and Peace. Immersed in this life dynamic I become an advocate of God's plan and disciple of Jesus with an SVD missionary identity. As an SVD Brother I am faced with challenges and hopes. I do this when I understand God's plan and His Divine revelation in my life, not for me to enter into dialogue with other religions but rather with myself. Not for me to have an inter-religious dialogue but rather an intra-religious dialogue. To put it simply, before having a dialogue with others I must dialogue with myself.

We should revise our comprehension of ourselves, subject it to analysis, and purify it from potential exclusivism. Only when our comprehension of ourselves is truly pluralistic and when we really understand the ways in which God speaks to us every day, will we be able to collaborate inter religiously with challenge and hope, and even believing in it, in helping others discover their own truth for the transformation of the world in Justice and Peace.

It is only when I had done this process that my reflection and meditation will cease to exist "When will be the day that the Justice and Peace hug each other? When will we be able to cry out that Justice is being made Bread and the Bread made out of Justice?" At this point my reflection will be like the words of the last verses of Psalm 85: "Loving kindness and truth have met together; Righteousness and peace have kissed each other. Truth springs from the earth, and righteousness looks down from heaven. Indeed, the Lord will give what is good, and our land will yield its produce. Righteousness will go before Him and will make His footsteps into a way."

## A LASTWORD, FROM THE EDITORS

*Dear Confreres,*

*The SVD BROTHERS bulletin wishes to serve as a Forum on Brother Vocation in the Society of the Divine Word. It is written by the readers. This bulletin is not only for Brothers. It also welcomes contributions from the SVD priests. Please, join us and write for the bulletin!*

*The initiative for this bulletin was born on the 2006 General Chapter where a group of Brothers (and Fathers) decided to intensify communication among Brothers in order to highlight the many opportunities of witnessing through the Brother vocation. We continue counting on your voice. Please write to the following addresses: [lanyi.svd@gmail.com](mailto:lanyi.svd@gmail.com) or [svd\\_brothersphil@yahoo.com](mailto:svd_brothersphil@yahoo.com). You may use the following languages: English, Spanish, German, Indonesian and Polish.*

*In the Divine Word,*

*Your SVD Brothers in Cebu City*

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