

HOLY CROSS TODAY - GHANA

COMMUNICATING THE LIFE AND MISSION OF THE MEN AND WOMEN
OF HOLY CROSS IN THE DISTRICT OF WEST AFRICA

VOLUME 10 - ISSUE 3(b)

July-September 2007

O HAPPY DAY !

On Saturday, September 15, at 2 PM, the Holy Cross Family in Ghana gathered at Bl. Andre Chapel in the District Center to celebrate the Feast of our Patroness, Our Lady of Sorrows, and the Beatification of our Founder, Blessed Basil Moreau, beginning with a Holy Hour, coinciding with the beginning of the ceremonies at Le Mans, France.



Fr. Bob Gilmour, CSC, celebrant, and the wholehearted response of all present in prayer and song, assisted by the Cathedral Youth Choir, fashioned a memorable celebration of the Liturgy to provide a peak emotional experience for all present. Clearly Fr. Bob had one of his finest hours through all, especially in his homily in which he wedded the reflections on both Our Lady of Sorrows and our Founder most eloquently—*O Crux Ave, Spes Unica!*

The slow-paced Eucharistic Celebration ended about the time in which the proclamation of the beatification of Venerable Basil Moreau was to occur at Le Mans. Thus, proximate to this time, in Blessed Andre Chapel, the veil was removed that had covered the portrait of Blessed Basil Moreau, (painted by Bro. David Kpobi), and the proclamation of the beatification was read. Much jubilation ensued, as the portrait was carried around inside the chapel and placed in a temporary shrine behind the altar. Some singing and dancing continued following the formal recessional.



The Holy Cross Family and other close friends and religious gathered for the social on the District House rooftop to complete this glorious day in Holy Cross!



EDITORIAL: COPING WITH ADVERSITY

Cape Coast district, including outlying towns such as Brafoyaw, where the District Center is located, was beset with severe power outages more than a month during August into September.

In early August the Power station supplying Cape Coast had a compounded breakdown, resulting in the loss of three of its four transformers. Only one transformer was thus at hand to supply electrical power to the area—one-fourth the normal output. With obvious need for rationing power, a schedule was set up, not surprisingly with the ratio highly favoring power outages to “onages” for each of the 6 sectors, providing over a 4-day cycle: **36:24:24:12** outage to **onage** hours, respectively. Clearly, it was of some inconvenience using rechargeable portable lamps or candles for light, and missing not a few soccer matches or other programs of interest on TV at times, with pending important work at the computer often on hold. However, a major concern was avoiding spoilage of foodstuffs in the freezer. Surprisingly, however, even after 36 hours of outage time, the large freezers at Augusco and the District Center stayed sufficiently cold to thwart this possibility.

The transformer problem was finally resolved and electric power restored to normal in the district on September 11th, a pleasant surprise that this was one week earlier than the projected shutdown time.

Indeed, this recent inconvenience and somewhat worrisome ordeal to us in Cape Coast was relatively small as compared to the plight of Holy Cross family in recent disasters in Bangladesh with massive flooding over 80% of the country, and in Peru where a severe earthquake, caused great destruction, both countries suffering huge numbers of deaths. Great demands were made on our Holy Cross communities in the wake of these two tragic occurrences. We join our prayers with those in our Holy Cross international family for God’s supporting graces to our confreres and those to whom they minister, who still suffer adversity in the wake of these disasters.

Our *coping with*, is a *cross-bearing of* the adversity that besets us in all such instances. May we accept that all such events bearing upon us in such adverse circumstances can well be considered *as opportune times to identify more closely with the poor*, for whom we have strongly proclaimed in province and district mission statements our preferential option! And do we accept the faith-knowledge that in the economy of salvation, through the power of the Spirit with us uniting all in Christ, our suffering has a value to benefit in some way, our suffering brothers and sisters in our world village—God’s power and wisdom prevailing..

The whole matter of *coping with adverse circumstances in our lives* is well reviewed in Victor Frankl’s classic text: *Man’s Search for Meaning*. Victor Frankl was an Austrian neurologist and psychiatrist, himself a Jew, spared from the Holocaust so as to care for Jewish prisoners consigned to labor by the Nazis during WW II. He noted that only the prisoners having substantial meaningful values for living, such as comrades in the camp, religious faith, dignity of person, or sustaining self-worth, were able to cope with their extreme adverse circumstances and survived, while those without any such support, isolated themselves from the others, most often suffering personality decomposition leading to eventual death. The survivors were the ones who *remained free in their captivity*.

Frankl: *“Everything can be taken from a man but the last of the human freedoms—to choose one’s attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one’s own way.”*

COPING WITH ADVERSITY – If we are Christ’s disciples, He is our way, truth, and life—our freedom is in Him. With this awareness, we remain steadfast in the exercise of our freedom—wars, floods, earthquakes, deprivations of any kind, notwithstanding—in the knowledge that “Nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Rom 9:39) We are ever free to choose eternal life in Him!

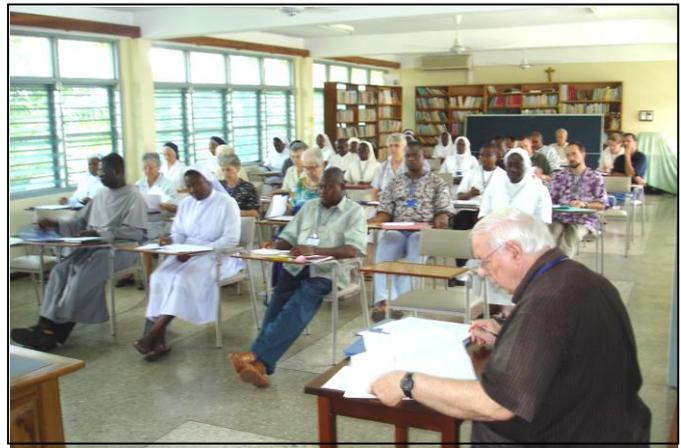
NATIONAL FORMATORS' MEETING

The meeting for all directors of religious formation in respective religious communities in Ghana met at Holy Cross District Center from 21st September to 24th September, 2007. This sector is comprised of the Archdiocese of Cape Coast, the Diocese of Sekondi-Takoradi and the diocese of Wiawso. Some 40 formators attended, most of whom are involved in postulancy/candidacy, pre-novitiate and novitiate programs, with a much less number directing temporarily professed religious. Two of our District members are on the Executive of this sector: **Bro. Tony Dadzie, president**, and **Fr. Bob Gilmour, secretary**. Other Holy Cross members attending were **Sr. Margaret Nimo, Brothers William Gates and Tom Dillman**.



At the first session on Saturday morning the formators listened to presentations made by **Sr. Martha Anobah, SMMC** and **Bro. David Kwaw, OFM-Conv.**, both relating their experiences as Directors in Formation. Those present seemed able to identify with them in regard to their own experiences of highs and lows as formators. Insights were gained from both the speakers and in the open forum following their presentations.

In the afternoon the large group was divided in smaller ones to discuss specific questions that had been chosen for this. After all reassembled later, each group reported its significant insights to the others, which generated other questions and comments from many others in this sharing session.



On Sunday morning considerable time was given in reviewing the minutes of the previous formators' meeting, resulting in a very lengthy period of individual comments on matters relating to given points in this review. There was considerable debate as to what should be the major topic for the speaker(s) at the next national

meeting, which also will be in Cape Coast. Owing to this lengthy discussion, as often happens in such a vocal and enthusiastic assembly, the reports from each of the five different sectors to give an update from their areas, did not begin until 11 AM instead of at the scheduled 9 AM hour! But this did conclude the main business of the meeting, with the opportunity of a free time to visit points of major interest in the Cape Coast region for those especially visiting this part of Ghana for the first time.

The occasion was formally ended with the celebration of the Eucharist on Monday morning, followed by breakfast, after which most all left shortly thereafter for their return trips home.

Special kudos to Bro. Anthony Dadzie, President, for his commendable role in helping to make this Formators' meeting a reality, and to Fr. Bob Gilmour, Secretary, who labored assiduously throughout

these days in striving to record significant points made in the various discussions among such a vocal group.

ST. JOHN'S SCHOOL SEEKING BOARDING STUDENT INCREASE

Construction of an additional dormitory at St. John's in Sekondi is motivated by the need to resolve a relatively serious problem at the school owing to the present imbalance of boarding-students to day-students. Clearly, the boarding student lives in a beneficial disciplined academic environment than the day students who live in and commute daily from their Sekondi-Takoradi area. This, according to **Bro. Joseph Annan**, Headmaster, is very evident from both the performance of students in these two different groups and the respective disciplinary problems, as well.

At present there are some 1300 students in the all-male enrollment in this secondary school, of which the 800 or so day students outnumber the 500 boarding students. Such an imbalance greatly influences the academic/social areas of behavior in the school. It is deemed that a drastic change in this ratio, reversing it in fact, is necessary to bring about the desired change to upgrade the academic status, as well as, behavioral image of St. John's—the day students downgrading the reputation of the school sometimes by their conduct when away from the school.

In view of the above, a new four-storey dormitory building is already under construction, which should accommodate some 400 students. It may not be possible to attract students in sufficient number to fill the new facility for school year 2008, but it is perceived that surely within a year or two later, when the school begins its selection of new students, the goal of attaining the desired ration of 900 boarding students to 400 day students will be a reality.

HE HAS CALLED ME

(Bro. Aristide Owen Biney is now in the Blessed Andre Novitiate at the District Center. He is one of the 3 Ghanaian novices, conjoined with 2 Ugandans and 1 Kenyan, now in their 3rd month of this novitiate year. He writes of his initial experience and insights thus gained).

“Come follow me”, it was the Lord Jesus Christ calling me. The novitiate is regarded by all as a place of prayer. For me it has been a time for a spiritual revival in my life through the opportunity to participate in a variety of spiritual activities and learn new forms of praying, which have greatly enriched my prayer life.

My apostolate of service outside the community in weekly visits to Ankaful Prison to work with the prisoners has been a well-spring of encouragement to continue the journey that I have begun in Holy Cross. It is a faith-deepening ministry gained from conversations with the prisoners. As I listen to their different stories, my heart sometimes burns with compassion for them.

I am very grateful to be able to share this novitiate year that comes through the collaboration between the Districts of East and West Africa. It has provided the opportunity for me to learn more about the African continent and cultural differences in sharing the life with those from East Africa.

I thank everyone for their support in their prayers for us and with us, as we make this journey in and with the Lord during this spiritual year. —Aristide Oben Biney

HOLY CROSS YOUTH RALLY

The District of Holy Cross organized a rally for the youth in the Sekondi Catholic Church on 2nd July 2007 at St. John's Secondary School. **Bro. William Gates** made initial arrangements for the occasion, while **Bro. Kenneth Kundantani** coordinated the program of activities. Some 300 youths attended, coming from Sekondi, Shama, Adiembra and other outstations of Sekondi. All the Holy Cross members, including Sisters of the Holy Cross, in Sekondi-Takoradi were present.

The day's program included talks by the CSC brothers on vocations in the Church and about the work of the brothers of Holy Cross here in Ghana, while **Sr. Scholastica** spoke about the work of the Sisters of the Holy Cross. This was followed by games, sports and music. It was a beautiful and fruitful interaction among youths of different ages and CSC members. The youths seemed to freely express themselves in their questions and views in regard to their present situations in life, the

challenges facing them, how to keep focused on life's values, and how they perceive the future for them. Those who were interested in learning more about the men and women of Holy Cross them. Those interested in learning more about the men and women of Holy Cross were given brochures and directed to keep in touch with respective vocation directors or any CSC members they know.

In the afternoon variety of games, participation was by individual choice. However, each parish or outstation fielded 3 teams each for volley ball, soccer and basketball. Six trophies were awarded for individual sports and one trophy for team for the overall winning team. **Sr. Scholastica** played on Adiembra parish' volley ball team. Youth participation on all the activities was encouraging. They seemed to enjoy to the full the day's activities and expressed their desire that similar programs be organized for them in the future. — Bro. William Gates, CSC

HOLY CROSS COLLEGE STUDENTS VISIT GHANA

(The following was written by **Kyle Kinkaid**, a Journalism student at HCC, who was in the group from the college visiting Ghana).

A group of students from Holy Cross College in Notre Dame, Indiana traveled to Cape Coast, Ghana on July 22, 2007. This trip, a requirement for their bachelors degree, is to increase a "global awareness" in the student. It allowed them the chance to immerse themselves into the rich Ghanaian culture. The students and their instructors were hosted by the Brothers from the Congregation of Holy Cross at the Holy Cross Center. During the student's stay, many close friendships were made between them and the brothers.

While in Ghana, the group visited the market in Cape Coast, as well as the market in Kumasi as part of an overnight stay in that city. They also ventured into the Kakum National Rainforest and across the rope bridges. Students were also able to visit the Elmina Slave Castle and the Cape Coast Castle. A special trip was also taken to a naval base where tours were given on some ships.

In more formal experiences, the Holy Cross College group had the great opportunity to hear lecturers from local universities. Different lecture topics included health care in Ghana, and the history of the Church in Ghana. On two different occasions, the brothers led evening reflection times, which were very moving, students having the opportunity of sharing certain aspects of their day's activities.

A large part of the trip included learning about the brother's mission in Ghana. Students visited many schools run by the brothers, such as the Holy Cross Skills School and Home of Hope and St. Augustine's College.

One afternoon, an art day took place at the Holy Cross Center where students were able to learn painting, dancing or drumming. All the members of the group especially enjoyed this event as they worked together in a group to express themselves through art.

All throughout the visit, students enjoyed great food prepared by the cooks in the kitchen at the Center. Holy Cross students were able to try new foods which they might not have had before. In appreciation of the brothers and the cooks at the Holy Cross Center, the students and their instructors prepared an "American style" meal one evening for all to enjoy. This was a nice way for both cultures to share their traditions.

The students left Ghana on August 7th and were moved by the experiences that they had while visiting. There were many sad goodbyes, but the members from Holy Cross College will never forget



the friends that they made and the things that they saw. All from the Holy Cross College group say “thank you” to the brothers for their generous hospitality. — Kyle Kincaid

PROFILE OF SISTERS OF THE HOLY CROSS IN GHANA

Kasoa Community:

- Sr. Mary Margaret Nimo** – Pastoral work in St. Martha’s Catholic Church
Director of our Lady of Holy Cross School in Nyame N’adom
- Sr. Shalet Ann Wagner** – In charge of planning of OLHCS
- Sr. Helene Sharp** – Supervisor of OLHCS building
- Sr. Evelyn Ntiamoah** – Student at School of Social Welfare in Osu, Accra
- Sr. Theresa Araba Fameyeh** – Teaching at St. Martha’s Catholic School
- Sr. Martina Dery** – Teaching at OLHCS

Takoradi Community:

- Sr. Esther Entsiwah** – Teaching at Archbishop Porter Girls’ Secondary School
Organizes workshops for teachers and catechists
 - Sr. Scholastica Elizabeth Ampadu** – Teaching at Nurses and Midwifery Training College
at Effia Nkwanta, Sekondi; Pastoral work and health
care at Blessed Virgin Mary Catholic Church, Fijai
 - Sr. Catherine Before** – Teaching at Greater Heights Preparatory School. Fijai, Sekondi
- Sr. Scholastica Ampadu

NEWS BRIEFS

- Of the some 14 young men participating in the 3-day “Come and See” Program at the District Center in early September, **Bro. Kenneth Goode**, Vocations Director, invited 9 to submit documents to be reviewed as to their qualifications to enter the Holy Cross formation programme. After reviewing the documents the Formation committee has decided to invite 8 of these young men for an extended “Come and See” programme at St. Joseph Hall, St. John’s School campus. This initial stage toward becoming a Holy Cross Brother aims to give further Christian instruction in doctrine and prayer and to experience something of life in a Holy Cross community. An evaluation will be made at the end of this 3-month period to determine their worthiness to enter the Cnadidacy Programme in January, 2008.
- As has been true in the past, the 6 novices now in the program at Bl. Andre Novitiate, will have during their novitiate year the benefit of persons from men’s and women’s religious communities in the area presenting conferences on various topics relating to religious life/spirituality and/or Days of Recollection.
- **Bro. Paul Mensah**, District Superior has consulted with the architect who planned recent buildings at the District Center to now draw up the plans for the general layout of foreseeable facilities for the proposed Holy Cross project in Kasoa. The latter will hopefully see completion of sufficient facilities by next year for opening a Holy Cross Junior Secondary School, with a Senior Secondary School constructed three years later to provide for those completing JSS. Ultimately the aim is to establish a Holy Cross Teachers Training College. All this is to be located on the 90 acres of land already purchased. Land will soon be cleared, after which fencing will be placed around the property for security to prevent squatters from encroaching on property. **Bro. Stephen Arthur** is now making the concrete pillars to be used for the woven-wire fencing.

- In early September a new Holy Cross House was established in Sunyanni, where the new Catholic University is located. The reason is to provide an opportunity for Holy Cross Brothers to gain their academic requirements either at CU or the nearby polytechnic institute. This also provides the opportunity for a home base for our Brothers who gain their degrees in Education to fulfill their one-year of service requirement to the government, as a return on their tuition-free education at the University of Cape Coast. Thus this beginning school year, **Bro. Raymond Frimpong** will be attending CU, while **Bro. James Yiadom** will be attending the Polytechnic Institute, and **Bro. Kenneth Goode** will be teaching at the university. It also provides the opportunity for Holy Cross to become known by Ghanaians living in this area, which is some 300 km from the District Center, and a more convenient location from which Bro. Kenneth, who also is the Director of Vocations, to visit schools and parishes thus far rather sorely neglected.
- **Jay Donne** is one of the Holy Cross students who visited Ghana in July, but with the intent to remain here to become more familiar with the various ministries in which our District members participate. His present plan is to be residing in one or other of the houses in the District for one year. His aim is to see what might be done to establishing some kind of continuing program in which interested Holy Cross College students might become involved for an extended time. At present Jay is participating in the Holy Cross Skills Training Program, including some involvement with the recently established Home of Hope participants