



CFC LINK

CHRISTMAS EDITION, 2016

Divine Word Missionaries

Common Formation Centre, Nairobi



For to us a child is born, to us a Son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Isaiah 9:6

FROM THE RECTOR'S DESK

Christmas is still a celebration of the birth of Jesus, regardless of whatever else it has become. Jesus came that we "might have life and have it more abundantly" [John 10:10] – that we might love and be loved, might care and be cared for, might accept and give the gift of goodness. Jesus taught that we cannot become good, no matter how diligently we work, but that goodness is inherent within us. When we accept the gift of goodness, we are compelled to respect and work diligently and to defend and encourage the goodness in others. Jesus knew there would always be times when we individually and collectively would reject the gift of love and fall short of the glory of God. He also knew that God, being the source of all goodness, would forgive our shortcomings, if we would only repent. If we would see the goodness in ourselves and others and act accordingly. In the hope that we may learn to accept this gift of unending love, we are pleased to present to you our Christmas Edition of the 'CFC LINK' – the bulletin of the SVD Common Formation Centre in Kenya, Nairobi. In this new issue of our bulletin we are presenting you different aspects of our daily life and experiences of living in the biggest and the most international and intercultural SVD community in Kenya and Tanzania (13 different nationalities under one roof!). We are very proud of who and what we are at the CFC Nairobi and very happy to share it with you.

On November 20, 2016 we concluded the HOLY JUBILEE YEAR OF MERCY which was extensively celebrated in our community. God's Mercy is a profound mystery and, as many other aspects of God, a difficult one to be contained in a single definition. But, as one of the authors of the 'CFC Link' writes: 'In a sweeping summary we could describe Mercy as acts and actions that protect, preserve, and foster human life. Mercy expresses himself in the desire for increase of life, and ever fuller experience of it.'

In the year 2014 with the new administration of the CFC, we started and continue to emphasize the importance of the OTP experience. Since that year we have sent nine (9) of our fraters to different SVD provinces in the world (Germany, Brazil, Paraguay, Chile, Austria, Mexico, Argentina and Spain) to taste the beauty and challenges of being a Divine Word Missionary in our times and in different cultural and religious contexts. The first batch of our OTP fraters has come back this year and one of them shares his experience in our bulletin.

Many other events in the KEN Province and the SVD at large took place last year in our house including quite a large number of visitors passing through (what a blessing!!!)... all these and other stories you will find in the current issue of the 'CFC LINK' we are sending to you.

Dear Reader, as we are blessed to celebrate Christmas again, may you see Jesus coming personally to you in every moment of life. The Christmas music in churches, on the streets and in the supermarkets might be terrible, and the Christmas preaching might be boring, but... Jesus always shows up! Sacramentally His birth in a manger is really there! His life, teaching and miracles are really there! His death on a cross and resurrection is really there! He comes personally for each of us in every Mass, and especially in the Christ Mass! As you go forward to receive Him, give your life to Jesus personally as a response to He Who gives His life for us personally out of love. He comes for you and me personally this Christmas!

MERCY CHRISTMAS AND A BLESSED YEAR 2017!

In the Divine Word,
Fr. Marcin Karwot, svd,
Rector CFC Nairobi

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2016/2017 CFC Community at a Glance

This formation/academic year, the strength of our community stands at 23 members including formators: 2 formators; 2 residence lecturers; 5 residence students; 4 third year students; 4 second year students; 3 first year students; a brother in temporary vows and 2 language students.

Our nationalities:

| | |
|------------------|---|
| Kenya | 3 |
| Ghana | 3 |
| Togo | 3 |
| Poland | 2 |
| Brazil | 2 |
| Madagascar | 2 |
| Angola | 2 |
| Tanzania | 1 |
| DR Congo | 1 |
| Zambia | 1 |
| Philippines | 1 |
| Indonesia | 1 |
| Papua New Guinea | 1 |

God's loving grace has gathered us from various peoples and continents into a religious missionary community dedicated to the Divine Word and named after him the Society of the Divine Word. (Prologue to the Constitutions of the SVD)

TRUE CHRISTMAS IN OUR HEARTS

By Frt Osei Asante Stephen, svd

Some people cannot understand how God could have come down wrapped in human flesh. But he did come truly in human nature and that is not strange to me. In fact, it is quite easy for me to strive in a community because I see Jesus born in human hearts everyday. He comes and lives in every heart and transforms the lives of people, and to me that is the greatest miracle that has ever happened to us human beings. God's Word says that Jesus is called "Wonderful". "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and a scepter will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace" (Is. 9:6). He is a Wonderful Being because He is full of wonders and in his life, Jesus went around doing good and healing all those who were oppressed (Acts 10:38). Above all, Jesus died for you and me so that we might have eternal life (1 Pet 2:24). Not only that, but He also rose from the dead so that we may also rise to a new life (1 Cor 15:20-21). Now, He lives to intercede for us in the presence of the Father, who is full of love and mercy for all humanity. But it is not enough that Christ, the King of Kings, was born in Bethlehem beneath the star that heralded His coming; He must be born within your heart today and He should be able to find a dwelling fit for him in the deepest part of our hearts. Jesus, the Saviour, can never enter through the door of our heart unless it is opened from inside. His Word tells us, "As many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God" (Jn 1:12). Would you let Him come into your heart? If you have not yet received this God's most wonderful gift, Jesus, open your heart to Him in earnest prayer saying: Thank you, Jesus, for coming on earth and living like one of us, for suffering for my sins so that I could know my heavenly Father's love. Thank you for dying for me, so that I can be reconciled with Him and have eternal life in Heaven. I receive you as my saviour now. Please forgive me for all the wrongs I have ever committed, and help me to get to know and love you in a deep and personal way. Amen. May the Peace of the Lord fill your hearts and minds this Christmas season and always.

Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful - Luke 6:36

Pope Francis declared that the Universal Catholic Church will observe a Jubilee Year of Mercy from December 8, 2015 to November 20, 2016. The Editorial Board requested Fr. Wojciech Szypula, SVD, a biblical scholar to shed more light on the meaning of Mercy.

By Fr. Wojciech Szypula, SVD

Pope Francis proclaiming the current year "The Year of Mercy" has certainly chosen a right theme. Our world at present experiences enormous tribulations brought about conflicts and violence. Much of these are caused by hostility, vengeance, and sheer malevolence of one human being towards another. The choice of Mercy as the theme for the year seeks to address the root cause of all these problems.

The concept of Mercy is often associated with forgiveness of sins. And yet, biblical analysis of the term demonstrates that mercy is much more than forgiveness. Yes, forgiveness is an element of Mercy, however, this word implies infinitely more than just forgiveness. In the course of the first recollection for the community held on September 23-24, 2016, we have explored the meaning of the word "Mercy" in the Bible. We discovered that in the Old Testament Mercy is primarily the quality of God demonstrated in his acts of preservation and restoration of the life of individual Israelites and the nation itself, whenever it had been disrupted. In the New Testament the word Mercy reflects God's intervention in human history through Jesus Christ. Mercy is the action of God who, through his Son, saves, restores human beings in physical, social, and spiritual way, gives the human life purpose and meaning, and, ultimately, leads human beings to eternity.

The New Testament also emphasizes the necessity of human mercy. The evangelist Luke declares: "be merciful as your Father is merciful" (Lk 6:36) setting the standard for human behavior and conduct versus the neighbor. In fact, the New Testament defines the path to salvation as "making neighbors to acts of mercy." This is the core message of the parable of the Good Samaritan.

In a sweeping summary we could describe Mercy as acts and actions that protect, preserve, and foster human life. Mercy expresses himself in the desire for increase of life, and ever fuller experience of it. Given that our world is so broken by the various forces that seek destruction, Mercy appears as the perfect antidote for the current drive to destruction. The primary task of any human community, particularly Christian and religious community, lies in enhancing the life of its members towards ever vibrant, meaningful, healthy, happy, and fulfilling existence. We can only ask and pray that our little CFC community may never lose the sight of this biblical message.

Report From Tangaza University College

By Frt Osei Asante Stephen, svd

Tangaza University College (affiliated to the Catholic University of Eastern Africa) is a Catholic theological and ministerial education center where SVD seminarians who are preparing to become priests do their theological studies. The academic year 2016/2017 saw eleven of our fraters in temporary vows studying in the school of theology and a brother in temporary vows in the Institute of Youth Ministry.

Four of our confreres are teaching in the college: Rev. Dr. Wojciech Szypula, Bible Department of the School of Theology; Rev. Dr. Narciso Cellan, Director and lecturer at the Institute of Social Communication; Rev. Frs.: Joseph Djabare and Justus Rotuk, in the Institute of Spirituality and Formation and Institute of Social Communication respectively. The academic year began with a Holy Mass on the 22nd August, 2016. The first semester saw a number of significant events. The first one was the common diaconate ordination of seventeen students from four different congregations: Spiritans; Rosminians;



Capuchins and St. John of God; which took place on the 17th September, 2016 at the College.

Another significant event was an international conference with the title: "Religion and Violence: Contributions from Social Sciences and from Theology", organized by the Islamic Studies Department of the College in collaboration with "Missio", a charity organization of the Catholic Bishops of Germany.

Also, there was a one-day seminar on the Apostolic Penitentiary. The tribunal of mercy in the service of the Church took place on the 16th of September and was facilitated by His Eminence Msgr Krzysztof Nykiel, Regent of Apostolic Penitentiary and Rev. Dr. Robert Lezokupski, OFM Conv, a former Canon Law Lecturer of the College and now official of Apostolic Penitentiary of the Holy See.

During the semester, we participated in a number of programmes. First, we played the Charity Shield Cup (Top Four) in the finals against the Spiritans. Unfortunately we lost the game 2 to 1.

Again, during this year's Football Tournament, we were eliminated from the group stage which is the first time in the history of our community. Better luck next time.

Second, on the 22nd of October, we participated in the Cultural Day of the college with the theme: "Our culture, Our pride". It was a day for various nationalities to showcase the riches of their countries through traditional dances, songs, cultural food, drinks and other presentations related to their culture. Fraters from Togo, Ghana, Tanzania, Kenya and PNG participated. It was indeed our culture, our pride.

Academically, we are all doing well. On this note we wish to congratulate Frt. Justin Komlan Gbedjeha now in his second year of theology and Bro. Bernard Odhiambo, now third year in the Institute of Youth Ministry who were the best students in their respective classes in the last academic year. This semester will come to an end on the 21st of December, 2016. Keep us in your prayers.

My Overseas Training Program (OTP) Experience in Paraguay

Frt. Anthony Musonda Chisanga, svd, is a Zambian. He joined Divine Word Missionaries in 2008. He completed his postulancy and philosophy studies in Lusaka, Zambia. He was then admitted to the Novitiate, which he completed at the Divine Word Novitiate in Ghana and professed the first vows in 2012. Subsequently, he came to the Common Formation Centre, Nairobi, Kenya, to continue his formation and theological studies. After

two years of studies at Tangaza University College, Anthony opted to go for OTP experience in Paraguay for two years. He shares with us his experiences.

Paraguay is situated in the heart of South America. Surrounded by Brazil, Argentina and Bolivia. This landlocked country is larger than it appears on the map. I arrived in Asuncion, the capital city, on 26th July,

2014. First, I stayed in the SVD Postulancy House for four months to study Spanish. Then, I started my pastoral programme in one of our parishes called Yatytay, where I had my first encounter with the culture and the people.



I was accompanied by a Paraguayan from Caazapá, Padre Aurelio Martinez, SVD.

The name Yatytay in Guarani means snail coming from the water. It is located 50 km from the main road that joins the two big cities, Encarnacion and Ciudad Del Este. According to 2016 records, this district has about 13,182 inhabitants. The main source of employment is agriculture and stockbreeding. They grow soya, maize, and yerba for mate and terere, cotton, wheat, cassava and sun flower. They also raise domestic animals, like cattle, pigs, goats, buffalos and chickens.



In the parish I worked with the youth, both at the main parish and in small communities (Capillas). I was working with the mass servers at the main parish (los monagullios), visiting the sick and the aged, helping in catechism classes whenever I was available. I was also helping at Mass both at the main parish and in outstations. To be closer to the people I was doing door to door evangelization. I organized with the leaders of the Capillas to go and stay in a place for some days, visiting not only Catholics but also Christians from other denominations. In the evenings we would often have a talk or a movie. In my free time I used to do manual work at the parish and the surroundings of the Parish house. Just to give you a picture of the parish, San Juan Bautista is located 16 km away from the River Parana near the offices of the district. It has 25 communities and 22 capillas. The capillas have Masses during the week days. The parish Priest conducts monthly visits, mostly 2 capillas a day. If it rains in this area it is difficult to move around. The roads are in a very shape and dusty.

Furthermore, I was able to organize a group of mass servers and we had fundraising just in the central town of the district. It was very successful, the people co-operated and we were able to buy new vestments. We had weekly meetings on Saturday afternoons. I was also working with the parish youth group. We collaborated so well in many activities both at the parish and in the outstations. The activities we had were well organized and successful. I had a chance to share with students in schools and always given a topic to teach. I was invited to share something religious with boys and girls in a basic school.

Also I was invited twice to give a talk about Holy Week to students in the high schools.

Ministering in the outstations gave me an opportunity to be close to the people's culture and language (Guarani). One thing I noted, which is similar to the African cultures, is the rite of passage of girl. They are celebrated when a girl turns fifteen. Those with money celebrate it as a big family event with relatives and the larger community.

I feel enriched having shared my life and faith with Paraguayan people. They are very welcoming people who know how to share meals in families and with relatives. One common thing you will find everywhere is that people share mate or terere. They drink mate in the morning hours or when it is cold. During day time or hot season they drink terere, which is cold water with ice.

I was also privileged to celebrate Sunday services at least on 4 occasions during the time when my parish priest was not around. I was in charge of celebrating funerals, mostly we would go to the funeral house.

I feels that the two years in Paraguay was time well spent. I really learned a lot about the Paraguayan way of life and their faith. A large number are Catholics and religious. Unfortunately, few are practicing Catholics. From my own experience in the parish, I noticed that some people who are chosen as godparents (padrinos, madrina) rarely come to Church.



Another thing which amazed me was the celebration of baptism and other sacraments. You would see many people in Church for the first time, because their relative is blessing a marriage or a child is going to be baptised. Finally, I enjoyed the OTP experience and I liked Paraguay and the people there. The people are very welcoming and loving. I achieved what I desired before going there, that is to learn a new language and culture and share my faith with the people. It was not a time wasted but a very enriching experience which widened my horizon and perception of the world and mission. "Rohayhu Paraguay", I love Paraguay.

By Frt. Anthony Musonda Chisanga, SVD

CFC Family Feast

By Frt. Isséré Agre (Roger)

This year's family feast was held on the 5th of October, 2016. As it has been the custom for some years now, the relatives of our fraters from the Province-Kenya and Tanzania, benefactors, Friends of CFC and SVD in the Nairobi District came to our community to interact with the formators as well as fraters to see how we are doing in formation. Around 11:30 there was a Eucharistic celebration which was presided over by the Rector, Fr. Marcin Karwot. He welcomed all and used the occasion to thank all the parents and guardians for all they have done and continue to help us in our journey.



seminarians and the support staff for the invitation and a warm welcome, it was such a very grand function, we the Friends of SVD and the parents appreciate it.

As part of the programme, the Prefect, Fr. Jose Eudes Santos introduced the parents to the daily activities and programme of the community undertaken by fraters. He urged the parents to support their children in whichever way possible. Later there was a short video clip on the various activities fraters undertake in the community. The group expressed their gratitude for such an interaction. As a member of the Friends of the SVD on behalf of the group puts: "I must take this opportunity to express our gratitude to all our SVD priests at CFC, all the



Renewal of Vows

On 30th July, this year, fourteen fraters in temporary vows renewed their religious vows of poverty, chastity and obedience as Divine Word Missionaries at the CFC Chapel. Fr Albert Fuchs, SVD, Provincial of the Kenya-Tanzania Province received their vows. Present at the celebration were Frs. John Alphonse Asiedu, Prefect of, CFC Tamale, Ghana, and Joseph Kallanchira, AFRAM Zonal Coordinator.



NEWSBIT

During the last formation year, the Provincial and his Council accepted four of our fraters who opted to go for Overseas Training Programme. They are Frts. Borice Randrianirima to Mexico, Lucien Razanadambo to Argentina South, John Jerome Asidigbe to Spain and Bro. Emmanuel Kimario to Argentina South. They have already arrived in their respective provinces and started the programme. They are all doing well. We wish them all the best.

Approved For OTP & Pastoral Year:

We congratulate Frts. Justin Komlan Gbedjeha, Pamphil Sambaya and Jean-Claude Randrianamanana for being granted permission to go for Overseas Training Programme (OTP) to the provinces of Argentina South, Ecuador and Chile respectively and Frt. Courage Eric Nordor for his Pastoral Year in Ghana next academic/formation year.

Fr. Mark Weber, SVD, is from the United States. He graduated from Divine Word College in 1976 and professed First Vows in 1977. Fr. Mark was ordained in 1982 and was missioned to Ghana for six years (1983-1989). He returned to the States and worked in various ministries. He was Provincial of the Chicago Province from six years (2005 to 2011) and now he is the General Secretary for Formation and Education.

1.As General Secretary for Formation and Education for the SVD, could you tell us more about what your office entails?

Basically, my function is to assist the General Council in coordinating formation and educational ministries. When matters relating to formation, educational institutions, or the higher studies of confreres are before the Council, I am asked to research the issues and present a memo to the Council to help them deal with it and make any necessary decisions.

2.What do you think is the greatest strength and weakness of SVD formation today?

I believe our greatest strength today is that more and more of our formation programs are intercultural communities. By learning to live with, work with, study with, and form community with confreres of different cultures, we are being formed to go forth into intercultural mission as well. I believe our greatest challenge is to prepare ourselves to be intercultural missionaries, and (at least in the case of those preparing for ordination) not simply parish priests like the diocesan clergy. This requires a willingness to insert ourselves in missionary situations where we may not have the modern conveniences (e.g. internet, mobile phone) we have grown used to.

3.Do you think by and large our formation programmes enable forming effective missionaries for the ever-changing world?

For the most part, our formation does prepare effective missionaries for our world today. Perhaps we need to focus more on growing in our ability to apply good missionary principles in ever-changing contexts, which requires an openness and creativity.

4.What is the congregation's main area of concern with regard to the SVD formation in Africa?

I think the concerns expressed above also apply to Africa. One particular concern is that so few confreres wish to receive a first assignment in other provinces in AFRAM. The zone needs younger African confreres to be part of the future leadership in the Zone.

5.What measures do you recommend concerning the initial formation in Africa?

I believe it would vary from place to place. Certainly, it is good to have an intercultural formation team. Also, all of the PRMs (provinces, regions, and missions) of AFRAM must take responsibility for the CFC's and the various novitiates and pre-novitiate programs that include more than one PRM. The Zonal collaboration in formation in AFRAM is unique, and deserves to be strengthened, especially in terms of preparing and coordinating formators.

6.A word for Formators and fraters in basic formation.

We are blessed with so many young men who wish to join the SVD. Take advantage of the good opportunities provided during formation, especially the programs of insertion into missionary situations during the years of formation. The future of our Society will certainly be shaped by you!

APPRECIATION

"A generous heart soon becomes a precious heart." We are very grateful to all our benefactors who are so kind and generous towards our formation. Dear benefactors, words are inadequate to express our gratitude to you all. You are ever remembered in our prayers and Eucharistic celebrations and it's our prayer that the Good Lord will continue to replenish your efforts.

ALUMNI NEWS

- Fr. John Kwamevi Cudjoe, SVD, '08, was elected provincial superior of Ecuador.
- In August 2016, the Superior General Heinz Kulüke, SVD, and his leadership team appointed Fr. William Odeke Owire, SVD, '07, to be part of the international Preparatory Commission for the 18th General Chapter in 2018.

Dr. Szypula now Senior Lecturer at Tangaza University College



The governing council of Tangaza University College in Nairobi, Kenya, has been awarded new ranks to some deserving members of the academic Staff at the beginning of this 2016/2017 academic year. Among them is our confrere, Rev. Dr. Wojciech Szypula, SVD, as a senior lecturer at the Biblical Department of

the School of Theology.

Rev. Dr. Wojciech Szypula, SVD, was born in 1969 in Przemysl, Poland. He joined Divine Word Missionaries in 1988. After a year of novitiate and two years of Philosophical studies in Poland, he continued to the Divine Word College for language studies and then to the Catholic Theological Union in Chicago for his theological studies. From 1991 to 1994, he studied English language and theology. From 1994 to 1996, he did his overseas training programme in Botswana. He then returned to the Chicago Province to

continue his formation and theological studies.

He completed theology with Masters of Divinity with specialization in the Bible and was ordained on 5th June, 1999, in Chicago and assigned to Zambia for mission. Since ordination, Fr. Szypula has served in the following pastoral and academic roles:

1999-2002- Parish Priest-St. Charles Lwanga Parish, Kabwe;

2002-2003- Formator, SVD Pre-Philosophy House, Kabwe;

2003-2007-Doctorate in Bible, Gregorian University, Rome;

2008-2012- Lecturer, St. Bonaventure University College, Lusaka and a formator, SVD Philosophy House;

2012-2014- Lecturer, St. Augustine College of South Africa in Johannesburg.

Since 2014, he has been teaching at Tangaza University College and Salesian Theological College, Don Bosco Utume while also serving as the Bible Coordinator for Kenya-Tanzania Province as well as the Zonal Coordinator of Biblical Apostolate for AFRAM.

Congratulations and more grease to your elbow our dear confrere.....!!!!

AFRAM Formators' Course Held in Nairobi



The AFRAM SVD formators' course was held from 26th June to 23rd July, 2016 at the Common Formation Centre (CFC), Nairobi, Kenya. The month-long was to help formators provide ongoing formation for those who are dedicated to the task of forming future missionary priests of the congregation.

Eleven (11) formators participated coming from five Provinces, Region and Mission (PRM): Kenya-Tanzania -4; Congo-2; Ghana-1; Togo-1; Madagascar-1 Mozambique-1 and South Sudan. Present at the meeting were also the SVD General Coordinator for Formation and Education, Fr. Mark Weber, AFRAM Zonal Coordinator, Fr John Alphonse Asiedu and Fr. Ittop from India.

SVD Ordination 2016

Every Priestly ordination is a joyous occasion for the ordinandi and the people of God. It is a culmination of years of academic studies, vocational discernment as well as spiritual growth where young men prepare to commit themselves to the service of the Church. This year three of our confreres completed their basic formation and theological studies in CFC Nairobi, and were ordained priests in their home Province-DR Congo. They are: Rev. Frs. SVD's: Francois Sangupamba Kasiala and Guy Polo Mukanina, ordained on the 17th of July while Rev. Fr. Charles Ndumbi Douglas was ordained on the 6th of August 2016. They have also been missioned to Argentina South, Brazil North and U.S South Provinces respectively. We wish them God's favor in their ministry.



Visitors

Our SVD Confreres who were working in South Sudan, Frs: Francis Naduviledathu, Andrzej Marek Dzida, Wojciech Pawlowski, Clemensius Suri Roja and Brother Vinsentius Knaofmone.

19th August - Frs. SVD: Nielo Cantilado, Provincial of Philippines Central and Romeo Cagantin, Advocacy Officer of the Jesuit Refugee Service, DR Congo.

28th August - 4th September, 2016 - The SSpS sisters who were working in Yei in South Sudan together with their Regional leader spent few days in our community after they were evacuated from the mission. They are Srs Maria Jerly Renacia, Berigilda Laolia, Carmen Silveiro and Nancy Noguera.

29th July-1st August, 2016 - Most Rev. Prosper Baltazary Lyimo, an Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Arusha, Tanzania.

26th July- August 20, 2016 - Fr Stan who is undergoing treatment and at the same time taking his home leave. Keep him in your prayers.

31 August - 16 September - Rudolf and Erna Kornek from Germany.

11 - 14 September - Kathi Grummer, Oliver & Lena from Germany

16 September - 3 October - Fr. Piotr Handziuk, SVD (CNG) and Mr. Dariusz Janyga from Poland.

26th October- 21st November, 2016 - Parents of Fr James visited the Kenya - Tanzania Province and stayed in our community. They are: Zeng Shou Liu (Father), Yulan Meng (Mother) and Fubin Liu (Brother). They are from Taiyuan City, Shanxi Province in China.

Thank you very much for finding time to visit, pray with us and talk with us. May God bless you all!

●CFC welcomes three Fraters to the community

In mid-august, three fraters were appointed to the Common Formation Centre, Nairobi, Kenya, to begin their theological studies and to continue their basic formation after novitiate in Ghana. They are: Frts: Simon Vire, Moïse Kpaghere and Isséré Agre (Roger). Please keep Simon, Moïse, Roger and all the fraters in your prayers.

●We also welcome our Fraters: Alex Omondi Owino, Anthony Musonda Chisanga and Stephen Osei Asante, who just finished their Overseas Training Programme (OTP) in Germany, Paraguay and Brazil Central respectively. They had already inserted themselves into the formation programme and continue with their last stage of formation. Welcome back Fraters Alex, Anthony and Stephen.

●SVD Brothers: Br Nicodeme Eluka was transferred to KEN from DR Congo and Br Douglas Simonetti arrived from Brazil. They have been assigned to our community and now are studying English language. We wish them well in their studies.

Do you want to know more about LECTIOYOUTH.NET?

LECTIOYOUTH.NET is a new biblical initiative of the SVD Africa and Madagascar (AFRAM) Zone in conjunction with Catholic Biblical Federation which aims to be an aid for youth to better understand the Bible.

Thus, it provides materials for forming and running local Bible study and reflection groups and is available in English and French languages. For more information, visit the website: www.lectioyouth.net, on Facebook, and also on smartphone app.

SVD Kenya-Tanzania Province met for Assembly & Strategic planning

By Frt Simon Vire, svd

From 6th to 8th September, 2016, our confreres in the province gathered here for their annual assembly as it is done every year. The confreres who were present had various sessions to deliberate on various issues concerning the province. As part of the programme as well, there was a social in the evening on the 7th of September during which some confreres who marked their birthdays during the year were given gifts. It was an opportunity for some confreres to share their experiences with one another as they entertained themselves. The assembly came to a close on the 7th. This was transitioned into another meeting with a proper designation as the strategic planning of the province.

The meeting for the strategic planning of the province started on the 25th October, 2016 and ended on the 27th October, 2016. Again, members of the province, and this time with the assistance of Spec Training and Consultancy, came together to deliberate on issues concerning the province. They also looked at the way forward for the province as far as the mission and characteristic dimensions of the Province are concerned.

During this period, Masses were offered for the dead confreres. During the mass on the 16th of October, 2016, mission crosses were given to four young Kenyan confreres who were ordained and assigned to work in the province. The meeting ended with a social in the evening where opportunity was given to bid farewell to all others who were present for the meeting.

Solemn Mass to close the Jubilee Year of Mercy

The Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy declared by His Holiness Pope Francis on December 8, 2015, was concluded on November 20, the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ with the closing of the Holy Door in Saint Peter's Basilica at the Vatican. Our community solemnly closed the Jubilee Year of Mercy with the celebration of the Holy Eucharist on November 18. The main celebrant was Fr. Marcin Karwot, Rector. We thank all who prayed and journeyed with us during the Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy.



CFC Community celebrated Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus

The solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus was celebrated in a special way this year in the CFC on 3rd June, 2016. Within the context of the extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy, a wonderful image of the Divine Mercy, which Fr. Marcin Karwot, the Rector, got from the Universal Shrine of the Divine Mercy in Cracovie (Poland), was blessed during a solemn Eucharistic celebration and placed in the Chapel of the CFC. This marked partly the embodiment of the CFC devotion to the Divine Mercy. Prior to the festivity, a triduum in honour of the Divine Mercy took place.

By Frt. Justin Gbedjeha, svd

Upcoming Event 2017

January

- 06: Beginning of Novena in Preparation for St. Arnold Janssen's Solemnity
- 09: Lectures resume for 2nd semester at Tangaza College
- 14: Workshop in preparation for the Ministry of Lector and the Ministry of Acolyte
- 15: SOLEMNITY OF ST. ARNOLD JANSSEN, SVD
Conferring Ministries of Acolyte and Lector
Renewal of temporary Vows
Beginning of the Second Novitiate in preparation for the Perpetual Vows
- 20: Beginning of Novena in Preparation for St. Joseph Freinademetz's (Memorial)
- 25: 1st stage of the KEN Provincial Elections
- 29: MEMORIAL OF ST. JOSEPH FREINADEMETZ, SVD

February

- 13-14 School of Theology Symposium

March

- 25 - Tangaza Day

Picture Gallery



Fr. Tom Layden: 50 Years of Religious Life

By Fr. Tom Leyden, SVD

When a community can speak from a history of 2,000 years, 50 years within that 2000 years may seem like any 50 years chosen to represent that 2000 years period. In 1960, I professed my first vows of the consecrated life in the Catholic family. In August 2016, I celebrated 50 years of living as honestly as possible as the consecrated life in our Arnoldus family. Beginning within the Irish Province some years followed in the Ende Province in Indonesia. Next came a study in the United States and then almost 20 years again in the Irish –British Province, mainly as Novice Master and involved in the broader arena of formation. Next came the years in Kenya-Tanzania Province, I have been here since 1994. The Bishop of Kakamega who invited me to work in his diocese said to me at that time: “Tom when you come to die, let us bury you in Kenya”. Now at 81 years, am still waiting and trying to let God have his way in the regard to the outline of my identity in years. Fifty years is certainly not just a weekend, it is a long journey, even if one reflection seems just like a spell of time before many yesterdays. The thought that comes to mind on reflection is that it is certainly possible to live and persevere in our



consecrated life style and do that in searching for “the Joy of Love” by availing of the words from Pope Francis. The storms inevitably come but Jesus quells them and the presence of Jesus may itself be the storms and the calm that can be found within the eye of the storms. The greatest blessing I appreciate in my consecrated life is the deep fondness I have for our Christian scriptures. I never claim to be any authority on the scriptures but I love to read the scriptures, in the pattern of my daily use of time. I set myself to complete a full reading of the Bible in two months. In my 22 years in Kenya I have completed the full reading of the Bible 130 times. What I have come to realize is that the challenge today is not so much that, I read the Bible in that kind of frame but that I find the time in which I can read the Bible in that way. It seems that one of the great personal challenges today is that question of the discipline in

the use of the available amount of time. Maybe, I learned the necessity of discipline before the smart phone arrived and advent of digital technology changed the communications scene out of all recognition.

What may be of relevance at one time may be of little interest to those who live half a century of years later. In 1966, the Second Vatican Council had just completed its deliberations in 1965 and the big reference materials were the 16 documents of Council. Second Vatican today seems a far distant historical reality. At that time, we frequently refer to “the Pastoral Constitution of the Church in the Modern World”. I wonder at this 2016, what understanding we had then of the modern world, a world without the internet, the smart phones, online booking, times move and so do we. In 2066 what kind of a world will we have? The spirit blows where it wills yet if we do not keep in contact with Mother Earth, with our feet on the ground, we will be obliged to ask like St. Luke, “When the son of man comes will he find any faith on Earth”.



NEWSBIT

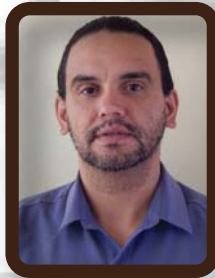
Former Rector elected SVD Provincial

Rev. Fr. Carlos Vieira Lima, SVD a former Rector of the Common Formation Centre (CFC), Nairobi, has been elected as the Provincial Superior of the Brazil North SVD Province. He was the rector from 2005 to 2011. He returned to Brazil in 2011. Until his election, he has been serving as the Vice Provincial and Formator at the SVD Philosophicum in the Brazil North Province. Fr. Carlos will serve a term of three years, from 2017 to 2020. We congratulate him on this new assignment. **11**

SEASONAL GREETINGS FROM COMMON FORMATION CENTRE COMMUNITY



Fr. Marcin Karwot
Polish, Rector



Fr. Jose Eudes R. dos Santos
Brazilian, Prefect



Fr. Wojciech Szypula
Polish, Lecturer



Fr. Narciso Cellan
Filipino, Lecturer



Fr. Marselus Anggo
Indonesian, Student



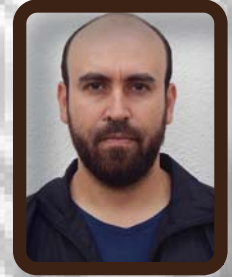
Fr. Geoffrey Kamau
Kenyan, Student



Fr. Bienvenu Ramanamidona
Malagasy, Language Student



Br. Nicodeme Eluka
Congoese, Language Student



Br. Douglas Simonetti
Brazilian, Language Student



Frt. Alex Omondi Owino
Kenyan, Third Year



Frt. Anthony Musonda Chisanga
Zambian, Third Year



Frt. Stephen Osei Asante
Ghanaian, Third Year



Frt. Peter Wiagolu
Papua New Guinean, Third Year



Br. Bernard Odhiambo
Kenyan, Third Year



Frt. Courage M. Eric Nordor
Ghanaian, Second Year



Frt. Justin Komlan Gbedjeha
Togolese, Second Year



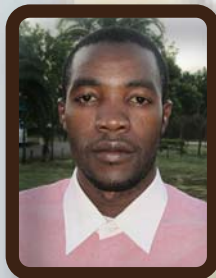
Frt. Pamphil Sambaya
Tanzanian, Second Year



Frt. J.C Randrianamanana
Malagasy, Second Year



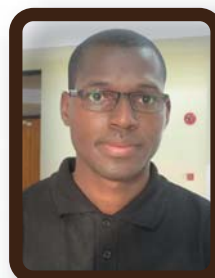
Frt. Celestino Maria da Silva
Angolan, Language Student



Frt. Vasco Mario Joachim da Silva
Angolan, Language Student



Frt. Simon Vire
Ghanaian, First Year



Frt. Moïse Kpaghere T.
Togolese, First Year



Frt. Isséré Agre (Roger)
Togolese, First Year

"For while all things were in quite silence, and the night was in the midst of her course, Thy almighty Word leapt down from thy Royal Throne."

(Wisdom 18:14-15)

From all of us at the Common Formation Center, Nairobi, Kenya, we wish you a blessed Christmas and God's blessings in the New Year to come.