



Society of the Divine Word (SVD)

SVD Lay Partners



Newsletter - from Around the World

Issue 25, August 2024

SVD Lay Partners – Looking Back and Ahead



SVD Sesquicentennial Celebration - Jubilee Year from 8th September 2024 to 8th September 2025

“We have a dream”

SVD Lay Partners' Statement and Action Plan

The participants of the SVD lay partners' workshop from 18th February to 2nd March 2024 at the Centro Ad Gentes in Nemi summarised the ideas and goals of the work of the SVD lay partners in a statement. It emphasises the main tasks: spreading the Word of God worldwide, serving people, especially the marginalised, working for peace, justice and the integrity of creation, growing in faith and strengthening the bond with the SVD. The statement also stresses the importance of the formation of SVD lay partners, the founding of new groups and the networking of groups worldwide. In order to achieve all the desired goals, an action plan was drawn up that contains concrete steps and a timetable for all the goals.

Formation and Organisation



Firstly, the Action Plan emphasises the importance of formation SVD lay partners. The 6 to 12 month initial formation is intended to provide a solid basis for cooperation and, above all, to cover the four characteristic dimensions and introduction of the concept of prophetic dialogue. The ongoing formation builds on this and, like the initial formation, takes place

together with the SVD. Spirituality is to be deepened (e.g. retreats, Bible study) and knowledge acquired (e.g. social doctrine of the Church, Papal Encyclicals relevant to mission). The Action Plan provides for an organisational structure of the SVD lay partners, from the grassroots to the zone to an global council. In addition to a president, vice president, secretary and treasurer, each group will also have a spiritual director. Elected zonal councils are also to be established in all zones by 2027. The global council is to be elected in 2029.

Public Relations

The Action Plan provides for the development of a logo for the SVD lay partners. To this end, an organisational and time



schedule was defined that includes the participation of all lay partners.

The Action Plan emphasises the high quality of the newsletter and calls to contribute articles on a regular basis and to observe basic journalistic rules.

The Action Plan also includes agreements on setting up a website that contains information from all groups for all groups as a portal. Proposals for possible providers and the sitemap should be available in 6 to 12 months. The website is to be maintained on a voluntary basis. The costs for hosting etc. are to be covered by contributions from all groups. A core group was formed to realise the creation of a website. It consists of Nelson Raul (Angola), Arlene Cariaga Bueno (Philippines), Joanna Dziemianczyk (Poland) and David Meneses (Mexico).

The detailed text of the Action Plan and Statement can be found on page 24 ff.

The Core Group



Nelson Raul

Arlene Cariaga Bueno



Joanna Dziemianczyk



David Meneses

SVD Lay Partners' Reflections on the Workshops



Dream to Reality

I attended the Second International SVD Lay Partners Workshop in Nemi, Rome, as a representative of Indonesia's SVD lay partner group, Java Province (IDJ). It was always a desire of mine to spend some time in Rome, and the workshop made that a reality. This was an excellent opportunity for me to learn more about SVD spirituality and

partnership with the lay partners. The workshop also allowed me to meet, interact, share, and exchange experiences with SVD lay partners from all over the world.

Being an SVD lay partner is an experience from the start to the end. Everyone has the same opportunity to contribute their knowledge and experience, which makes us feel strongly equal - whether we are from ASPAC, AFRAM, PANAM or EUROPA. This made us feel comfortable expressing ourselves during the workshop. This also allows us to form deep bonds between ourselves. We sense the care and affection expressed by each participant over two weeks as if they were real brothers and sisters in our family. I miss them all so much.

Everything I've learned and experienced during the workshop has given me a very positive mindset and way of thinking. It has also broadened my knowledge and strengthened my conviction in SVD lay partner, leading me to believe that we will continue to expand in a variety of ways to support and work with SVD. That is why I was eager to attend the training, and I have been feeling extremely lucky that I was selected by SVD Provincial to represent Soverdia, Java Province.

I'll use the knowledge I've gained from this workshop to form SVD lay partners in my region. I'll be leading animation workshops to help our parishioners and members of the SVD, understand what an SVD lay partner is and how we may work together as members of the St. Arnold Janssen family.

By doing simple tasks like coin collection and daily mission rosary prayer, we can begin assisting the SVD missions. It is simple to do, but if we do it correctly, the outcome will be extremely significant. Through the intercessions of Saints Arnold Janssen and Joseph Freinademetz, may God bless us with hope, faith, and strength to continue our work in supporting and collaborating with the SVD. Amen.

Paulina Suharsi
SOVERDIA, IDJ
(Participant of the 2nd workshop)



SVD Lay Partners for a Common Future

There is a distinction between the Church associations from Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, in which the faithful, whether clerics or laity, carry out together the activities of evangelization, the apostolate, and works of charity. As people of God, every member by baptism is a missionary disciple. This missionary nature can be exercised in many ways, but more importantly, they can realize this vocation together with any Religious Congregation. Thus, they become partners in mission together with a Congregation/Society/Institute.

According to the historical archives of the Society of the Divine Word (SVD), one of the agenda of the first General Chapter (1884-1886) was the foundation of an institute of lay partners. On 27th and 28th January 1885, the capitulars had discussed an "institute of lay cooperators to assist the missions." The minutes of the said chapter read, "Since some pious people living in the world wish to join us in our spiritual efforts, it has been decided to offer them this possibility by establishing an institute of lay cooperators as mission helpers."

It was resolved: to grant them a share in all the good works and prayers of the Society. So right from the start, the SVD had discovered lay partners as a real treasure. This aspiration, which had been forgotten with the adoption of the Rule of Religious Life, reappeared quite clearly with the resolutions of the 17th General Chapter, 2012. The main concept is that lay people who share Arnoldus' spirituality and charism can become lay partners with the Society and through formalizing Statutes, they can become SVD lay associates.

In his opening Homily at the SVD Lay Partner Workshop in Nemi on 15th October 2017, the Father General of the SVD said, "You are important to us. Without you, our work as missionaries all over the world would not be possible. The SVD's vision in following the Divine Word is "His Life is our Life and His Mission is our Mission."

It is in this straight line of origins that the lay partnership, the fourth pillar of the Arnoldus family, is currently being established. This partnership aims to ensure that the divine message of salvation is known and received by all men and women throughout the world.

Jean Paul Nico Luketo
Fraternité SVD, CNG
(Participant of the 1st workshop)





AFRAM ZONE



Kenya (KEN) – Friends of SVD

We become God's Light

Reaching to Arusha Lay Partners

God pours His light into us, illuminates our whole being and we become instantly the light to shine forth. On 21st April 2024, Fr. Martin Cingel, SVD, the Mission Secretary, took the initiative to meet with a group of our fellow lay partners in Arusha, Tanzania with the main purpose of uniting the two groups. He was well received by our lay partners there. He emphasized the need to hold meetings for all lay partner leaders and promised to plan for the date.

Commissioning

Others see our actions and choose to follow us when our light shines. On 14th April, 9th June, and 16th June 2024, respectively, the Mission Secretary, Fr. Martin, welcomed twenty-four members into the lay association from our parishes of Mihango, Soweto, and Diwopa.

Celebration

On 12th May 2024, we gathered at St. Mary Immaculate Parish, Mihango, for a Thanksgiving Mass celebrating Fr. Martin Cingel's silver jubilee. We took part in the Bible procession and later presented to him our small gift.

Leaders Meeting

Leaders from our three districts met at Diwopa parish in Nairobi from 21st to 23rd June following an arrangement made by the Mission Secretary during his visit to Arusha, Tanzania. The purpose was to unite the three groups to form one lay partners' group in the Province, guided by a single constitution, journeying together, and embracing Synodality.

We began the meeting with an invocation to the Holy Spirit, led by a burning candle and a Bible in accordance with SVD tradition. We concluded with a Eucharistic celebration. The meeting was extremely well facilitated by the Mission Secretary.

Grace Akinyi



South Africa (BOT) – SVD Lay Partners, Malamulele

Ongoing Work of the Group as well as Nemi-Workshop and General Chapter Participation



Empowerment and Growth

SVD Lay Partners from St. Benedict's Catholic Church held regular meetings for members' empowerment and spiritual growth.

Fr. Marselinus, the parish priest, and Fr. Jay De Leon, the Mission Secretary, provide the members with great support in terms of formation and spiritual animation. For us lay partners, they organized and led a retreat.

Outreach Projects

Apart from engaging with the Xitlhelani Pfluxanani Disability Centre, the group also identified vulnerable and needy families at the nearby refugee camp. We assisted the SVD missionaries in buying food and other essentials using the SVD social fund. We plan to continue the support, and we are looking forward to spending a day with them and sharing the Word.

The seed-bed is in excellent condition and ready for planting.

Blessed Benedict Daswa Pilgrimage and Family Visits

We participated in the Blessed Benedict Daswa Pilgrimage's planning at the Malamulele parish. Our faith has become stronger as a result of this pilgrimage.



We offer prayers and visits to families that have lost a loved one.

Lay Partners Workshop in Nemi and 19th General Chapter

One of our members participated in the SVD lay partners workshop in Nemi, Rome. The workshop's goals were to discuss best practices from around the globe and to ensure that we all understood what was expected of us as lay partners.

From AFRAM Zone, Thandi Mazibuko, SVD lay partner from Malamulele, was invited to participate in the 19th SVD General Chapter of the Society of the Divine Word in Nemi, Rome.

Thandi Mazibuko



SVD Generale, Medisk Department

Zambia (ZAM) – SVD Lay Partners

Group Activities



Recollection

Twenty-one SVD lay partners attended a Recollection on the theme "Encounter with the Lord" on 21st October 2023, conducted by Mission Superior Fr. Martin Kawana SVD and Fr. Maximilian Bwalya SVD. The Recollection concluded with lunch, and the partners contributed to the construction of the new Church structure at St Charles Lwanga parish.

Visit to St. Elizabeth Catholic Church

In November, a few members went to St. Elizabeth Catholic Church and the outstation of Chindwin Parish to invite more members to join the group. They introduced our group to the parishioners and shared our work and the objectives.

Festive Season Donations

On 30th December, the SVD lay partners of Kabwe donated various items pledged by the members to selected members of St Elizabeth Catholic and Holy Rosary parish. They visited Mr. Bwembya of St. Elizabeth, Madam Bernadette Macheleta of Holy Rosary Parish, and Madam Juliana Munkombwe.



2024 Activities

On 20th January, the SVD lay partners celebrated the feast of Saint Arnold Jansen, presided over by Fr. Martin, and renewed their commitment. This was followed by a meeting to plan for the year's activities.

The group's membership has grown from twelve to thirty-five. Regular formation and meetings with the Arnoldus family have increased the group's understanding and devotion to the SVD charism. One of the activities is to invite our friends from Linda Parish in Kabwe to a joint Assembly of the SVD lay partners.

As part of its evangelism efforts, the group has planned visits and donations to the most vulnerable members of our communities. Recognizing the importance of self-care and prayer, the partners will hold recollections and retreats at regular intervals. During the year, new members will be welcomed after formation.

Ndalia Chileshe represented the group at the Second SVD Lay Partners International Workshop in Nemi, Rome. In her own words, "I was thrilled to be part of the wider Arnoldus family. The workshop has raised fresh expectations and strengthened my dedication."

Ndalia Chileshe





ASPAC ZONE



Indonesia (IDE) – Soverdia Nagekeo

No to Plastic Waste



Plastic-Free Charity Concert

The charity concert by the brothers from St. Paul's Major Seminary Ledalero, held at Stella Maris Danga Parish in Nagekeo, took place on 10th June 2024. Leading up to the concert, the brothers and their companions engaged in various activities within the parish, including community catechesis, a one-day seminar on "Laudato Si and the Wounded Face of the Earth." There was a plastic waste collection drive at Danga Market, tree planting, and sports events. From the brothers' arrival on 7th June to their departure on 12th June 2024, members of the Soverdia Nagekeo District actively engaged in committee activities.

Use Glass Cups

Soverdia Nagekeo and the parish committee achieved a significant achievement in the implementation of environmental cleanliness by switching to refillable water bottles and glass cups instead of single-use plastic bottled water.



A Success Story, a Useful Educational Tool

The success of the glass and refillable water program makes us happy and proud since it has prevented plastic waste – especially from single-use plastic bottled water – from appearing everywhere. For those who have been accustomed to drinking water from throwaway plastic packaging, this is a useful educational tool.

Elfrin Hurek



Indonesia (IDJ) – Soverdia

Social and Spiritual Activities



SVD Novitiate Visit

Soverdia welcomed and supported SVD novices on the "Emmaus Journey" to Bali Island on 20th to 23rd April 2024 by donating food, drinks, gifts, and planning a Mission Day to promote their SVD call. The goal was to raise funds for their educational expenses and for a memorable farewell. We believe that our support will encourage them to complete their studies.

Care for Prisoners

On the Feast of the Ascension of the Lord, members of Soverdia along with Fr. Guido Fahik, SVD, and Fr. Martin Fatin, SVD, visited Kerobokan Prison in Bali, where they provided lunch and celebrated Holy Mass for the prisoners. We pray that Soverdia's caring visit will give the prisoners the strength to continue living their lives and being connected to the Divine Word.

Devotion to Mother Mary

In May, several Soverdia groups from the parishes, district, IDJ Province, and the Indo-Leste sub-zone devoted themselves to the Mother of the Divine Word while simultaneously praying for the SVD missionaries through live and virtual Missionary



Rosary Prayers. Through our prayers, we hope that God will grant our wishes for the missionaries.

Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus

Every year, Soverdia organizes a Novena Mass and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament to prepare for the Feast of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus. As SVD lay partners, we are grateful that this novena is becoming increasingly popular, with more people attending year after year. May the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus remain in everyone's hearts.

Interactive Virtual Bible Study

On Monday, 24th June, Soverdia members of IDJ Province had an Interactive Virtual Bible Study with the theme "Being a bearer of light," conducted by Fr. Aurelius Pati Soge, SVD of Bible Center Batam. Soverdia members from various districts in IDJ and Timor Leste Province participated. This activity will become a regular program, and hopefully, through this activity, more and more members will be inspired to live closer to the Divine Word.

Paulina Suharsi



India (INM) – Disciples of the Divine Word (DDW), Andheri, Mumbai

Silver Jubilee Activities



Visit of Tribal Children to a City of Dreams

Agle saal phir milenge, translated as “We’ll meet again next year”, was the reverberating chorus from a bus filled with enthusiastic and happy tribal children on their way back home.

Enthusiasm in the Air

On a scorching summer day on 4th May 2024, forty children with seven social workers along with Fr. Nickson Gabru, SVD, and Fr. Lucas Parkhe, SVD made a five-hour long bus journey from a rural tribal village called Tala to the city of dreams, Mumbai. For most of them, this was their first trip outside their village. DDW Andheri organized the event to commemorate their 25-year silver jubilee journey and to highlight their commitment to social activities.

The youth of Sacred Heart parish organized a day full of fun activities such as games, songs, and dances for the children. The parish grounds were set up with entertaining games, candy, and popcorn stalls to keep everyone engaged. Language and social barriers did not hinder anyone from having fun and laughter. Gift hampers for children and the social workers brought many smiles.



Joy Ride and Boat Ride

After a good rest, the children woke up early, excited for a joy ride to the city of Mumbai. Two buses were arranged to take the children and volunteers on a sightseeing trip in Mumbai. The first stop was at the Gateway of India, where everyone enjoyed a 45-minute boat ride on the Arabian Sea. The next stop was at St. Theresa's School Hall, where Fr. Cosmos Ekka, SVD organized a fun session with dance, animated by the migrant children from Maitri Sanghatan, UCDC, Bandra.

The Gift

After a delicious meal and ice cream, the children started their return journey with fond memories of a city that they had only heard of or seen in movies. DDW Andheri also received a heartfelt gift - the gift of genuine smiles, joy and love.

Anupama Subodhanan



The Philippines (PHC) – The Lay Society of St. Arnold Janssen (LSSAJ)

Organisation and Spirituality – Two Sides of Groupwork



Officers and Members of the Board of Trustees Take Oath

On 12th June 2024, the LSSAJ reached another milestone as a new set of officers and members of the Board of Trustees were sworn into office by Fr. Erik Lakandula, SVD, the newly appointed Prefect of the Christ the King Mission seminary. The following individuals were sworn into office: Charles Avila as Chairman of the Board; Antonio Alvarado as President; Sam Corral as Vice President; Daisy Leones as Board Secretary; and Julio Tonquin as Treasurer. Other members of the Board of Trustees include retired Justice Gabby Ingles, Sammy Yap, Ed Agbayani, Marvin da Silva, Berlee Magdayao, Heidy Elizan, Aisa Tacolod, and Rizalina Loya. Chapter President Danny Remoroza of the General Santos City Chapter and President Emma Flores of the Dasmaringas Chapter remain with the board as mandated in the constitution and bylaws of LSSAJ.

Fr. Erik shared his life-changing experiences as a young SVD missionary in Tanzania, Africa for thirteen years, which was truly inspiring. He presented the First Module on “SVD Missionary Spirituality” and the history of the Society of the Divine Word, beginning from the biography of St. Arnold Janssen and the significance of the Quarter Hour Prayer. The celebration of the Holy Eucharist was followed by a simple lunch.



Trinitarian Lay Mission Spirituality

In line with the guidelines of the ongoing 19th General Chapter of the SVD, which stresses the importance of mutual education and formation between the SVD and lay partners, the board members will conduct regular formation sessions focusing on "Trinitarian Lay Mission Spirituality." LSSAJ aims to engage in more collaborative and creative missionary activities with the SVD, other SVD lay partners, and civil society organizations, with a focus on LSSAJ's advocacies: JPIC, good governance and transparency, poverty alleviation, and biblical apostolate through its regular sessions of Faith Transforming Life (FTL).

LSSAJ will undertake a membership campaign to reach a wider audience in promoting its vision and mission, which has been severely affected by the pandemic.

Daisy Leones



The Philippines (PHN) – SVD-PHN Mission Partners

Different Activities



Another First from SVD PHN

During a regular meeting on 11th June 2024 one of the five districts in Northern Philippines – the Pangasinan District, PHN Mission Secretary Fr. Emil Pati, SVD and SVD-PHN mission partners coordinators couple Mike and GeeO Paderon were given the opportunity to present the Triennium Mission Animation Plan for 2023 to 2026. The initiative led by District Superior Fr. Pablo Garay, SVD, is a testament to stronger collaborations for the mission in the future. The formation and strengthening of Mission Animation teams in the districts, SVD schools and colleges, and other SVD-PHN institutions was discussed.

I Pray, I Give, I Promote the Mission

With the release of the SVD-PHN mission poster for 2024, the call and challenge to every SVD-PHN mission partner is – I pray, I give, and I connect and promote the mission. Mission posters and mission envelopes will be distributed to districts, schools, SVD parishes, and other SVD settings. A QR Code on the poster, when scanned, will display the SVD-PHN Mission Animation video released on YouTube in June 2024.

[SVD-PHN Mission Animation](#)

The Arnoldus family breakfast

Every 4th Sunday for the past four months, the Arnoldus family has been having breakfast at the SVD Provincialate in San Fernando, La Union. The breakfast brings together the SVD Provincialate community, retired SVDs, and SVD-PHN mission partners after the mornings Eucharist. Each family contributes food for the feast, with the prayer of uniting together as one Arnoldus family for the mission.

Partnership @Vocation Promotion

Vocation promotion is a serious responsibility for all Catholic faithful. It opens an important path of discernment to where one is called. It is crucial for individuals, especially within the family, to encourage and support vocations to the priesthood and religious life.

SVD-PHN mission partners are encouraged to help in vocation promotion, particularly within their family and friends. Please check out the link shared on the SVD-PHN mission partners' Facebook page.

[Vocation Promotion](#)

[Family Breakfast](#)

Mike and GeeO Paderon



SVD-PHN Mission Partners from Isabela and Abra



An Evening to Remember

On 2nd June 2024, couples and singles came together for a night of dancing and music supporting a cause. The event, themed "True Love Have Never Endings", organized by St. William the Hermit Parish in San Guillermo, Isabela, raised funds for the ongoing construction of the parish church. Two couples shared their love stories, the parish youth band performed, and there was an award ceremony for Silver, Pearl, Ruby, and Golden Long-Lasting Relationships.

We Remember. We Celebrate. We Give Thanks

Every third Sunday of the month, SVD Community at the SVD district house in Bangued, Abra, and SVD Friends meet after the Sunday Community Mass to celebrate the birthdays and anniversaries of the SVDs and mission partners.

Honoring the "Unsung Heroes"

In June, two SVD-PHN mission partners from the SVD district house in Ubbog, Bangued, Abra were honored in a ceremony attended by the SVDs, mission partners, friends, and family. Mrs. Josie Versoza, the long-time laundry woman, was thanked for her dedicated service. Additionally, the community celebrated the fifth birthday of *Kadanggay Misyon* (Mission



Partner) and the fifty-seventh birthday of Rey Valdez, who has served the SVD for thirty-five years in Ubbog, Bangued, Abra.

Manang Josie and Rey are just two of the hundreds of silent mission partners, often referred to as "unsung heroes," who have truly been partners in the mission.

Youth Summer Camp

From 1st to 5th July, hundreds of youths gathered at St. Joseph the Husband of Mary Catholic Mission in Calanasan, Apayao for the Vicariate Youth Camp of the Apostolic Vicariate of Tabuk. The theme was "Youth in Action: Living the Gospel in Building a Community of Hope". Fr. Emil Pati, SVD, and mission partners coordinators Mike and GeeO Paderon spoke on 'Love Thy Neighbour', and 'Faithful Hearts'. They participated in a talk show on 'Expectation versus Reality', while leading the event with 'Building Bridges of Love'.

[Youth Summer Camp](#)

Mike and GeeO Paderon



Papua New Guinea (PNG) - SVD Friends PNG

SVD Lay Partners on the Journey with JPIC Activities in PNG



Meeting the Disabled

The SVD lay partners of St. Martin De Porres, Par, Wabag Diocese, Enga Province, together with their spiritual and physical programs, carried out one of the JPIC tasks by visiting the disabled persons in the communities, coinciding with their spiritual and physical programs.

During the "World Day of the Poor" in 2023, the JPIC identified six individuals with disabilities: (1) Deaf and speech-impaired, (2) Paralyzed and crippled, (3) Handicapped, (4) Mentally challenged and outcast, (5) Lame, and (6) Blind. On 25 March 2024, two teams of SVD lay partners, led by Evelyn Jaruka and Dianne Magol, visited the deaf and speech-impaired in Rakapos and Takawas village. Anita Yallom, Gloria Fonde, and Eldergard Magol visited the mentally challenged people where parishioners Tikisaenda Aal and Suni Pambaen participated well in Church activities

Building relationships

Our visit was intended to improve the relationship between the fortunate and the unfortunate, particularly disabled people. Jaruka and Magol, both schoolteachers, devote time to their spiritual lives and show love for children through their joint responsibility to the disabled. Jaruka and her staff were in charge of the deaf-and-mute visiting participants.

Rehabilitation

In the meantime, the SVD lay partners were assisting in sharing the JPIC work of small rehabilitation program activities among the disabled. As part of the JPIC program for 2024, one of the programs titled "Empowerment of Rural & Urban Disabilities based on Education Animation (Activity 1.6)" involved collaboration with JPIC SVD lay partners. Additionally, the lay partners prayed with the hearing and speech-impaired people and provided small donations, such as food items, as a token of love and appreciation. They too contributed stored foods and garden vegetables, in gratitude.

Evelyn Jaruka



EUROPA ZONE

Italy (ITA) – Cooperatori Laici Verbiti

Establishing of a New SVD Lay Group in Rome



St. Benedict of Norcia Parish was founded in 1926 in Rome, near the spot in Via Ostiense where Sts. Peter and Paul said their „Goodbye“ for the last time before martyrdom. In September 2020 it became an SVD parish, and the parish community slowly learned about the SVD founder St. Arnold Janssen, more about the founding generation and Arnoldus spirituality.

Cooperatori Laici Verbiti

In 2023 a small group of parishioners visited the places connected with the SVD congregation – Sankt Augustin, Goch, and Steyl – an amazing chance to get deeper into the spirituality and the history of the founder and SVD. This Italian lay partner group - *Cooperatori Laici Verbiti* - was formed in this parish in November 2023, blessed by the parish priest, Fr. Vivian P. Furtado, SVD, and assistant parish priest, Fr. Juraj Cibula, SVD. The aim was to build up a solid knowledge of the Arnoldus spirituality and to integrate our activity with the activity of the parish to help our priests.



Since the beginning, members have been meeting monthly to share moments of formation on SVD history and spirituality. Fr. Kieran Janjun Sun, SVD was recently appointed as the new spiritual director of this group.

Short and Medium-term Goals

The short-term goals of the SVD lay partners are to complete basic formation for lay partners and to raise funds for the mission. To achieve this, two musical events have been planned in the future.

Medium-term goals are to elaborate Statutes and a book of prayers, to increase the number of members, and to share the peace of Christ in Rome, all of this in the spirit of St. Arnold Janssen.

Isabella Gargiulo



Germany (GER) – SVD-Partner

"Future Belongs to the Man of Peace" – Catholic Convention 2024 in Erfurt



Catholics from all over Germany have been meeting for *Katholikentag* (Catholic Convention) since 1848. This year, the meeting took place in Erfurt from 29th May to 2nd June. The motto was "Future belongs to the man of peace". Around 20,000 people came together to talk about and celebrate their faith. This was of particular importance at this location, as the majority of the population is non-religious. Only 8% are Catholic.

The *Musikapostel*, the music group of the Fratres from Sankt Augustin, inspired the people with cheerful songs from all over the world. People sang along, clapped and danced. It became clear that not only music unites people, but also Christian faith.

When the time was cleared away again after four days, everyone was tired but very happy and satisfied. Thank you Erfurt! We had wonderful and peaceful days!

Maria Wego

As in previous years, the German SVD Province took part in *Katholikentag* 2024 with its own tent. They were supported by SVD-Partner from the preparation stage onwards. In the SVD tent, visitors were able to find out more about the work of SVD in Germany, such as pastoral care for migrants or seafarers and parish pastoral care. The worldwide work was also presented. In many conversations, acquaintances were deepened and new ones made. There were those who were happy to meet SVDs, like the old lady who has been bringing the SVDs' magazines to her neighbours for decades. And there were those who had never heard of the SVD before, like the young man who would like to work as a *MAZler** for a year after finishing school. After mostly short but very intensive conversations, SVD-Partner gave people a small paper sandwich bag filled with spiritual food: the Quarter-Hour Prayer, the SVD Lay Partners' Prayer for Peace and a blessing. The seeds of the miracle flower (*Mirabilis jalapa*) were added to encourage the preservation of creation.

*MAZ = temporary Missionar, usually one year for young people



Austria (ECP) – SVD Freundeskreis

Praying and Bible Sharing

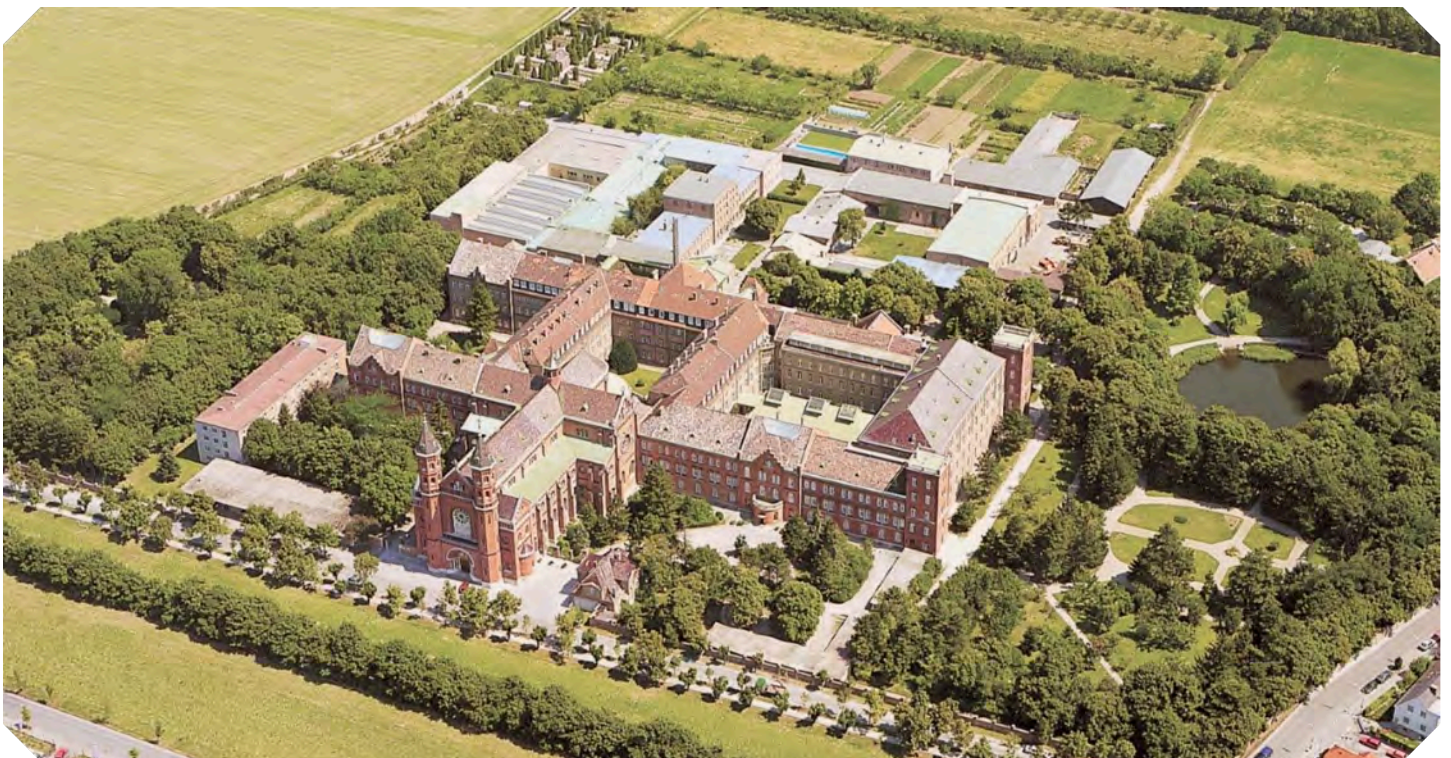


Immediately after his return from Nemi, Manfred Lichtenberger reported to the Steyler Freundeskreis in St. Gabriel, Austria, about his positive experiences and adventures and presented the topics of the workshop.

In May, this information was shared with the Steyler Weggemeinschaft MHGG (Missionary Holy Spirit Community) of the Missionary Sisters (SSpS) in Stockerau too.

At the end of June, the members of the *Freundeskreis* prayed together for the 19th SVD General Chapter and had Bible sharing.

Manfred Lichtenberger





PANAM ZONE



Brazil (BRA) – Amigos do Verbo na Amazônia (AVA)

We are Leaven, Salt, and Light Wherever We Go!



Celebrations

The SVD lay group - *Amigos do Verbo na Amazônia (AVA)*, which works in four districts of the Amazon region, continues to participate in the celebrations of the patron saint. With several of the parishes that were celebrating the feast, the cities of Alenquer, Rurópolis, and Santarém welcomed the missionaries.

Fundraising Activity

The AVA group of Our Lady of the Rosary parish, Santarém, in addition to the celebrations in the communities, organised another activity to raise funds for the sustainability of the group, which took place on 25th May this year.

Hot Soup

We are also continuing with the distribution of soup on the city's waterfront in partnership with the AVA of *Santo Antônio do Laginho* and *São Mateus*.



Holy Missions in Alenquer

We are getting ready to participate in the Holy Missions in Alenquer, which will be held from 4th to 7th July 2024 in the city of Alenquer, PA. Many lay partners from the regions will be there during this time, engaging in active sharing and missionary activities.

Oneide Costa



Colombia (COL) – Laicos Misioneros del Verbo Divino

First General Assembly



The lay partners of the Society of the Divine Word, Colombia held their first general assembly from 29th June to 1st July 2024. This gathering was the result of a process initiated by Fr. Manuel Antonio Brand Mesa, SVD, in February 2022 in Medellín. The assembly was a time for renewal and care as they worked towards official recognition as lay partners of the SVD.

Eighty lay people from nine cities and municipalities of Colombia met in Medellín to elect the members of the national board. Six people were elected to integrate it, a coordinator, a vice-coordinator, a general secretary, a treasurer, and two councillors. All regions of Colombia where the SVD is present were represented, including El Banco Magdalena, a municipality where there are no SVD priests or brothers, but where there are SVD lay partners.

We were accompanied by four priests and one SVD brother, led by our mission secretary, Fr. Oscar Darío Vila Úsuga, SVD. He was in charge of training on topics related to personal growth, the meaning of "Your light must shine before others," and the spirituality of the Divine Word.

The idea that the laity associated with the Society of the Divine Word (SVD) in the Colombia Province are not parish laity, but

rather members of the congregation, is becoming increasingly prominent. Even though we may be part of a parish in the cities where we live, we do not function as a parish group. While we may have responsibilities within the parish, our main mission and responsibility lie with our Society of the Divine Word. We believe that this line of thinking will enable us to evolve and establish a strong SVD lay movement that will endure into the future and continue to exist within the Society. Previous attempts to institutionalize SVD laity in Colombia failed because they remained fragmented across different cities and operated as small groups within parishes, focusing on collaborating with their parish priests like any other parish group. Their objective was to serve the parish rather than to live the spirituality of the Divine Word or to build the institution.

Another important point was the assignment given to the new board to oversee the finalization of the statutes that have been in progress during the first few months of this year. Additionally, we are looking forward to participating in various meetings and workshops for the formation of the SVD laity worldwide. Preparations for the 150th anniversary jubilee of SVDs will commence next month in Cali, Colombia.

Iván Darío Cataño Vásquez



Mexico (MEX) – Misioneros Auxiliares del Verbo Divino (MAVD)

A New Phase in Missionary Life



The year 2024 started promptly for the lay missionary life in México. After celebrating our Coordinators' Encounter in Manzanillo, Colima in February, we prepared for a new phase in our missionary life, marking the beginning of activities under the new coordinating team with Félix Ortega, Juan Manuel Ahuatl, and David Meneses.

Moments of Renewal and Care

Soon it was time to meet again. The Holy Week mission gave us moments of renewal and affection. This year has been particularly reflective, as we questioned the new direction of the movement, aiming to shake off old grievances. Therefore, we extended participation to members who, with great faith, wished to rekindle their missionary path and join us in visiting our Otomí brothers in the Santiago de Anaya area of Hidalgo state.

Amid the warmth of fraternity and family, we lived through Holy Week surrounded by new challenges and the return of familiar faces to bolster our mission: sharing life and its renewal, and celebrating the passion, death, and resurrection of our Lord. We sang His victory in the candlelight of the Easter Vigil, illuminating the current darkness of depression and loneliness that seeks to overshadow the love and mercy Jesus invites us to experience every day.



The Road to Emmaus

After completing our mission, we left with memories that keep Jesus close to us. The Otomí communities and their people continue to renew their lives in faith. We took "the road to Emmaus," returning to our homes with enthusiasm to share with our loved ones how we have encountered the Divine Word on our missionary journey.

In the fervor of this renewal, we convened meetings in various regions of the country, reuniting with our closest colleagues and bridging the distance between us by sharing our beliefs and experiences with Jesus. These interactions also allowed us to discuss our interests and daily life stories, strengthening the familial bond that sustains us to move forward.

David Meneses



United States (USW) – SVD Lay Partners

Celebrations and Community Mission



Celebrations

Riverside, CA Queen of Angels has had many exciting happenings recently! Fr. Beni Leu, SVD marked his 25th Silver Jubilee of Priestly Ordination, Fr. Biju Thomas, SVD celebrated his 20th Priestly Ordination, and the parish celebrated its 75th anniversary.

Silver Jubilee of Fr. Beni

A celebratory Mass and dinner were held by the parish, the local SVD community, and the San Bernardino Diocese. Fr. Beni expressed his gratitude for his priesthood, calling it a gift and a blessing. He will soon travel to Indonesia to celebrate his Silver Jubilee with family and friends. Congratulations and continued blessings to him.

Fr. Biju Thomas SVD celebrates 20 years as a priest. Sadly, he's moving to Prescott, AZ in the Phoenix Diocese. He will be missed. Godspeed, Fr. Biju.

75th anniversary

The celebrations continued with the 75th Anniversary of Queen of Angels parish. The Church was established in 1949, and in 1955, the community successfully raised funds to build "The Miracle Church". In 1999, the church required a larger space,



and with the support of dedicated parishioners, a new church was built. Happy 75th Anniversary Queen of Angels!

Community Mission

The SVD Four Characteristic Dimensions are at the heart of our community's mission.

The 1st Dimension – Focusing on the Bible
We hold weekly Bible studies with an average of 150 participants, including Lectio Divina sessions.

The 2nd Dimension – Mission Animation
It is dedicated to leading the community back to God's love and helping them live by it by conducting retreats.

The 3rd Dimension – Justice and Peace
It is upheld through our pantry and homeless outreach programs. We provide food for 120 low-income families and offer a 12-step program for those struggling with addiction, alcoholism, or domestic violence. Our youth groups are active in the parish and the community.

Lastly, the 4th Dimension - Communication
It is crucial to our parish. We utilize social media platforms extensively to keep the community well-informed about parish activities and schedules.

Sylvia Angel



United States (USS) – SVD Lay Partners

SVD Lay Group at Our Mother of Mercy Catholic Church



New Office Bearers

The office bearers of the SVD lay partners at Our Mother of Mercy Parish in Pass Christian, MS, USA are as follows:

Chairperson: Karen Cook

Co-Chair: Angel Lynk

Treasurer: Sharon Saucier

Secretary: Chantel Normand

Spiritual Directors: Fr. Rofinus Jas, SVD, and Deacon Justin Mitchell.

We, as the Domestic Church, carry Jesus and His teachings into our homes every Sunday after Mass. The question we must ask ourselves is, 'How are we living out our faith? How are we passing on our faith to our spouses and children? Does our home reflect the presence of God, exuding love and kindness to others? Is it unapologetically Catholic? Let's consider what changes we can make in our lives and homes to create an environment where God is welcomed as a part of our family.'

Family Retreat

The SVD lay partners organized a Family Day Retreat on Saturday, 22nd June 2024, focusing on the concept of the Domestic Church. It was a delightful day filled with food, family, and fun, combined with insightful sessions. The resource person was Jamion Burney an outstanding musician, and singer who aspires to become a Deacon.

During the retreat, we were reminded to heed God's call, and to fulfill our responsibilities, particularly in guiding the youth, despite being raised in the Catholic faith.

One of the attendees sent an email saying, "Thank you for inviting us to take part in such an enlightening event. The retreat gave me a stronger sense of community and purpose. Jamion's talk emphasized self-reflection and empathy, while Deacon Justin's insights on service and faith were truly inspiring."

Chantel Normand



Chile (CHI) – Alma Verbita

Various Challenges



Meeting of Alma Verbita

In our May meeting, we reflected on the Holy Trinity and how we can embody this mystery in our daily lives as Christians. We discussed the presence of the Holy Trinity in our lives and the challenge of recognizing it amidst the distractions of the world. Our goal is to stop and trust, despite the prevailing atmosphere of distrust, and to spread joy in a world that often lacks good news. We want to explore this aspect of our faith in the context of our daily lives and the world around us.

Bearers of Faith and Action

We as a community continue to walk together, evaluating our commitments for this year and preparing for the upcoming challenges.

The call is to step out of our comfort zones, not to become mere stewards of the faith, but to be bearers of a faith that is shared and lived with others. We must be a presence of the Holy Trinity to others. As a community it is clear to us to go out to encounter, to open new spaces, to challenge ourselves every day, to grow and to be with others.

Alongside the elderly care home we support, we keep working on our Formation, spiritual growth, and social work. We are working to maintain the funding of all of our activities.

PANAM Zone

As lay partners of the PANAM Zone, we are working and meeting to finalize the plans for the zone meeting scheduled for September 2025. This will be a significant celebration for all of us who share in SVD Spirituality, providing an opportunity to deepen and strengthen our commitment to the universal mission established by our founder, St. Arnold Janssen.

We are also excited about the formation work being carried out among the laity in the Panam Subzone (Paraguay, Argentina, and Chile). Following the General Chapter, we are delving into the theme, "Your light must shine before others" (Mt 5,16). We have already conducted three formation sessions, with each country taking charge of one.

Magaly Morales A.



❖ Congratulations ❖

Congratulations to our new Superior General, Father Anselmo Ricardo Ribeiro, SVD, and the SVD General Council 2024-2030.

The 19th General Chapter of the Society of the Divine Word (SVD) at the Centro Ad Gentes in Nemi, Rome, elected Father Anselmo Ricardo Ribeiro, SVD as our new Superior General.

Congratulations Father Anselmo and to the New SVD General Council 2024-2030.

Be assured of our loving and prayerful support as you take up this new responsibility.

While expressing our gratitude, we also congratulate our outgoing Superior General, Father Paulus Budi Kleden, appointed as the Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Ende in Indonesia by Pope Francis on 25 May 2024.



❖ Zonal Activities - EUROPA ❖

A Small Commitment

Monthly Online Prayer of the European Lay Partners



Can the spirituality of the saints who lived seeking the will of God, still inspire and transform the lives of people living in the secularized Europe of the 21st century?

St. Arnold Janssen belongs to a distant context from us, as a result of the changes that have transformed our world. Yet, despite this distance, his spirituality, although characterized by elements peculiar to his time, is incredibly inspiring for a lot of people.

As SVD lay partners, after the Nemi Workshop in February 2024, we have returned to our territorial work, but we have

made a small commitment as Europe Zone: a monthly online meeting on the third Monday where we pray for the Catholic Church, the Society of the Divine Word, and above all, for religious vocations.

Anti-life laws are increasing, depression, suicides among young people are increasing, and our society needs doctors: the priests who administer the sacraments, the true Medicine.

At the moment our online group has members from Poland, Slovakia, Portugal, Italy, Germany, Hungary, and Austria. Each month, one of us is responsible for organizing the prayer in English and our mother tongues.

We pray to ask the intercession of our saints - St. Arnold Janssen and St. Joseph Freinademetz. Their legacy inspires us with perseverance, hard work, commitment, and at the same time love. They teach us not to complain about the current situation, they urge us to read the signs of the times and not to worry about our failures.

But above all, it encourages us to “love and live with the humility and simplicity of heart of the incarnate Word, to face adversity with the courage and patience of the crucified Word and to experience the joy in the heart of the glorified Word.”

Vivat Deus Unus et Trinus in Cordibus Nostris.

❖ Information from the SVD ❖

News from India-East Province (INE)

Workshop for the SVD Lay Partners



The INE mission office and AJSN-INE jointly organised a two-day workshop for SVD lay partners of INE Province on 16th and 17th March 2024, centered around the theme: Initial Formation of SVD lay partner groups in INE.

The workshop began with the Bible procession and installation of the Bible by Fr. Anuranjan Bilung, SVD, the Provincial Superior of INE. The representatives from the five lay partner groups lighted the lamp. The Word of God (Mt 5:13-16) was proclaimed by Fr. Luis Ronald Pereira SVD, followed by the Quarter Hour Prayer in Hindi. The workshop was attended by twenty-five participants from two already formed SVD lay partner groups (Disciples of Light, Lungai and Divine Word Lay Associates, Burla) and three newly initiated groups from St. Mary's Church, Sundargarh, Good Shepherd Church, Bondamunda, and St. Arnold's Catholic Church, Jharsuguda. Two sisters of the Congregation of the Handmaids of Mary (HM) were present as guest participants.

The first day of the workshop dealt with four topics: Lay partners as the fourth pillar of the Arnoldus Family by Fr. Anuranjan Bilung, SVD, "Your light must shine before others (Mt. 5:16): Faithful and Creative Disciples in a Wounded World" by Fr. Dixon Lawrence D'Souza, SVD, the Formation of SVD lay



partners by Fr. Luis Ronald Pereira, SVD, and JPIC ministries in INE by Fr. Rasal Xess, SVD.

Representatives from each group presented a brief report of their activities along with their action plan. The participants were provided with questions to be discussed in their respective groups: (1) What are the steps your lay partner group will take to strengthen your group? (2) What are the ways you wish to collaborate with SVD and mission? (3) Prepare the action plan (2024-2025) for your group. (4) As SVD INE lay partners, what are your expectations from the SVDs of India-East Province?

The second day started with the Holy Eucharist presided over by Fr. Anuranjan. The day covered five topics: SVD spirituality and charism for lay partners by Fr. Dixon, Biblical Apostolate in the INE by Fr. Sunil Damor, SVD, being with people's struggles and protecting one's identity, rights, and culture by Fr. Ashok Kumar Minz, SVD, fundraising and bookkeeping by Fr. Rajesh Rosan Ekka, SVD, and guidelines for the formation of lay partner groups by Fr. Dixon.

Each of the five groups' representatives gave a summary of their discussions and pledged to work together on the formation of SVD lay partners. Presentations about the life and work of Servant of God Marian Zelazek concluded the workshop, and handouts and prayer bookmarks were distributed thereafter.

We are grateful to Fr. Valentine Surin, SVD, the praeses of Shanti Bhavan, for organizing the logistics that contributed to the workshop's success. Thank you to the confreres at Shanti Bhavan and the resource persons for your valuable contributions.



Fr. Luis Ronald Pereira, SVD
INE Mission Secretary
Fr. Dixon Lawrence D'Souza, SVD
INE AJSN Coordinator

❖ Special Groups ❖

The XVDA in The Philippines (PHC)

A Special Vocation



How it started

XVDA refers to the wives of former SVD priests and seminarians (XVDs) who have bonded to support their husbands in activities related to the Society of the Divine Word (SVD). For 50 years, many wives have faithfully assisted their husbands in collaborating with their alma mater, Christ the King Mission Seminary, and Divine Word Seminary in Tagaytay City.

The acronym XVDA

The acronym XVDA was accorded by Fr. Agerico "Jerry" Orbos, SVD during a retreat in 1991. Since then, several activities have seen the wives supporting the initiatives of the XVD. For some time, Fridays were spent with Fr. Jerry for counseling and discussions. Coming together twice for exclusive sharing has strengthened the bond and reinforced the need for stronger faith among the XVDA's.

SVD projects

The XVDA helped in funding several projects of the SVD, including Art in the Mission 1 (2002), Art in the Mission 2



(2005), Bingo for a Cause (2007), and a visit to Bahay-ni-Maria, a home for the aged in Laguna upon invitation of Fr. Efren de Guzman, SVD. They also participated in the annual "Christmas Harana sa VCR" and sponsored benefit concerts to raise funds. Additionally, they were involved in the feeding program of Fr. Flavie Villanueva, SVD at the St. Arnold Jansen KaLiNga Center. (KaLiNga - an acronym that means Eat-Study-Bathe-Be Well)

Pilgrimages and outings

In 2017, the XVDA launched their exclusive Lenten activity "Visita Iglesia", a traditional mini pilgrimage to visit at least seven churches to pray the Stations of the Cross. The pilgrimage has taken place in the following provinces: 2017 - Batangas; 2018 - Laguna; 2019 - Bulacan; 2023 - Rizal; 2024 - Cavite. Since then, it has been an annual religious activity and was only given respite during the pandemic.

The XVDA's out-of-town trip to Bohol in 2023 provided an opportunity for the ladies to strengthen bonds and develop closer camaraderie. There are more activities in the planning stages, and the XVDA is committed to assisting the SVD with their XVD partners, in line with the spirituality exemplified by St. Arnold Janssen.



Myrna Q. Villarosa
Daisy Leones

❖ Experience Reports ❖

"Do You Know What's New with the Pension?"

A Special Pastoral Experience

Every Sunday, a church service can be seen on television in Germany. The various Christian confessions alternate in the programme. The Catholic side broadcasts Holy Masses from churches in various parts of Germany, occasionally also in Austria. After the Holy Mass, people have the opportunity to call the parish from 9.45 am to 5.00 pm and talk.

On the occasion of the "72 Hours Campaign", a social campaign of the Federation of Catholic Youth in Germany, the Holy Mass on 7th April 2024 was dedicated to this campaign. As I work at the Federal Centre of Catholic Youth in Germany, I took on this special telephone service together with others.

We were a team of eight people for one of the six shifts. The phones rang non-stop. I spoke to around 30 people in less than two hours. It was enriching and worth every minute although it was exhausting, too. After just two or three conversations, I realised how important this service is. Most of the calls were from elderly people who were happy to be able to talk to someone. The loneliness was often obvious. So, it is not surprising that they also asked questions nothing to do with the

Mass like "Do you know what's new with the pension?". What surprised me most was that they found most Holy Masses boring and stiff. This service prepared by young people was pleasantly different for them.

Conclusion for Everyday Church Life

- The opportunity for dialogue after a service is very important
- Many people are lonely. What can we do?
- Let's celebrate lively church services!

Maria Wego
SVD-Partner, GER

❖ Column ❖



Dear Friends,

SVD and the SVD lay partners are involved in many fantastic ecological projects. Which one should I report on first? That's not easy. I decided on an action in Manipur on 5th June 2024.

On World Environment Day, children planted various plants with their teacher and Fr. Roy Naduviledathu, SVD. That's good for the climate and also for the menu! Yes, it is a campaign that takes place in many places, not just on World Environment Day.

But this planting campaign took place in Manipur, an Indian State where there are riots, and many people are suffering. So, this campaign is more than just a contribution to the environment and food security. It is a sign of hope and optimism.

When I saw the photos, I thought of a sentence attributed to Martin Luther: "And if I knew that the world would end tomorrow, I would plant an apple tree today." Well, the world will certainly not end tomorrow. But to make it a world worth living in and one that says yes to life, let's plant apple trees and jackfruit – today!

Yours Jo

❖ For Information ❖

New website about the SVD Martyrs

[svdmartyrs](https://svdmartyrs.com)

Catholic Media Council CAMECO - Practical Guide for everyone: Securing Your Digital World

[CAMECO](https://cameco.org)

❖ Announcements ❖

November 2024

Eighth World Day of the Poor – International Prayer Bridge

On Sunday 17th November 2024 the Church celebrates the eighth World Day of the Poor. This years motto “The Prayer of the Poor Rises to God”. Again SVD-Partner Germany invites you to pray together.

You will find texts and prayers on the website from the middle of October and still now the message of the Pope on the following web-sites.

[Texts and prayers](#)

[Message of the Pope](#)



❖ Formation / Further Studies ❖

Action Plan and Statement

Results of the Second Lay Partners Workshop in Nemi, February 2024

Action Plan

The following are some of the points that were discussed during the workshop, and the following aspects are drawn to take into consideration for future functioning of the lay partner groups.

1. Formation

To strengthen the SVD lay partner/collaborator groups, formation is very significant. How to do this?

A. Initial Formation

The initial training of SVD lay collaborators (that could be carried out in a period of 6-12 months) requires a comprehensive approach that combines theoretical teaching with practice, participation, and follow-up.

By providing solid, well-structured training, lay collaborators are prepared for effective and committed service in the SVD community.

What to do:

- Focus on the history and the spirituality of the Founding Generation
- Charisms of the SVD
- 4 characteristic dimensions and introduce the concept of Prophetic Dialogue.
- Bible study and Bible sharing
- Elements of fundraising
- Interactions with SVDs
- Visit to mission and Social Action

How to do it:

- Establish clear objectives
- find a meeting point, fix a meeting day at least once a month, onsite or online and set-up a schedule
- involve reliable and committed people to give the training
- provide spiritual accompaniment by the Spiritual Director of the group
- show adaptations to training plans as necessary.
- evaluate progress

On the part of the Mission Secretary, or in any case, the Advisor, he could generate support for the presentation of the lay collaborators in a formal manner, showing the vision, mission, charism and characteristic dimensions.

B. Ongoing Formation

The permanent training of SVD lay collaborators requires an interaction between leaders of the SVD community and the lay collaborators to:

- Strengthen skillsets and knowledge to carry out work focused on the 4 characteristic dimensions,
- Facilitate Bible studies
- Learn about the social doctrine of the Church and catechism and Papal encyclicals relevant to mission
- Carry out evaluations on the involvement of the lay partners considering the context of the different mission spaces
- Encourage a renewal of commitment as a member of the missionary congregation, to conduct retreats, workshops, doing projects in the community
- Engage and empower youth, with topics where generational change can be discussed
- Grow in spirituality and live a life of prayer, Eucharistic Adoration, daily Mass
- Build a team and establish a sense of belonging
- Visit Steyl, Oies and the exchange visits to other SVD parishes and homes.
- Explain about fundraising activities
- Have summer mission camps.

2. Logo for SVD Lay Partners

Disseminate the call for a common Logo to all SVD lay Partners/associations.

Process

- Concept note with the brief and specifications for the logo to be circulated to all groups.
- Communicate with the groups the deadlines and evaluation criteria.
- Groups to submit logos with a brief writeup of their design.
- Eligibility: Open to all groups – one entry for each lay partner.

Selection

- All the logos will be sent to David Meneses (Mexico) and he will give a number to each of them.
- Deadline to complete the process: within 4 months.
- Online voting to choose the best logo. (voting date to be communicated to all groups)
- David to prepare and share the Google form; and collate the final voting results.
- Voting eligibility – one vote per member.
- Logos of the three majority votes to be chosen for final selection.
- In case any minor modification is required of the above three logos, the same to be communicated to the respective group for resubmission with the requested changes by (date).
- The above three logos will then be sent to Fr. Stanislaus Lazar and he will see with the superior general and council for the selection of the logo.

3. Structure of the SVD Lay Partners

The structure as follows:

- Each group to elect coordinators for the post of president, vice president, secretary, treasurer. This team is responsible

for planning, organizing, and supervising the activities; will also serve as the primary point of contact with the religious leaders of the congregation.

- Each group to have a Spiritual Animator/Director to guide the group.
- Local group meetings for initial and ongoing formation.
- Encourage meetings with other groups in the province.
- Sub-zones, and zonal meetings of local groups to update and share information on growth, activities, and challenges.
- All zones to have at least one meeting within the next three years to elect a zonal president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, and member of the Zonal Council – by 2027.
- Once the zonal elections are completed, an international representation of the president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, and member to be elected for the International council – by 2029.

4. Strengthening the SVD Lay Partners Newsletter

- The present Newsletter is done well, and they appreciate all the editors and contributors.
- Newsletters to be made interesting by identifying the interests of lay partners.
- To ensure that the content is focused, relevant, and varied; the articles are easy to view and contain diverse and useful information, upcoming events, testimonies, spiritual reflections, information about projects they are involved in, etc.
- Submitting good articles with high-definition photos.
- Newsletters to be read by ourselves and encourage others to read them as well.
- Maintaining periodicity and consistency: publicity schedules will also help meet article submission dates.
- Spanish proof-reader required – Mexico (Jose Felix) to check and revert.
- In case newsletters are not received, members are to send their email addresses to the editor of the newsletter, so that the mailing list can be updated. svdlaicos@gmail.com

5. Exploit Technology to propagate the functioning of the SVD Lay Partners (SLP); develop an app or a portal.

The participants at first preferred to design an SVD lay partners' app on the lines of the SVD app (in different languages). It would be attractive and easy to read, cost effective, and could be downloaded on the mobile. Then they formed a core group and the core group met to discuss the pros and cons of app and portal and opted for a portal. The core group presented the above in detail to the participants, including some of their input and how they arrived at the following.

5.1 Overall

- SLP will have their own portal that will have both static and dynamic content
- The static content presented is open to the public and this will act as a SLP promotion tool. This portal will have a link to the SVD Website.
- The dynamic content will be only to the SLP members and to the decision makers from the SVD and they have to log into the portal with a specific code/PIN
- While developing all efforts will be made to make this portal a secure one.
- To begin with, this portal will have the option for English and Spanish.

- Coordinators from group > Province > Sub-Zone and Zone have to be appointed and they will be involved in every stage of the development and will assist in mobilizing content and the finance needed for the SLP portal.

5.2 Static content

- This is open to the general public
- Includes vision, mission, purpose, objective, history, network, activities, contributions, newsletters, projects on-going, beneficiaries' views, resources required, and many more...
- This content will be updated occasionally or bi-monthly.

5.3 Dynamic Content

- This is meant for only authorized members and is not open to the public.
- The functioning of SLP as an organization happens here.
- Areas like Induction programs, online formation, reporting, project proposals, approvals, financial transactions, problem solving, etc. will be presented here.
- The decision makers or the responsible persons can know what is happening around the world on a day-to-day basis.

5.4 Preparation of the Site Map (6 to 12 months)

- In simple terms every click or mouse over pop-up in the portal is included in the site map and based on this content has to be collected/mobilized.
- A site map will give us an idea of what all is available in the portal.
- A site map is important to get quotes or pricing from the Designer and the Developer.
- The site map prepared will be shared with all members, suggestions will be incorporated, and the final site map will be sent to the Mission secretary, Rome for final approval.

5.5 Content

- Content collection will be based on the site map that will be shared with every member of the SLP.
- Every SLP group will send their content (Text, still pictures, videos) to the province/region/mission SLP coordinator. He/she will edit this content and give it to the website in

charge person.

5.6 Finalizing the “Designer and Developer” (Vendor)

- We will look out for the vendor in all four zones and where the core group member lives.
- Give the site map with requirement details attached to the vendors and request them to give us a quote/pricing.
- After receiving the pricing, based on the pricing, their background, and capabilities one vendor will be identified and make an agreement and give advance money if needed.

5.7 Finance mobilization

- We need finance for the design and development of the portal and regular maintenance. Maintenance can be done by the vendor with payment or by an SLP member who is willing to spend time without pay or minimum payment.
- As of now SLP has around 15,000 members worldwide. To begin with, every SLP member contributes one Euro or more and that will give us a total of 15,000 Euros or more. This would be sufficient for the development of this portal.
- How to collect this amount has to be decided

5.8 The Core Group

AFRAM: Nelson Raul (Angola)
 ASPAC: Arlene Cariaga Bueno (Philippines)
 EUROPA: Joanna Dziemianczyk (Poland)
 PANAM: David Meneses (Mexico)

Overall coordination & project control: Michael Peria (India)
 Spiritual Animator: Fr. Stanislaus Thanuzraj Lazar, SVD (Mission Secretary, Rome)

Maintaining the app/portal is to be decided by the core group. As soon as possible, we can begin the app/portal.

6. Sharing and Reporting

The participants of the Workshop will share their experiences in their groups. After six months, they will report on some of the activities that they have engaged in due to the learning in the workshop. Likewise, they will send another report after one year too.

Statement of the SVD Lay Partners' Workshop Participants

1. Dream of SVD Lay Partners

We, the SVD lay partners, guided by the Holy Spirit, want to remain rooted in the Word and to grow in Arnoldus spirituality. We stay committed to carrying out God's mission in serving people on the periphery and the marginalized. We desire to be more open to the Holy Spirit and to welcome all peoples and work together with the SVD Congregation and other lay partners.

We dream of participating in God's mission:

- So that our members become more Christ-centered, rooted in Catholic teaching, united with the word of God; to pursue the Catholic faith and possess a discerning spirit to

accomplish God's mission.

- So that we become a growing global community, in collaboration with the SVD, by embracing all cultures, particularly those on the periphery of society.

We dream of journeying in commitment to mission:

- So that we involve ourselves in the four characteristic dimensions – Bible, Mission Animation, JPIC, and Communication to bring into reality the love of God. More particularly, we desire: to see a world that breathes justice and peace, to make Mother Earth our home; to accompany the less fortunate and oppressed; and to reach out to those on the margins.
- So that we strengthen our own families, bringing all of them

to build a community in which we can share our joys and sorrows and live Arnoldus spirituality.

We dream of being partners with the Society of the Divine Word:

- So that we work collaboratively with the Society to show the face of God to people.
- So that we meet with the SVD regularly to strengthen the bond and to learn from each other

We dream of growing both in our vocational journey and in numbers:

- So that we can be accompanied by a Spiritual Animator/Director who can guide us to understand the Arnoldus Spirituality, to assist us in deepening our understanding of the Bible and scriptures, and to help us discern our vocation as lay partners.
- So that we endeavor to establish more lay partner groups and become lay associates who are closer to the Society as well as to other lay associate groups.
- So that every group has statutes that guide our vision and mission and action plans to demonstrate our identity as SVD lay partners/associates.
- So that we engage and re-energize younger people in our journey so that there is vibrancy, creativity, innovation, and resources.

2. Steps in Realizing the Dreams

As a group, we worked on various ideas on how to realize the dreams stated above. Starting with a clear vision of both a sound structured plan that would help to organize the SVD lay partner groups and also the following steps that would assist us in our provinces/regions/missions.

As SVD lay partners, we participate in the mission of God through activities that demonstrate our commitment to the Word of God and mission, by spreading the Divine Word starting within our communities. We strive to participate in God's mission by taking the following steps as individuals and as lay partners:

- Develop a prayerful discernment; commit to grow in our Catholic faith, by enthusiastically participating in spiritual activities such as workshops, retreats, and Bible studies.
- Welcome all of God's people to participate in SVD missionary activities.
- Formulate guidelines for the SVD partners to meet the priorities of the lay mission locally and globally in order to better serve people.
- Collaborate with SVDs and establish statutes for approval.

We strive to live our SVD journey faithfully and devotedly by actively participating in faith formation, education, and service to others. To strengthen our commitment to mission, we take the following steps:

- Work for JPIC as a significant priority along with the other dimensions.
- Find ways to help our communities with environmental and ecological concerns.
- Schedule regular workshops and training with clear agendas and objectives based on short and long-term mission goals.
- Attend retreats to deepen our spirituality and commitment to the SVD lay partner/Lay Associate vocation for both current and new members.
- Commit to working with youth, families, and the marginalized.

As partners in our mission, we commit to collaborate with the Society of the Divine Word. Therefore, we would like to take these steps with the power of the Holy Spirit to meet the needs of our communities:

- Promote the SVD mission using networking platforms throughout the organization globally and internationally.
- Network with other SVD communities and SVD partner groups to foster strong prophetic dialogue across the ecumenical community.
- Work in collaboration with SVD and SVD lay partners to strengthen the SVD mission by contributing financially as well as giving our personal and professional resources as much as we can.
- Work in collaboration with SVD communities and SVD lay partners to strengthen the SVD lay associations and promote more members to strengthen the various groups.

We will do the following to promote more lay partner groups:

- Seek the assistance of SVDs to prepare the formation manual to form ourselves more effectively, which, in turn, could strengthen our vocation.
- Invest more time in promoting and emphasizing the importance of starting lay partner groups in every SVD parish.
- Commit to establishing SVD youth groups in our countries
- Find and strengthen a common mission with the SVD partner.
- Network with other faiths by including all lay missionaries in all four zones, sub-zones, and internationally as a whole.

3. Formation of the Lay Partners

Initial formation: It was strongly reiterated that initial formation and ongoing education of lay partners are critical to the growth and development of every SVD lay partner/associate. We plea to have a Spiritual Animator in each Province/Region/Mission to accompany and assist us with this formation. We need to create a formal, friendly invitation and introduction to lay partner ministry. For lay partners to be formed effectively, SVDs could combine theology and practical instruction, and provide a clear understanding of the vision, mission, charism, and four dimensions of the SVD; provide encouragement and personalized follow-up; and offer a solid, well-structured training for the lay partners so we are better prepared for fruitful and committed service in the SVD community.

Ongoing formation: Let us continue this ongoing formation with a well-structured, thorough, and comprehensive training for SVD lay collaborators. For lay partners to be formed effectively, SVDs could combine contemporary theology, spirituality, biblical education and Society documents; this would need to be combined with identifying needs, developing a diversified training plan, promoting participation, evaluating results over time, and applying what has been learned. A renewal of commitment and establishing a spiritually binding covenant for every member is recommended.

4. Some Activities for the Future

- Logo – The creation of a common Logo for all SVD lay partners and associations is an urgent task. The process has begun and should be completed within four months.
- Structure: Each zone will organize a zonal meeting of lay partners to elect five office bearers for the zone. This will be done within three years. The next step would be for all the zone leaders to come together within five years, by Zoom or other means, to elect the international leaders.

- Newsletter – It is most significant to strengthen the SVD Lay Partners' Newsletter by making the newsletter accessible and ensuring all partners receive the newsletter by email. The mailing list can be updated at svdlaicos@gmail.com. The Newsletter is also available online at <https://www.svdcuria.org/public/mission/newsbul/svdlp/lp2308en.pdf> and <https://www.svd-partner.eu/svdlp-slsvd-1/>
- App/website/portal – A core group from the four zones has been formed to discuss the design and development of such applications. Many elements are to be considered such as cost, administrator(s), and content. This is an ongoing project that will take time to develop considering all pertinent information.

In conclusion, we aim to remain faithful to our formation by aligning ourselves with the spirituality of our Founder to achieve a more meaningful and enriching community. Realizing these dreams and fulfilling all these steps will not be possible without the support of the mission secretary, the spiritual animator, and other SVD confreres. We seek their assistance in realizing these dreams.

May the darkness of sin and the night of unbelief vanish before the Light of the Word and the Spirit of grace and may the Heart of Jesus live in the hearts of all.

The First Point to be Realised - The Logo

In April, the groups were asked to submit designs for the joint logo and in July, 20 designs were available for selection from which three could be chosen. We are excited to see which of

the very different designs will be the most popular and become the joint logo. Here are the 20 designs once again



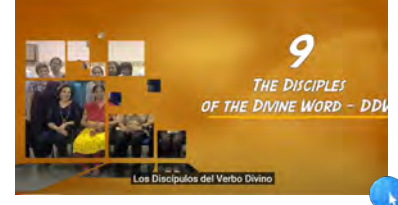
List of Lay Partners' Videos

Published by SVDMissionTV on YouTube

Since February 2022 SVD lay partners all over the world present themselves and their work in small videoclips published by SVDMissionTV on YouTube. Since issue no. 20

you find the complete list of all existing videos here. At the moment there are no new videos.

Click on the globe to start the video.



More in production



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.



Ben Ayung
† 12.04.2024
SVD Lay Partner, IDJ



Busmi Pasaribu
† 14.04.2024
SVD Lay Partner, IDJ



Anastasia Mariani
† 22.05.2024
SVD Lay Partner, IDJ



Linda Mulyani
† 25.06.2024
SVD Lay Partner, IDJ

Gone from our sight, but never from our hearts.

We will miss you!

Rest in Peace



150th SVD Anniversary Prayer

Holy Triune God, source of life and communion,
we thank you for inspiring Saint Arnold Janssen
to found the Society of the Divine Word.
We extend our gratitude to those who preceded us,
and to all collaborators in mission.

United to Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Word,
we are his missionary disciples who proclaim
the Good News of life and joy,
alongside works of friendship and compassion
for a wounded world.

With your Holy Spirit, renew us, Lord,
strengthen our journey as pilgrims of hope,
and in the face of new challenges,
may we generate responses
with creativity, fidelity, and synodality.

Holy Mary, Mother of the Divine Word,
guide our mission
with signs that build communion
and promote participation.
May the Light of your Son, which overcomes darkness,
illuminate our hearts, and all of humanity,
and creation.
Amen



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