

HOLY CROSS TODAY - GHANA

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

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DISTRICT AND "OLD SAINTS" CELEBRATE GOLDEN JUBILEE YEAR

On Sunday, March 25th, many in the Holy Cross Family in Ghana gathered together at Corpus Christi Church in Sakumono (near Accra) with a significant number of "Old Saints" from St. John's School, Sekondi, to celebrate the occasion of this year's Golden Jubilee of Holy Cross in Ghana. Well-wishers of the parish came to the later morning Mass to join with the above for a full-house in the beautiful relatively new and quite large church. The Holy Cross members seated in the front pews stood after Communion to sing the Holy Cross Anthem that has been composed by **Benedict A. Sackey** (music score), an "Old Saint", and **Bro. Michael Amakyi** (text), expressly for this Golden Jubilee Year. The anthem is here included for those who may be interested, if perchance they did not see it in the Holy Cross Mission Internationale publication.

HOLY CROSS ANTHEM

**Behold the Cross our only hope.
We model our lives on the Holy Family.
We educate hearts and minds,
Men with hope to bring,
Educators in the faith.**

**O Holy Cross, Spes Unica
O Holy Cross, Spes Unica
Work for all, proclaim to all:
Crux Ave, Spes Unica!**

Following the Mass all the Brothers and Old Saints present for the occasion traveled a short distance to the spacious quarters provided at one of the latter's homes for a fine dinner, which was concluded with an exchange of reminiscing among Brothers and Saints at St. John's School in Sekondi relating to the past years of mostly good times shared by both.

THE DREAM REALIZED

On Easter Monday, the members in the District and the Sisters of the Holy Cross in Ghana gathered at the Sisters' residence in Kasoa to celebrate the joy of the Easter Event and personal relationship in



our Holy Cross Family. However, this year the setting for the now traditional occasion was at the Sisters new Center, Nyame Adom (*By the Grace of God*), some 5 km west of Kasoa, some 40 km from Accra. The Center is spacious enough to allow for future construction of other buildings for schools or whatever may unfold as a need for future ministries. It should be evident from the photo that the Sisters' residence is a rather formidable structure, having separate wings sufficient for the present facilities to

accommodate candidates and novices in religious formation. Clearly the site will be much more impressive when enhanced by the completion of planned landscaping. (continue mid-page 2)

From the Desk of the District Superior



Dear Friends and Benefactors:

Welcome to this edition of Holy Cross Today Ghana. Many significant events have occurred since then. More than 45 African heads of states gathered in Ghana to consider a possible continental government. Ghana has also redenominated its currency beginning July 1, 2007. Also, during this time some important personalities have visited us: The Apostolic Nuncio to Ghana, **Most Rev. George Kocherry** and **Most Rev. Michael Blume, SVD**, the Apostolic nuncio to Togo and Benin. Archbishop Blume is from South Bend, Indiana and former SVD provincial in Ghana. We also had the Prefect for the Evangelization of the Peoples, **Cardinal Ivan Dias** visited to our Center in Cape Coast, where he interacted with priests and religious from Cape Coast Ecclesiastical Province. He updated the group on the development of the Church in his portfolio.

The District has rekindled its collaborative effort with the District of East Africa. On July 13, 2007, three novices from East Africa join the confreres in West Africa for their novitiate. The novitiate programs on the African continent start on the same day - July 13, 2007. We welcome and congratulate our brothers to Ghana and in a special way welcome all our men as they start their journey in the Congregation of Holy Cross.

We want to congratulate our brothers **Vincent Ntsiful, Robert Koomson, Paul Bukari, Nicholas Arthur, Kenneth Goode** and **Ebenezer Prah**, who completed studies at the University of Cape Coast and **Stephen Aidoo** from Cape Coast Polytechnic. We congratulate **Brother John Affum** who also graduated from Institute of Religious Formation at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago.

One of the highlights of our jubilee celebrations and the special year of spiritual renewal called forth Superior General is the invitation of **Brother Joel Giallanza, C.S.C.** to facilitate our community's annual retreat. We want to thank Bro. Joel for coming again to Ghana in this jubilee year. I want to thank all those who continue to support our mission in West Africa. May God continue to bless you and your endeavors.

—Brother Paul Mensah, CSC
District Superior

(Dream Realized) Construction for the latter began on a rather isolated stretch of land more than two years ago. Though security persons were hired to protect things, the large area of some 14 acres gave room enough for thieves to be a constant menace in removing sections of fence wire and building materials to be sold for profit. Then a serious dispute arose between the Sisters and the original contractor, when it was realized that he was "eating" the money given for construction needs. And the workmanship was not satisfactory in all areas, as well. After a hiatus of almost a year in striving to make the most of a bad situation the Sisters were refunded from Notre Dame St. Mary's to continue with a new contractor, who proved reliable and honest. Construction has now been completed to attain a quite beautiful residence, as can be noted from the picture.

At this new Center adequate space is available to establish facilities for education, a priority project, and other facilities that seem to be realistic undertakings. It has been mentioned in an earlier issue that the District has purchased land in the Ksoa environs to begin soon, probably within the year, its own Junior Secondary School. This is to be followed, as soon as possible, by a Senior Secondary School, and ultimately to establish a Teachers Training College.



Sisters of the Holy Cross in Ghana

The proximity of the houses of the Sisters and Brothers very possibly can be a means of greater collaboration between our respective ministries in education, though present plans are for the inauguration of separate facilities.

Nonetheless, there has been through the years significant sharing of respective undertakings between the Sisters and our District of West Africa, reinforcing a seeming keen awareness of our close relationship for the fact of our belonging to the Family of Holy Cross here in Ghana. We celebrate together our three major feasts in Holy Cross, as well as Christmas and Easter, also celebrating the occasions of religious professions, community and personal jubilees, and of course, such as funerals for deceased members of respective families within our Holy Cross Family here in Ghana.

We take this opportunity to express again our deep appreciation to our beloved Holy Cross Sisters in Ghana for their presence and support in so many ways in District affairs. We pray for God's abundance of blessings on the Nyame Adom Center, and on all who reside there that they will enrich the lives of those to whom they will be ministering, truly "By the Grace of God".

FROM THE DISTRICT PEACE AND JUSTICE OFFICE: CAPITAL PUNISHMENT IN GHANA

In the previous issue of the District newsletter due recognition and praise was given the Ministry of Social Welfare for its efforts and measurable achievement in reducing child-labor abuses here in Ghana. Attention is now being given, as well, to the plight of 113 inmates who are currently held in Condemned Cells at the Nsawam Medium Security Prison awaiting death.

The prisoners, all men between 20 and 65, have been convicted of murder and/or armed robbery, the longest-serving convict now a 10th year resident on death row. However, none of these may be executed, since Ghana has not invoked the death penalty on a prisoner in death row since 1993. There has been a gradual trend over the past few years to abolish capital punishment in nations of Africa, most recently including both Senegal and Liberia in 2004 in West Africa. In Ghana, the human rights body, Amnesty International (Ghana) Group 22 of Suhan, has appealed for Ghana to join these other countries.

In a letter to the Attorney-General and Minister of Justice, who seems to oppose capital punishment, the Ghana group urged him to "take all the necessary measures to ratify the present legislation to concur with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights." Until this can be done, it urged him to appeal to President Kufuor to use his prerogative of mercy, as he did in 2003 to commute all death sentences to life imprisonment.

It should be noted that this year 2,373 prisoners throughout the country benefited from Ghana's 50th Jubilee, being granted amnesty on humanitarian grounds, or who had completed half or more of their sentences or due to illness and/or age. Three prisoners serving life sentences had these commuted to a definite term of 20 years.

The problem remaining to be addressed is in regard to the state of prison facilities here in Ghana. Prisons in many instances are seriously overcrowded, 60% by some estimates, and poorly equipped to teach skills or otherwise provide proper rehabilitation to inmates for a viable existence once released from prison.

BROADENING THE HOLY CROSS VISION

In June the District had the pleasure of a visit by **Scott Kopp**, who is currently engaged in Campus Ministry at Archbishop Hoban High School in Akron, Ohio. The Brothers of Holy Cross have a significant representation on the teaching staff, in addition to that of **Bro. Ken Haders**, President of the school. Scott undertook this journey for a several-week visit to Ghana to broaden his perspective of the contribution the Congregation of Holy Cross is making elsewhere in the world, heretofore limited primarily through his work with the Brothers at Hoban.



Scott has been a campus minister at Hoban for the past five years. The Catholic students comprise about 85% of the enrollment at the school. He has a major role in planning and conducting retreats in which all the students participate, and also optional retreats for students on weekends. He has an assistant for these. He is engaged in counseling students especially relating to religious matters, and tries to help and encourage students in regard to vocations to religious life with emphasis on Holy Cross for their consideration.

Scott has been greatly influenced by the efforts of Bro. Ken Haders, he says, in acquiring a “Holy Cross perspective” in the education and direction of the youth with whom he comes in contact. This has also encouraged his participation in CSC sponsored programs at ND and especially at St. Edwards University to become more effective in his campus ministry. And he has felt motivated further to see how Holy Cross is involved in its ministries elsewhere in the world, at least making a beginning in this direction with his present visit to Ghana.

EAST-WEST AFRICAN DISTRICTS COLLABORATE AGAIN IN NOVITIATE PROGRAM



Some 7 years ago the Formation Committees of the Districts of East and West Africa, respectively, perceived the advantage of combining the novices from their Districts into a single novitiate in Ghana, possibly owing to the slight edge in numbers of novices in Ghana. This collaborative venture was deemed successful in attaining the ends of religious formation ascribed to the novitiate, as well as to strengthen the bond of community among the novices from the two Districts. However, both Districts seemed to have sufficient numbers of novices to suggest the viability of separate

novitiates, and no further plans included a single novitiate for the two Districts’ novices.

This year the situation is somewhat different, with 11 persons in the District of East Africa to become novices, with a relatively small number of 3 persons for the novitiate in Ghana. After a meeting of minds from both Districts, it was deemed well to again set up a collaborative program for the novitiate year in Ghana. In view of this, three members of the District of East Africa arrived in Ghana in latter June: **Christopher Nghanzi** and **Gerard Muwonge** are from Uganda, while **Alex Okidi** is from Kenya—two are seminarians. They will soon enter the novitiate with the three Ghanaians: **Pius Kweku Maison, Aristide Oben Biney, George Awuni Depaaya**. The picture above is of the pre-novices at Moreau House in Butumagyeb0/Sekondi. The novitiate year begins on July 13 at Bl. Andre Novitiate in Ghana with **Bro. Nee Waye** as director. Concurrently, this date will also be the beginning of the novitiate year at Lake Saaka, Uganda, where **Bro. Joseph Kaganda** will be director for the remaining eight novices in East Africa.

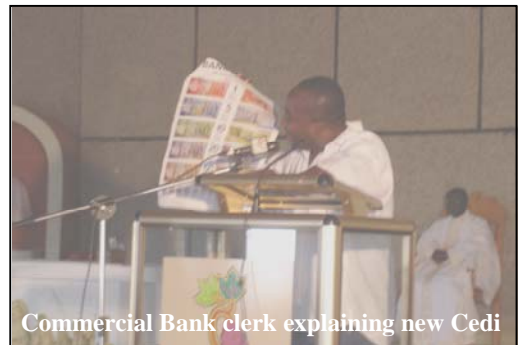
Fr. Bob Gilmour, continues in his very capable role as Director of the pre-novices at Moreau House in Butumagyebu in Sekondi

JUBILEE PROJECT: “REACHING OUT”

The District has set as one of its aims during its Golden Jubilee Year to “reach out” into areas in the community with special programs that will be of significant benefit to the public. A recent project in latter June was organized by **Bro. Tony Dadzie** and his “project” committee to help educate the people in Moree Village to better understand the government’s present plans for re-denomination of the currency, which process was initiated on July 2nd. Banks had been closed for several days over the long weekend, including the national holiday on July 1st. While large posters have been liberally posted throughout the nation explaining the relationship between new and old currency, for many, especially those with minimal education, the introduction of the new currency has caused some confusion and anxiety. The large Catholic Church in Moree was selected as the best gathering place for this instruction, the great number attending completely filling the place.

The transformation process will continue to the end of the year with both old and new currencies acceptable in money transactions. However, the banks will issue only new currency for all withdrawals by respective customers.

In brief, **1 new Ghana Cedi, that is 1 GH = 10,000 Cedis.**



Over the past four decades the value

of the present Cedi has so inflated that the present exchange rate is 9,200 Cedis is equivalent to \$1 US. Under the new currency, **1 GH = \$1.09 US**. The coins will be in “peswas” (Gp) and **100 Gp = 1 GH cedi**. The old Cedi has maintained an almost constant 9,200 cedis:\$1 for the past several years, its inflating value paralleling that of the dollar. Ghana’s economy

presently seems fairly solid, and continues to attract foreign investors.

For many of us the use of a billfold to hold the considerably great reduction in paper notes to be carried for normal transactions will now be possible once again, instead of carrying a pocketful or plastic bag as necessary with the volume of old Cedi notes for daily purchases..

NEWS BRIEFS

- **Bro. Kenneth Goode**, who now devotes a considerable amount of time in vocational recruitment in the District, is also on the Archdiocesan Vocational Committee. This committee includes priests, brothers and sisters, from each religious community in the archdiocese. It serves as a vehicle for planning and organizing vocation programs conjointly to enable larger groups to be contacted and to share in ways that have been found effective in promoting religious vocations within respective communities.
- The Institute for Continuing Formation formally ended its 9-month session on June 29th. There were 23 Brothers and Sisters participating in the program from 9 different countries. The occasion was celebrated with Mass in the Blessed Andre Chapel, which was followed by a farewell program by and for all at ICF, **Bro. Bob Aron, FIC** continues as clearly capable director of the ICF program.
- In mid-June **Sr. Esther Entsiwah, CSC** invited all the Brothers who had completed studies for graduation at the University of Cape Coast or Cape Coast Polytechnic earlier in June for a party at the Sisters’ residence in Takoradi to celebrate this occasion. The event was much appreciated by **Brothers Nicholas Arthur, Paul Bukari, Kenneth Goode, Vincent Ntsiful, Ebenezer Prah and Stephen Aidoo**. Sister Esther allowed a week or more respite from their labors for setting the date of the celebration, albeit, formal graduation ceremonies at UCC and CCP will not be held until October. The Brothers had been sorely pressed during the final months of studies doing the research on assigned projects, as well as write up quasi-thesis reports of their results, in addition to heavy final exams before winding up their studies. Congratulations to all on their respective accomplishments!
- While not an unusual occurrence at this time of the year, the quite severe water shortage, especially in the Cape Coast area has finally run its course with recent heavy rains to augment the city reservoir’s water supply. Frequent power outages still occur owing to the hydroelectric dam’s reservoir at low level, causing decreased generation of electricity. On the other hand, relative peace, political stability and economic growth prevail here in Ghana—(counting our blessings)!