



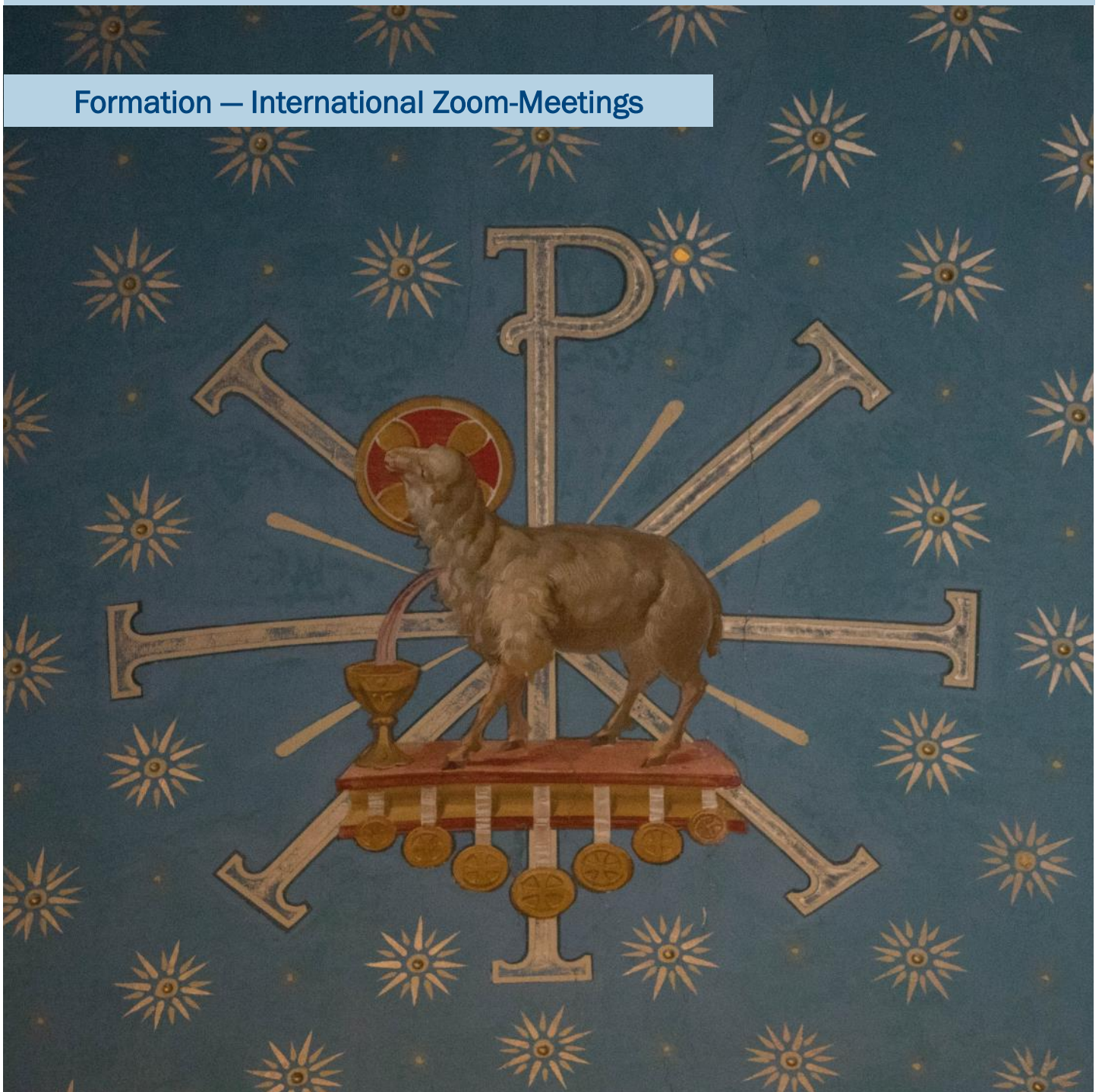
Society of the Divine Word (SVD)

SVD Lay Partners

Newsletter - from Around the World

Issue 15, April 2021

Formation – International Zoom-Meetings



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<https://www.svd-partner.eu/svdlp-slsvd-1>

Editorial

Jesus Lives!

Did you have a virtual Easter service from the comfort of your home? Most likely. Did you yearn for familiar Holy Week traditions? Yes, and Yes.

Like last year, this year too for many of us, the Easter celebration was virtual. Of course, we all hope that this coronavirus crisis across the globe is over soon, and we are able to do things the way we did before. Even with all these challenges, one thing remains certain: the Easter story of the Resurrection of Jesus brings new life and new hope!

At this point in history, Pope Francis' encyclical letter, "Fratelli Tutti" calls on us to open our hearts with gratitude to the possibility of universal love, to recognize and travel new paths of hope: "For God continues to sow abundant seeds of goodness in our human family."

Arnoldus family members across the globe have been carriers of this love during the coronavirus pandemic. Through definite actions, the SVD lay partners along with the SVD confreres are ensuring that vulnerable people aren't left alone and can survive the pandemic. Our 18th General Chapter theme – "The Love of Christ Impels Us" (2Cor 5:14) invites us to fall in love with Jesus anew, and "impels" us to commit ourselves in a fresh way to joining him in his mission. This love is experienced in tiny gestures of hope and solidarity. It is calling us to a new way of living with faith, hope and love; thus, building up on our central Easter experience.

In my personal Easter story, my father passed away when I was ten. It was unexpected. It was the first time I witnessed the death of someone who was very dear to me. A few years later my mother died suddenly. My Easter story slowly began to unfold. The following years were not only years of struggle and pain but also years of acceptance. I became more empathetic and more compassionate towards self and others. I also became more optimistic and cheerful.

Our own Easter stories are uplifting symbols of human resilience against despair and darkness. Easter does not wipe away our pain and suffering. It simply assures us that Jesus is alive. The disciples on the way to Emmaus realize who He is only when He breaks bread with them. Jesus' Resurrection is the beginning of a new creation, the promise of new life for all humanity. Yes, Jesus Lives!

Wishing you a joyful Easter Season!

Susan Noronha
 (Editor-in-chief)

Formation of Lay Partners

Virtual Meetings of the SVD Lay Mission Partners – Experiences and Gratitude

As announced in the last issue, the special theme of this issue takes up the topic of “Formation” again. Four virtual workshops on the topic took place in November. On 12th November 2020, the participants of the 1st International Workshop in Nemi 2017 met to exchange experiences about formation in their groups. Two weeks later on 26th November

2020, three workshops took place. They were held at different times due to the time zones. First the workshop for ASPAC, followed by the workshop for AFRAM and EUROPE, and finally the workshop for PANAM.

Some of the participants share with us their experiences.

Meeting of the Members of the 1st Workshop in Nemi 2017

Thanks to Fr. Stanislaus Lazar, SVD for this opportunity to meet again. Seeing all of us, my mind flew back to Nemi, and I was very moved to listen and to see that we are still a community, each one working as best we can for the Kingdom of God.

Laura Díez Bilbao
Spain

Thanks to Fr. Stanislaus Lazar, SVD and the SVD Generalate for organizing the workshop and guiding us in formation. It was joyful reuniting with this great first batch of Nemi workshop participants, reinforcing our lay mission, hearing each other’s activities from different countries. Thanks to Fr. Jürgen Ommerborn, SVD who presented how St. Arnold Janssen pursued mission warmly and interpersonally with lay persons. So too for us now, mission is furthered with fraternal joyful teamwork among Arnoldus Family; Priests, Brothers, Sisters and lay partners.

Fabian Pagaduan
The Philippines

At a distance yet very close. Thank you very much Fr. Stanislaus Lazar! You did it one more time! Amazing experience!

Gianini Sahagún Becerra
Mexico

It was an immense pleasure to have shared the meeting with everyone. Greetings and hugs from Paraguay.

Froilan Armora González
Paraguay

It has been a great blessing from God to be able to see us. I felt an immense joy while listening to each of us. God in his infinite love continues to bless us. Thank you Fr. Lazar.

Rogelio y Rubiela Ramírez de Rodríguez
Panama

Thank you so much Fr. Stanislaus Lazar for this opportunity. It was really emotional .and awesome at the same time to see all of you. Our friends did not change much. It will be great if we can have something like this every year or so. Stay blessed and safe.

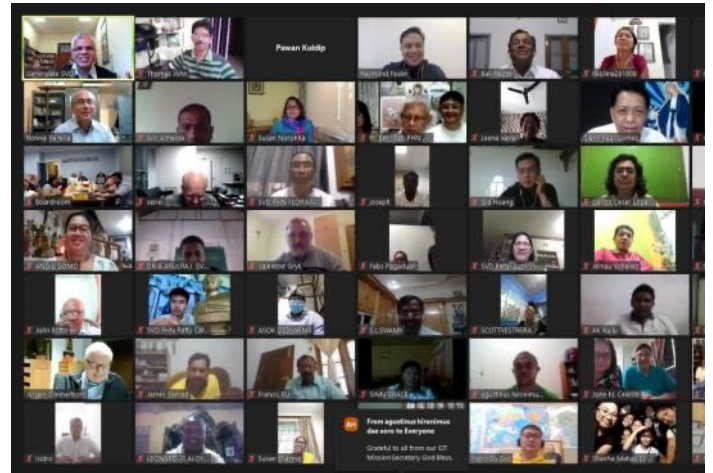
Edwina Mbite
South Africa



ASPAC

Amidst the challenges of the global crisis brought by the pandemic, the SVDs never ceased or recessed in doing their mission. On 12th December 2020, Fr. Stanislaus Thanuzraj Lazar, the SVD Generalate Mission Secretary, scheduled a Zoom meeting for the Mission Secretaries and Lay Mission Partners of the Society of the Divine Word. The virtual meeting was participated by more than 65 delegates from ASPAC Zone, where SVDs are doing mission. It started with a Quarter Hour Prayer and Fr. Raymund Festin, SVD (General Councillor), was the moderator. The first topic, “St. Arnold Janssen, Lay Partners and Challenges Today,” was given by Fr. Jürgen Ommerborn, SVD. Fr. Stanislaus Lazar, SVD gave a talk on the “Formation of Lay Partners.” At the same time, Fabian Pagaduan (PHC) and Susan Noronha (INM) shared the Formation Programs undergone by their respective lay groups, the Lay Society of St. Arnold Janssen (LSSAJ) and the Disciples of the Divine Word (DDW). The meeting was very informative, enriching, and inspiring.

The statements from the 18th General Chapter were encouraging. It is impressive to note that the SVDs give much importance to their lay mission partners. Another realization that there are types and stages of becoming a lay mission partner. No one can just simply claim as one. Further, formation programs are essential to strengthen one’s dedication and commitment. As lay mission partners, we have to do it together. These would lead us closer to the Founder, his vision, and mission, thereby imbibe the Arnold Janssen Spirituality holistically. Hence, living a life fully alive as a witness to the Word made flesh. As a neophyte, there is much to do and more to go through. The word “partners”, is immensely motivating because it makes one feel confident that he/she is not alone in the mission God designed him/her to be. In



stead, the blessed hands of the SVDs will be one’s guide. One should always remember that “our mission is that of the Divine Word having become a human being in Jesus: to be God’s gift of love to humanity.” (Fr. Jürgen Ommerborn, SVD)

Towards the end of the one and a half-hour online meeting were questions and answers. One would look forward to hearing other places’ mission stories in the next assembly, like how they started their program and respective apostolates. Maybe small group discussions will be done represented from each country so that, so we could learn from each other. Personally, it is to rally-round some insights on the new ways of doing mission, like becoming a lay missionary in the new normal way. What a happy advent for us indeed.

Nanelyn D. Wate
The Philippines

PANAM

On 12th December 2020, I had the opportunity to participate in the virtual meeting for the SVD mission secretaries and lay partners of the PANAM area. It was a very welcoming meeting with a concrete and profound message. In the talks there was a reunion of the participation of the laity since the beginning of the Congregation together with the founder Arnold Janssen, and although the laity are not a third order, it is possible to work together with the SVD Congregation to fulfil the mission of God and make known this mission to those most in need.

To continue our growth, it is necessary to be in constant preparation, in the talk by Fr. Stanislaus Lazar, SVD the guide to prepare the Formation Manual for SVD lay members was shared, which contains the structures for the formation of new members and the permanent formations that must be considered. It counts according to the SVD spirituality and we are committed to generating our local manual according to our cultural reality. Our lay friends from the Provinces of the

United States and Mexico shared their formation programs with us. With the COVID pandemic, we all face a test, a great challenge, different from those we may have already faced in this journey, but as SVD lay partners we have the great mission “To be Light” like Jesus, for which we can continue to be instruments of God and let Him show us how He can shine through us.

Grateful for every blessing that God shows me, I hope to be able to participate in new encounters, to continue preparing myself, but above all to be able to contribute to the mission of the Divine Word, transmitting God’s love to all creation.

Maria Fernanda Carranza
Ecuador

AFRAM and EUROPA

The event for the SVD lay partners group was more about sharing Works of Mercy to the needy. Portugal and Kenya groups managed to share their experiences respectfully. In addition to that, there were talks on the Formation and today's challenges faced by the lay partners. As a novice, I have learnt that working, praying together and having group retreats is very important as it gives each other spiritual insight and upliftment than working in silos. Working together will help the group to adhere to the plan and execute it as scheduled.

Going forward, I think more SVD lay partners could be identified and engaged in these Works of Mercy in order to help the needy to have a normal life. Post COVID-19, visiting each other and sharing experiences can do as a way of learning from the best practices.

Thandi Mazibuko
South Africa

The zoom meeting arranged by the Mission Secretary in Rome, to which we were invited to participate, was held on 12th December 2020. This meeting was so inspirational and brought to the fore the fact that the world is a global village. From the humble beginnings of St. Arnold's work, it is gratifying to know that the Arnoldus family is now found in more than eighty countries worldwide. There were about thirty participants in all. The meeting lasted for an hour and half.

Mildred Sodala
Zambia

When my calendar on 10th September 2020 reminded me that I should just be on a plane to Nemi for the SVD lay partners' meeting, and the weather forecast indicated that they were 32° Celsius, I felt like I was missing out. COVID-19 confused a lot of people with many plans, and this was one of them. A huge regret, because I was counting on them and needed them so much. For myself, my spirit, energy, creativity, a different outlook, understanding. Fortunately, a meeting via ZOOM on 12th December came to the rescue. Thanks to the involvement of a few people, several dozen lay partners



could experience at least a little of what was supposed to be. What was that for me?

First of all, I am glad that I am among people with similar values, we have a similar view of other people, God, the world, our place in it. Secondly, the presentations we saw, made me realize how many interesting activities are undertaken for the benefit of others, from which I can draw both knowledge and inspiration. But most of all, I felt a bit as if I was a participant in the meeting in Nemi. While I was listening, I was also watching others - just like that - their faces, reactions, places where they are, and even the weather (my namesake - Agnes from Ghana had beautiful weather and she was sitting in the yard, while here in Poland, it was already dark outside my window and it was snowing).

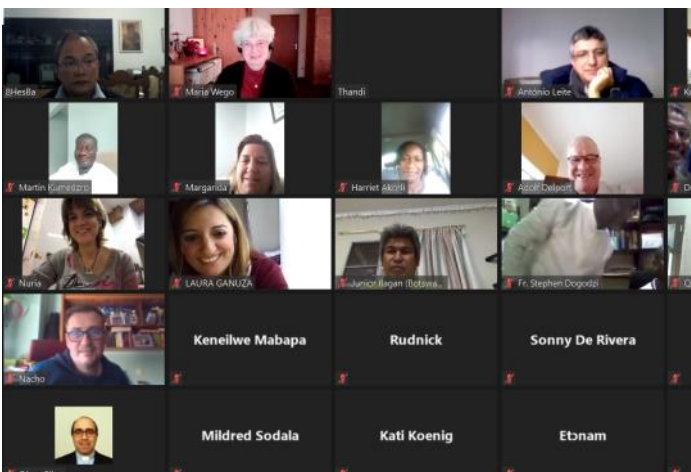
It was an uplifting meeting and at least a bit of hope, that it would be normal. I am grateful for that. It's good that we are moving forward.

Agnieszka Werda
Poland

Lay groups around the world were invited by the Generalate to come together and learn more about formation. SVD-Partner were asked to join the meeting of the EUROPA and AFRAM zone on 12th December 2020. To come together with lay people in so many countries is something special. But to come together on 12th December is something very special for SVD-Partner because it is the day of recognition by the German SVD-Province in 2016.

After learning more about Arnold Janssen and lay people by the presentation from Fr. Jürgen Ommerborn, SVD one African and one European group informed about their work and structure. It was good to see and learn how groups work as a response of the societies' needs. Time was too short to discuss with each other and learn more about the other groups. Hopefully there will be more meetings where more groups can introduce themselves.

Maria Wego
Germany





AFRAM ZONE



Zambia (ZAM)

Zambia Mission Lay Partners – COVID-19 and Empty Churches

In our country following the death of Bishop Moses Hamungole of Zambia's Monze Diocese, and four Catholic Priests, within a very short period of time due to COVID-19 related complications, the pandemic was no longer a disease far away from home. The COVID-19 pandemic has brought many disruptions to life. People no longer meet freely. It is through zoom meetings and webinars, people are able to share their experiences with others.

One of the main challenges that has hit us is that: weekly visits to the sick and aged, which we actively participated has been suspended. As lay partners, we have not held any meetings for many months now. Before the pandemic, Churches on Sundays were filled to full capacity. Currently, Churches though open, attendance is very low due to re-

strictions imposed in consideration of health implications. The number Masses celebrated in the Churches are spread out.

We celebrated St. Arnold's feast day by attending Mass on 15th January and that of St. Josef Freinademetz on 28 January 2021.

As a way of evangelisation, we continue receiving videos from Rome, on spiritual reflections on different topics by a variety of people. These reflections are spiritually enriching and very educative.

Mildred Sodala



Ghana (GHA)

Friends of SVD – Our Activities During the Last Months



Feast of St. Josef Freinademetz

The SVD lay partners of St. Charles Lwanga Parish Abeka in Accra collaborated with members of the Sacred Heart Confraternity and organized a Triduum from 27th –29th January 2021 in honour of St. Josef Freinademetz, the first missionary to China. Fr. Dionisio Nellas, SVD spoke on the theme: “SVD in the Light of the Sacred Heart of Jesus”. He described Josef Freinademetz as a man who was greatly influenced by his parents. He developed love for the Word of God by regularly reading the Prologue of St. John. Fr. Nellas encouraged us to be hard working, disciplined in life, and to be prayerful. The Triduum was concluded by Holy Mass.

Visit to Agomenya Lay Partners

On 20th December 2020, some lay partners from Accra along with Fr. Stephen Dogodzi, SVD, visited the Holy Trinity Catholic Church, Agomenya in the Eastern Region of Ghana. The planned visit was to revive an old group of lay partners, and to encourage new members to join, to support the missionary work in the Church and its communities.

Visit to SVD Retirement Home

To mark the second anniversary of the Friends of SVD of Christ the King Parish, Accra, members visited SVD retirement home at McCarthy Hill-Accra on 29th January. This visit



coincided with the feast of St. Josef Freinademetz. The Parish Priest, Fr. Andrew Campbell, SVD, assisted the group with 3 bags of rice to donate to the retirement Home.

Day of Formation

The Friends of SVD held a day of Formation on 13th February at St. Charles Lwanga Parish. Fr. Courage Nordor, SVD cited scriptural texts and Church documents to support the importance of the laity in the mission of the Church.

Participants were assigned to the groups to discuss the following;

- › the role of an SVD lay partner
- › the challenges one faces as a lay partner
- › proposals concerning our involvement in the mission of the Society of the Divine Word.

Presentations were made by each group on their respective topics. The day concluded with Eucharistic Celebration.

Harriet Akorli Dzikunoo



Angola (ANG)

Associação de Leigos Missionários do Verbo Divino – Activities of the Past Months



Associação de Leigos Missionários do Verbo Divino is inspired by the Most Holy Trinity to report our joys and sorrows. Despite many difficulties, our faith in the Triune God has served as an energy to overcome barriers.

In these past months, our joy was largely manifested by the accomplishment of the following activities:

- › Election of new leadership team.
- › Participation in the two big zoom workshops facilitated by the Generalate.
- › Appointment of Fr. Denis Pereira, SVD – our Spiritual guide

The workshops brought our Arnoldus family closer, leaving lasting marks of joy and clear guidelines, particularly among our participants, to remain united and committed to the work of St. Arnold Janssen and the mission of Jesus Christ. In spite of difficulties and challenges, we have also realized that we must have our Statutes, financial and institutional independence, create conditions to promote regional meetings to develop our Christian faith, good attitudes and the spirit of the mission. Our vision and mission must focus on Bible sharing, prayer for missionaries, vocation promotion, reaching out to the poor and organising workshops and seminars.

Despite these beautiful experiences, death knocked on our door on 12th February 2021. The Lord called to His heavenly home Venâncio Liamusseko, one of our pillars who lived his life totally to the mission. He was the co-founder of our lay



partners group and was involved in all the missionary activities in the Lunda Norte Province, and Malanje, in the Caculama mission. He was one of the few dedicated people, who fully participated in all the missionary activities from 2014 to 2019.

More than an example, our brother is an inspiration and a true soldier of Christ, who knew how to incarnate our motto “The proclamation of the Gospel is the most sublime expression of love for others”.

José Miguel Mateus





ASPAC ZONE



Australia (AUS)

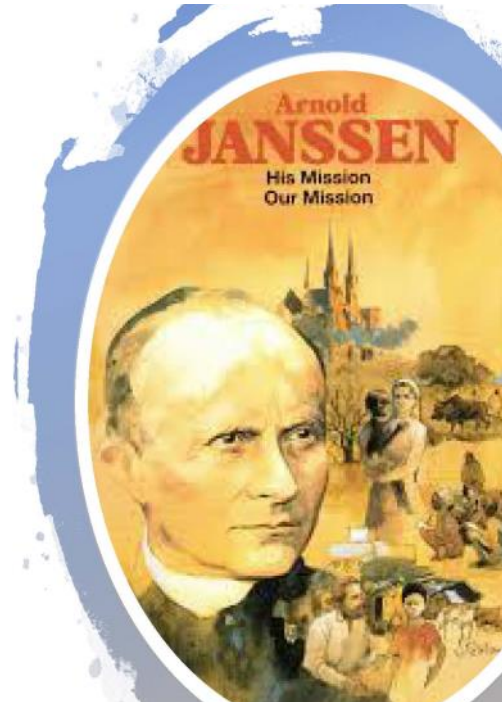
SVD Lay Partners – Virtual Novena and Feast of St. Arnold Janssen

Global Novena to St. Arnold Janssen

7th Jan- 15th Jan 2021

Join with other SVD Lay
partners together in prayer

Zoom link to be provided
separately



2020 changed the way of life for many. The Arnoldus family though safe from the ill effects of the coronavirus, had their lives affected as well. Lay partners from all over the world joined together to pray the Novena to St. Arnold Janssen from 7th – 15th January 2021. The self-directed novena was conducted through Zoom in an online environment.

Lay partners chose their timeslots according to their convenience and joined from their homes or in groups if permitted. As many countries were affected with Coronavirus restrictions on group gatherings, the Online platform provided a convenient avenue for lay partners from different parts of the world to come together and pray together. All SVD zones were notably represented at the Novena. The highlight for many was the opportunity to light a digital candle at the Online Chapel of Steyl. An internet link was provided for the

same. Through the intercession of St. Arnold Janssen, SVD lay partners prayed for their own and each other's intentions in the path to an active love of neighbour.

Mervyn Rodrigues

Mervyn Rodrigues, SVD lay partner from the Australia Province organized Online (Zoom) Novena to St. Arnold Janssen. The idea was that a group of people come together and pray to our Founder for his intercession in these challenging times. Many lay partners worldwide took part in this novena.



India (INM)

Disciples of the Divine Word (DDW), Mumbai – Our Work during the Last Months



Some stories and some experiences

On one of our Feed the Hungry visits on the sides of a Highway, we met Divya (name changed to protect identity), a homeless young woman. We visited her every Saturday and gave her some toiletries together with lunch packet. Though she welcomed our gesture, she rarely smiled. Now, she greets us with a broad smile. This encounter made us realize how privileged we are to have families where we are loved. Every Saturday, we are meeting many homeless, especially children, living on streets, sharing their stories with us.

Torey (name changed to protect identity) runs a tiny tea stall on a roadside. She is a ray of sunshine with her warm smile and hospitality. Over the course of her conversation with us, she narrated her story of struggles. Despite her difficulties, she was helping us to distribute food packets to the nearby slums. She also treated us with a hot cup of tea from her stall. We were inspired by her courage in the face of adversities. Kudos to such women for being an inspiration in others' lives.

A small group of DDW members along with Fr. Gregory Pinto, SVD visited the homes of our senior members during the Christmas season. Due to the pandemic lockdown, though there were many government restrictions, we spent some time together sharing, caring and praying. Despite physical

and family struggles, our senior members inspired us with their faith and courage.

INM Provincial Assembly and Chapter

Lorna D'Souza and Jayesh George participated in the INM Provincial Assembly from 2-4 February and Susan Noronha participated in the Chapter on 5th February 2021 at Atma-Darshan, Mumbai.

(Courtesy: Prakashan – DDW Newsletter. January 2021)
Susan Noronha



India (INM)

SVD Lay Partners, Pune – Mission of Love and Service for the Needy



“It is not the magnitude of our actions but the amount of love that is put into them that matters.” (Mother Teresa)

On 20th December 2020, SVD lay partners, Pune began its mission to serve the community with its first outreach program at the Sarva Seva Sangh, Pune, one of the pioneering centres of the Society of the Divine Word, engaged in the rehabilitation and empowerment of children at high risk. We planned a fun-filled Christmas get-together for the boys and girls from the institution. The event began on a warm note from Fr. Gregory Arockiam, SVD. Fr. Mathew Korattiyil, SVD, Director of Sarva Seva Sangh provided a glimpse into the mission, history, and the various projects of the institution.

The children had a blast participating in the games and so did the SVD lay partners witnessing their joy and enthusiasm. Their joy and smiles provided a perfect start for the Christmas season. The highlight of the afternoon was the entertainment program presented by the children. Their dancing talent and energy left us all in awe and wanting for more. We conducted games, gave gifts and shared a festive meal with the children to end a memorable afternoon. We thank Fr. Mathew Korattiyil, SVD, Fr. Felix Arul Asirvatham, SVD and Bro. Sandeep for their support to organize the event.



The SVD lay partners, Pune has made its humble beginning in community service with this event. We are currently a group of 20 members which will surely grow in number with the grace of God. We are indeed glad and blessed to embark of this wonderful mission to serve the needy in the Pune community.

Godfrey Fernandes



Indonesia (IDJ)

Soverdia - New Beginning and a Farewell Forever



A New Beginning of 2021

Soverdia St. Joseph Denpasar held its Advent Recollection with several activities. One of them was to clean the graves of bishops and priests in Palasari Village, West Bali. We closed the year 2020 with Holy Mass and Salve to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, presided by Fr. Servatius Subhaga, SVD, at the Adoration Chapel. The New Year Liturgy was celebrated by Fr. Yan Madia, SVD, Rector of SVD Bali Lombok District. Despite the pandemic and social distancing, the SVD lay partners are finding more than one way to connect with each other.

Although the COVID-19 pandemic is still very frightening, it has not discouraged us in celebrating the Feasts of St. Arnold Janssen and St. Josef Freinademetz. Rather, the pandemic has made us more creative. By utilizing technology and collaborating with the SVD Batu Novitiate, Malang, East Java, we had the live streaming of the Novena to St. Arnold Janssen and the Salve Triduum to St. Josef Freinademetz. Several SVD lay partners in Denpasar and Tuka, Bali, in Malang (East Java) and in Martubung (North Sumatra) also held live streaming/onsite celebrations.

While we hardly meet or see each other face to face, the live-streaming of spiritual activities have strengthened our faith and the bonding among our members.



Last Memories with Fr. Aloysius Wayan Supriyadi, SVD

The Triduum and the Feast Mass of St. Arnold Janssen turned out to be the last memory with Fr. Aloysius Wayan Supriyadi, SVD. Fr. Wayan passed away due to COVID-19 illness on 30th January 2021 to the home of Heavenly Father.

May you rest in peace through the mercy of God, dear father. We pray that your dream to form SVD lay partners group in St. Peter's Parish Denpasar will be realized very soon.

Paulina Suharsi



The Philippines (PHC)

The Lay Society of St. Arnold Janssen (LSSAJ) – Collaboration and Reach-out



The first anniversary of the nationwide lockdown in the Philippines was on the 17th of March. While the rest of the country is finding ways to ease the effects of this monstrous virus, the LSSAJ remains steadfast on continuing its advocacies in helping to mitigate the impact of the pandemic. LSSAJ continues to help the poorest of the poor by collaborating with the Arnold Janssen Kalinga Center and delivering food carts and capital to the beneficiaries for their livelihood.

LSSAJ has livelihood projects in Jesus Nazareno Parish, Dasmariñas, together with its active support to church activities. LSSAJ assisted the fire suppression system at Catholic Trade Building through the expertise of Engr. Cris Lim. Part of the Catholic Trade Building burned down in mid-December 2020. LSSAJ General Santos City Chapter, continues with its organic vegetable farming. Members are planting moringa trees, part of their entrepreneurship program. Charles Avila continues with his formidable campaign against hunger and poverty by conducting fora/seminars via social media. Rudy Besinga writes daily reflections in Facebook and leads spiritual exercises as part of the spirituality formation. The Society is also collaborating with the *Seniors sa Panahon ng COVID* (SPC), a group of senior citizens, in addressing the issues and concerns of the Filipino senior citizens during this pandemic. Daisy Leones is one of its convenors, now heading its Research & Education Committee (REC).

On 30th January 2021, LSSAJ held its annual election of officers and Board of Directors for 2021-22; Charles Avila (Chairman of the Board), Engr. Cris Lim (President), Rodulfo Besinga (VP-Internal), Jorge Azuelo (VP-External), Mayette Tamondong (Board Secretary) and Julio Tonquin (Treasurer). The other members are Tony Alvarado, Elin Mondejar and Emma Flores. The Board passed a resolution appointing Daisy Leones as the official communicator/representative of LSSAJ to SVD Rome, SVD lay partners and Arnoldus family.

During February 2021, LSSAJ in its manifesto, voiced strong support for the Society of the Divine Word, the University of San Carlos (USC), the Commission on Social Advocacies of the Cebu Archdiocese, and the Save our Schools Network, in their collective solidarity efforts to help Lumad children receive good education through the Bakwit School Program. LSSAJ condemned the dangerous actions of the Philippine National Police (PNP) against the USC's academic freedom and human rights.

Daisy Leones



The Philippines (PHN)

SVD-PHN Mission Partners – Bible Studies



Celebrating National Bible Month

January is the National Bible Month in the Philippines by virtue of Presidential Proclamation No. 124 (2017) and the last week of January is National Bible Week by virtue of Proclamation No. 44 (1986). The year 2021's theme is: The Word of God Restores.

The celebrations may not have been like the previous years because of the limitations brought by COVID-19, but the spirit is unrelenting. For the Divine Word made flesh is alive in every way in our lives, in our midst. In difficult times, the Word of God restores.

Some of the highlights of the celebration were:

The SVD Philippine Northern Province, through its Biblical Apostolate, under the headship of the SVD-PHN Biblical Coordinator Fr. Romy Benitez, SVD in partnership with the SVD-PHN Mission Partners, launched the Monthly Biblical Formation of SVD-PHN Mission Partners, in particular, the workers of the Provincialate and their families and SVD friends of the Provincialate Community on 24th January 2021. The program will be running every 3rd Sunday of the month.



Online Bible Sharing

Although the online gathering has been going on every Wednesday since 2020, the focus for the month of January was on the Bible Formation and Bible Sharing (Vigan Method).

Tatak (our identity): The Word Enthroned in Our Homes

Our SVD-PHN Mission Partners in the districts of Abra, Cagayan and Baguio visited homes to enthrone the Bible. In San Fernando City, La Union, Mission Secretary Fr. Emil Pati, SVD and Biblical Coordinator Fr. Romy Benitez, SVD joined our lay mission partners. This is primary to the SVD-PHN Mission Partners' identity, the Bible enthroned in our homes. It is our prayer that as we enthrone the Word in the center of our homes, He does not only become a fixture but the Word made flesh in our lives as we live and witness to His example.

Mike and GeeO Paderon



The Philippines (PHS)

Lay Mission Partners of the Divine Word (LaMP-DW), Bohol – Introduction



Budding of New Group in SVD-PHS, Bohol Chapter

The quirks amid the new normal challenges never stopped the Boholano spirit of religiosity and festivities. The newly-organized SVD lay mission partners had their first assembly on 18th October 2020. It was the Lay Program Introduction and Orientation of the fourth congregation that St. Arnold Janssen dreamt of. Fr. Charlton Plateros, SVD (Rector, Arnold Janssen Home), gave words of welcome. Fr. Eduardo Rocha, SVD (former Provincial Superior), and Fr. Tony Pates, SVD (International Renewal Program Formation – Steyl) were the speakers. Fr. Samuel Clarin, SVD (HNU's Presidential Assistant for Religious Education and Mission), celebrated the closing Mass. The first batch of 31 participants were SVD Friends, SVDs, and Holy Name University employees (HNU). On 31st October the group had the culmination of the Holy Rosary at the university grotto.

Lay Mission Partners of the Divine Word (LaMP-DW)

It is no secret that everyone is in a thought-provoking situation. The pandemic frets each one. But the lay partners prepared themselves for the yuletide season by having the Advent Recollection on 15th December 2020. This was the first phase of the SVD lay partners formation program. A committee was created to draft the constitution and by-laws of the association, which was presented on 27th February 2021.



The group was named as Lay Mission Partners of the Divine Word (LaMP-DW).

After the approval of the constitution and by-laws, the election of officers followed. The newly elected office bearers are: Nanelyn Wate (President); Adolfo Doroy (Vice President); Amie Rosarie Caballo (Secretary); Maria Paz Espiritu (Treasurer); and Michael Cañares (Auditor). The officers appointed the following coordinators: Ma. Elisa Dolotina (Communication); Sr. Ma. Bernardita Mendez, SFCC (Bible); Lorebien Lagapa (JPIC); and Nemia Dahab (Mission-Animation). The Spiritual Directors are Fr. Eduardo Rocha, SVD and Fr. Charlton Plateros, SVD.

The induction of the office bearers is on 11th April 2021 in the presence of Fr. Roger Bag-ao, SVD (SVD-PHS Provincial Superior), and Fr. Franlou Bardon, SVD (SVD-PHS Mission Secretary).

Nanelyn Wate



The Philippines (PHS)

SVD-ICP Lay Partners, Veruela – Introduction



The SVD-ICP lay partners of Immaculate Conception Parish, Veruela, Agusan del Sur, was formed with 34 members on 8th September 2020 at the celebration of the 145th anniversary of SVD Foundation. It was initiated by our Parish Priest Fr. I Wayan Heriyanto, SVD and with the support of the Parochial Vicar Fr. Peter Fillo, SVD and Fr. Franlou G. Bardon, SVD, the Mission Secretary of PHS.

On 19th September, the group had their first meeting and formation. Fr. Peter Fillo, SVD talked on the history of the SVD congregation. We agreed to have monthly formation activities, adoration, Bible sharing and to support missionaries around the world on World Mission Sunday. The group collected P45,000.00 which was sent to the PHS Mission Office in Cebu City.

Different committees are formed in order to have an active participation in the group. One of our mission programs is to share our resources with the needy. The group initiated to print a Mission Calendar and T-shirts for 500 years of Christianity in the Philippines. The proceeds went to charitable activities.

The first charitable activity took place at La Suerte Chapel and at New Visayas, Veruela, Chapel in December 2020. The team distributed food packs and used clothes. Lay partners along with Fr. I Wayan Heriyanto, SVD visited senior citizens



through Pamaskong Handog 2020, giving food packets, and inviting them to communion and confession. We also helped around 350 families with groceries affected by the flood.

We celebrated the feast of St. Arnold Janssen and St. Josef Freinademetz. After the Mass, the team shared together a simple breakfast and coffee as a simple way of celebrating the occasion.

With the addition of new members on the feast day of St. Arnold Janssen, we are now 49 members of the SVD-ICP lay partners in Veruela, Agusan del Sur Parish. We hope to grow in our commitment to become co-witnesses to Jesus, the Divine Word, in our own little ways in our parish and beyond.

Evelyn O. Goloran



EUROPA ZONE

Germany (GER)

SVD-Partner – Where Two or Three ...



Of course, this also applies when people come together online. That is why SVD-Partner participated in the Arnold Janssen Novena and make an offer for Lent.

Arnold Janssen Novena 2021 - Nine days praying around the clock and around the world.

The invitation of the SVD lay partners in Australia to pray the Novena to St. Arnold Janssen together was accepted by groups on every continent. SVD-Partner decided to pray the novena in the evening and invited people to join them at 6 pm. A small prayer community was formed from Germany, Switzerland and Hungary.

There is more to online prayer than just talking and seeing each other. During the time of silence after the reading, everyone could look at an icon on the screen. Next to it time was running in an hourglass. This helped to concentrate and come to rest, but at the same time a time frame was set. At the end of the intercessions, a candle was lit for everyone in the [SVD-online chapel](#). Not least, thanks to the music in the online chapel, this was another time to take a deep breath.

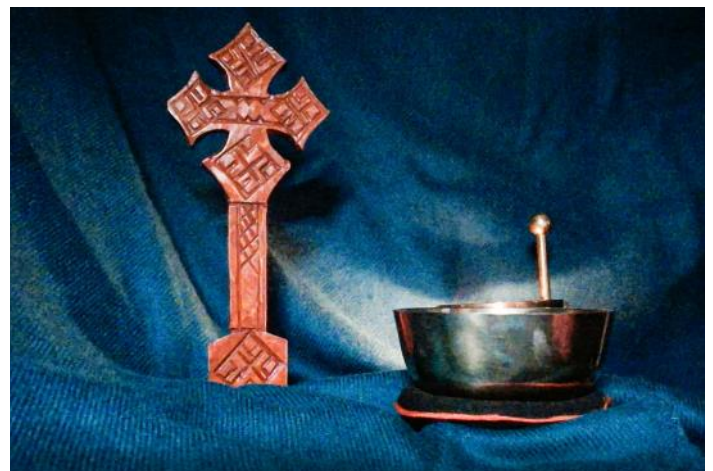


On the evening of the ninth day, everyone was grateful that the SVD lay partners in Australia had taken this initiative. So, no one had to pray the novena alone, but was together with others from the large Arnoldus family.

As Much as You Need

During Lent 2021, SVD-Partner took up the suggestions of the campaign [klimafasten.de](https://www.klimafasten.de) (fasting for climate). The campaign looked at the care of creation and your own behaviour. In doing so, SVD-Partner also looked at life and work of the Arnoldus family. Starting on Ash Wednesday, there was an online meeting every Wednesday at 7 pm. People came together to pray and talk about various topics such as water, nutrition and mobility.

Maria Wego



Italy (ITA)

Associazione Amici Verbiti - Assembly in Beautiful Oies



Have you ever seen a beautiful image, a beautiful photo of a sky overflowing with dark and gray clouds, torn in the middle by a flash of light in which peeps a cold and shy sun?

Leaving this image, which still persists in my mind, I move on to the real chronicle of the day. On Saturday, 26th September 2020, in Oies in Val Badia (BZ), at the birthplace of the St. Josef Freinademetz, with all the trappings of the current pandemic, the annual assembly of our association took place.

Oies welcomed 37 friends on a beautiful and cold day. We gathered in the pilgrims' hall to begin our assembly. Fr. Franz Senfter, SVD, head of the Oies sanctuary, greeted his friends warmly and said he was honored by our visit and having chosen Oies as the seat of the assembly. A further greeting was addressed to us by Fr. Paolino Bumanglag, SVD, Mission Secretary of the Italian Province. Also read was the greeting of our President Gianni Pulit who, due to a slight health condition, was unable to be present.

This was then followed by the report on the activities carried out in the past year by the undersigned and on the annual financial statements presented by our accountant Mariano. Reports were unanimously approved. This assembly should also have renewed the board of directors, but given the small number of participants, it was decided to move the election to the next assembly, hopefully in Varone with more friends and with more peace of mind.

Holy Mass followed in the new church dedicated to St. Josef Freinademetz presided over by Msgr. Francesco Sarego, SVD, Bishop Emeritus of Goroka (Papua New Guinea), concelebrated with other missionaries and with Fr. Gianfranco Maronese, SVD, Rector of Varone and our councilor. This was followed by lunch at the *La Tana dell'Orso* restaurant in Oies and a visit to the birthplace of St. Josef Freinademetz.

(Courtesy: Missionari Verbiti, December 2020)

Carlo Rossi



Spain (ESP)

Laicos Verbo Divino (LVD) – The One Who Prays is Never Alone



In Spain, despite the difficult circumstances we went through due to the pandemic, some people from our LVD group decided to join the “Prayer Bridge” on the “World Day of the Poor” on 15th November 2020.

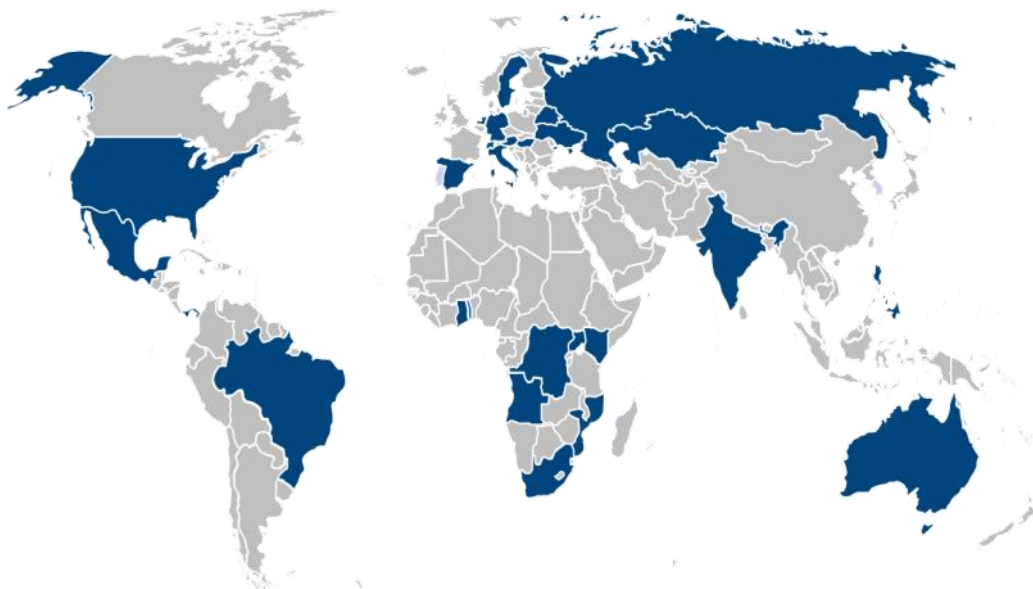
We believe that both, we and our families, - and above all, the most disadvantaged who have less, but much more faith, - need our prayer more than ever. That is why we decided to make a simple but profound gesture, that would make us feel united even though we are far away physically. Each one of us at home, and as a family if possible, made a prayer using some of the valuable guides and ideas provided by our lay partners from Germany, around a symbol (a small Altar with an open Bible, some flowers, candles, a crucifix ...). Each of us took a photo to create a beautiful collage.

In addition to feeling ourselves together in prayer, this collage represents the “Virtual Prayer Bridge” to which Pope Francis invites us, the believers – to pray to God and in solidarity with the poor. We joined many cities around the world on that day. In the absence of being able to celebrate our annual Missionary Encounter because of COVID-19, this occasion was a different but a beautiful way to feel the strength to pray together.

May we continue to feel the presence of the Holy Spirit among us, and may we be witnesses to God’s presence for those who have the least.

Laura Díez Bilbao

United in Prayer at the World Day of the Poor





PANAM ZONE



Mexico (MEX)

Misioneros Auxiliares del Verbo Divino (MAVD) – 39 years MAVD and Counting!



The 39th anniversary of MAVD was on 21st February 2021.

The first MAVD arrived between 1983-1985 at a less known place called *Huejutla de Reyes Hidalgo*, better known as *La Huasteca*, the place where willows abound, a truly amazing mission field. It was very difficult but not impossible to reach the communities of this region. Well, it is a very hot place. People are very humble, food and clothing very traditional, speaking the *Nauatl* language. The towns lacked some religious, social and educational activities and people were illiterate. During Easter the families were engaged in fishing and exercising their trades. Their rest days were only on Good Friday and Sunday, the Lord's Resurrection. But with the arrival of the missionaries, they promoted many activities like reading, religious celebrations, etc. Thanks to the participation of all the people, today these Indigenous persons have grown in different areas.



The dedication of all the MAVD members and their lives given to the mission, there was an interest from new missionaries who wanted to be part of this great family.

Region "C"

The first group formed in this region bears the name of *Xinachtlij tlen Toteco* (Seed of God). Currently, it has 10 members willing to share the Word of God through their talent in music, in prayer and always determined to accept the place in the different missions. They have 26 years of formation and experience of being missionaries.

The second group formed from this region is called *Tonantsi María* (the Virgin Mary) with a total of 12 members and an experience of around 20 years. They are committed to sharing and living the Gospel through their activities - the pilgrim bible, participation in the radio program *Theotokos Rejoice María*, etc.

Jesús Hernández Artemio – Ulises Salguero Martínez



Panama (CAM)

Misioneros Laicos del Verbo Divino – Starting Activities Again



At the beginning of 2021, due to the reappearance of the coronavirus, the activities of *Misioneros Laicos del Verbo Divino* were suspended temporarily. Thanks be to God, we resumed our missionary activities in February. On

8th February 2021, the board of directors met together with our spiritual guide, Br. Pedro Azuag, SVD.

On 19th February, training was received from the religious of the Annunciation Carla Sánchez and Marilus Gonzáles; The theme was focused on Lent, touching the biblical quotes from John 4:10 (Jesus answered her, “If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, ‘Give me a drink,’ you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water.”) and Mark 6:36-37 (“Send the people away so that they can go to the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat.”) But he answered, “You give them something to eat.”), deepening our desire for the Eucharist, holiness, charity and joy in being a missionary and continuing with the mission of Jesus.

May God bless us.

Rubiela Ramírez de Rodríguez

United States (USW)

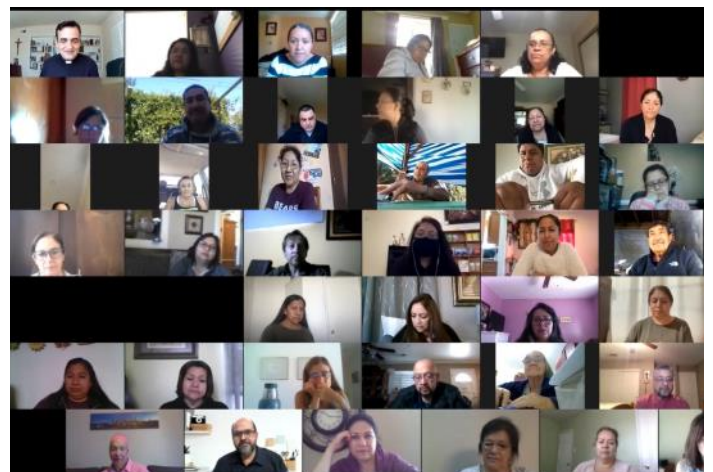
Misioneros Laicos del Verbo Divino (MLVD) – Participating in the International Missiology Course

In pursuit of continuing the mission entrusted to us, we believe that Formation is a key foundation for us laity in order to grow both in knowledge and spirituality. Even though the pandemic has limited our way of sharing the Word in this past year, we cannot but continue to find new methods of evangelizing. In the words of Saint Paul, “Woe to me if I do not preach it” (1 Cor 9:16).

As of January 2021, the MLVD members have been participating in an International Missiology Course: “The Mission of the Laity in the Church within the Magisterium of Pope Francis” by Fr. Miguel Ruiz, SVD, a Missiology graduate of the Pontifical Gregorian University. The course is being offered through Zoom with an average of 150 participants from USA, Argentina, Peru, Ecuador, Brazil and Paraguay. It has been a very enriching experience in many ways. Nothing compares to listening to someone who has the experience of mission in a diversity of cultures and having him as an excellent speaker. The presentations have been great, and it has been delightful being able to interact with laity from the other ends of the earth and sharing our different testimonies of mission which gives us a different perspective other than what we are accustomed to. The themes that have been shared are so relevant to our times that they have been of great help in moving forward as partners in mission and leaders within our local communities and beyond.

We are grateful to have this wonderful opportunity to grow as a lay missionary movement and we pray that the Spirit of God may continue to shine His light, so that we may continue to persevere in the mission entrusted to us by our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, in the spirit of St. Arnold Janssen and the Society of the Divine Word.

Gabriel Flores



~ Last but not Least ~

Changes in the Editorial Team

Farewell and Welcome

Farewell to the Outgoing Editors



On behalf of Arnoldus family, we would like to thank the outgoing editors of SVD lay partners newsletter, Gianini Sahagún Becerra (Mexico) – translator from English to Spanish and Fabian Pagaduan (The Philippines) – translator from Spanish to English. We express our deep gratitude and appreciation to both Gianini and Fabian who have graciously edited and nourished the newsletter since 2018, encouraging its growth and quality.

Welcome to the Incoming Editors



It gives us great pleasure to announce that Isabel Urquidi Díaz (Chile) - translator from English to Spanish and Daisy Leones (The Philippines) – translator from Spanish to English, have joined the editorial team of the SVD lay partners newsletter. We extend our warm welcome to the new editors.

The Patron Saint of the Founder

Arnold of Arnoldsweiler

When baptising their children, Christian parents not only give them a name, but also a role model in faith. This was no different for the parents of St. Arnold Janssen. So: Who was St. Arnold, after whom the founder was named?

Arnold lived at the court of Emperor Charles the Great in the 8th century in Germany and France. According to tradition, he was a singer and harpist. Charles the Great appointed him Count of Agde and Montpellier (France) and educator to his son Louis (Louis the Pious). Until Louis came of age, Arnold was regent of the sub-kingdom of Aquitaine (France). At the end of his regency, he donated his fortune to the Abbey of Aniane. He had to break off a pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela (Spain) because of famine. The last years of his life he spent in Ginnizweiler, which was later named Arnoldsweiler. Today it belongs to Düren located between Aachen and Cologne (Germany). His grave is in St. Arnold's Chapel.

In Arnoldsweiler, Arnold's commitment to the poor, which ran through his entire life, becomes clear. When Emperor Charles went hunting there, Arnold saw the need of the people. He

asked him to give him as much forest as he could ride around during the meal. Charles agreed, and Arnold rode around the *Bürgerwald*, from which, according to the decision of the Imperial Diet of 779, people from 20 surrounding villages were allowed to fetch firewood. His Memorial Day is 18th July.

Maria Wego



The Organizational Structure of the SVD

Provinces/Regions/Missions

In the group reports, the country of origin is given first in the heading and then the abbreviation of the SVD province/region/mission. Sometimes the country and PRM are identical, as in Germany. However, there are also cases where several countries belong to one PRM, e.g. Botswana and South

Africa, or where there are several PRMs in one country, e.g. India. In order to be able to assign the abbreviations, here is the list of PRMs. If there are several countries, they are listed in brackets under the name of the PRM.

AFRAM

ANG	Angola Province
BOT	Botswana Province (Botswana, South Africa)
CNG	Congo Province
GHA	Ghana Province (Ghana, Liberia)
KEN	Kenya Province (Kenya, Tanzania)
MAD	Madagascar Region
MOZ	Mozambique Mission
SSD	South Sudan Mission
TCD	Tchad Mission
TOG	Togo Province (Togo, Benin)
ZAM	Zambia Mission
ZIM	Zimbabwe Region

ASPAC

AUS	Australia Province (Australia, Myanmar, New Zealand, Thailand)
BGD	Bangladesh Mission
IDE	Indonesia - Ende Province
IDJ	Indonesia - Java Province
IDR	Indonesia - Ruteng Province
IDT	Indonesia - Timor Province
INC	India - Central Province
INE	India - Eastern Province
ING	India - Guwahati Region
INH	India - Hyderabad Province
INM	India - Mumbai Province
JPN	Japan Province
KOR	Korea Region
PHC	Philippines - Central Province
PHN	Philippines - Northern Province
PHS	Philippines - Southern Province
PNG	Papua New Guinea Province
SIN	China Province (Mainland, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macau)
TLS	Timor Leste Region
VIE	Vietnam Province

EUROPE

CUR	SVD Generalate
ROM	Roman Colleges and Nemi
ECP	Europe Central Province (Austria, Switzerland, France, Croatia)
ESP	Spain Province
GER	Germany Province
HUN	Hungary Province (Hungary, Serbia)
IBP	The Irish and British Province (Ireland, England)
ITA	Italy Province (Italy, Romania, Moldavia, Albania)
NEB	Netherlands-Belgium Province
POL	Poland Province (Poland, Ukraine, Latvia, Norway)
POR	Portugal Province
SLO	Slovakia Province (Slovakia, Czech Republic)
URL	Ural Region (Belarus, Russia)

PANAM

ARE	Argentina - Eastern Province
ARS	Argentina - Southern Province
BOL	Bolivia Region
BRA	Brazil - Amazon Region
BRC	Brazil - Central Province
BRN	Brazil - Northern Province
BRS	Brazil - Southern Province
CAM	Central American Region (Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Panama)
CHI	Chile Province
COL	Colombia Province (Colombia, Venezuela)
ECU	Ecuador Province
MEX	Mexico Province (Mexico, Cuba)
PAR	Paraguay Province
USC	Chicago Province (USA, Canada, West Indies, Jamaica)
USS	USA - Southern Province
USW	USA - Western Province

Silent Workers in the SVD Vineyard

Katalin Koenig from Hungary

Lay people help the Divine Word Missionaries in their work in various ways. They themselves, however, do not necessarily come to the attention of the public. From now on we will report about them



Katalin, how long do you know the SVD and how did you get to know them?

I know them for about 20 years. I got to know them in my home parish, where young SVD priests were supposed to gain practical experience in parish work. They were from India and Indonesia and founded a prayer group which still exists today and of which I am currently the leader. In addition, some of us took part in retreats. This is how a friendship has developed with them.

How do you help the SVD?

My help mostly consists of translations for the Hungarian SVD monthly magazine *Világposta*. I worked on the new Hungarian edition of the book "God's Holy Will Alone" and translated letters by Josef Freinademetz from China for a book.

and introduce one of them in each issue. The first one is Katalin Koenig (71), who lives in Budapest, Hungary.

For the book "100 years SVD in Hungary" I transcribed and translated handwritten letters on the foundation.

In addition, as a member of the Friends of the SVD I help with events, e.g. selling the SVD books and distributing leaflets. I also consider leading the prayer group in the parish as a kind of help. I am doing this since I know the SVD, that is for about 20 years.

What do you particularly enjoy about this work?

I enjoy being able to help. I get to know interesting topics and interesting people. Through this work, I also learn a lot about my faith, my religion. And last but not least, I enjoy the fact that I did not learn German and English for nothing, so that I can still be helpful at my age.

Dear Katalin, 'köszönöm szépen' - thank you for this insight into your work with and for the SVD in your home country Hungary!

Interviewed by Maria Wego

SVD Missionhouses

Papua New Guinea



Missionhouse in Wewak



Missionhouse in Alexishafen



Missionhouse in Bomana




Mission station, Trinity FM Radio



Missionhouse in Madang

In Memoriam



For God so loved the world,
that he gave his one
and only Son,
that whoever believes in him
should not perish,
but have eternal life.

Venâncio Liamusseko

+ 12.02.2021

Member of *Associação de Leigos Missionários do Verbo Divino*, Angola

Fr. Aloysius Wayan Supriyadi, SVD

+ 30.01.2021

Priest in Denpasar Diocese and supporting the work of SOVERDIA, Indonesia (IDJ)

Gone from our sight, but never from our hearts...

We will miss you.

Rest in Peace



Joseph of Nazareth

Joseph is
a Jew
from a royal lineage
Christ-bearer

Joseph is
a dreamer
a listener
a doer

Joseph is
a believer
a husband
a father

Joseph is
a worker
a refugee
a returnee

Joseph is
a role model.

The Joseph figure is in the mission house of St. Michael in Steyl and was created by the artist Gertrud Büscher-Eilert. Joseph is depicted as Christopher (Greek Χριστόφορος = Christ-bearer). He carries Jesus on his shoulder and leans on a stick which is also a family tree. Some persons from this family tree are depicted: Adam, Noah, Abraham, David with Bathsheba, Jehoshiah and Zedkiah. On the top of the stick is a cross formed out of three leaves.



Pope Francis has declared the period from 8th December 2020 to 8th December 2021 as the Year of Joseph. The feast day of St Joseph is 19th March.

Imprint

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Sophie Wego

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