

HOLY CROSS TODAY - GHANA

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

VOLUME 11 - ISSUE 2

July-September 2008

SHOWERS OF GOD'S BLESSINGS ON HOLY CROSS IN AFRICA

Saturday, 12th July, was a time of great rejoicing for all in our Holy Cross Family in Africa, as 11 young men from the District of East Africa and 3 from the District of West Africa made their first profession of religious vows—a time for grateful appreciation to God for the largesse of his gift, indeed, by all in our international family of Holy Cross for his gift of these 14 new members to our Congregation.



6 novices professed their first vows, 3 of these

from East Africa having collaborated with the 3 from Ghana. The Ghanaians are **Brothers George Awuni, Aristide Nsempe Biney and Pius Kweku Maison.** From East Africa two are seminarians, **Mr. Gerald Muwonge and Mr. Alex Okidi,** along with **Brother Christopher A. Nganzi.**

The weather was a perfect blend of partly cloudy skies and sunshine, no problem for the overflow of those present, who had to accept accommodations seated under canopies outside Blessed Brother Andre Chapel, nonetheless fully joining some two hundred inside the chapel in the singing, dancing, and congratulation of the newly professed. **Fr. Bob Gilmour csc,** celebrant, along with a number of other priests: Jesuits, SVDs and diocesan clergy, concelebrated the liturgy. His homily, bearing on the respective commitments giving mutual witness and support between the religiously professed and the married/single vocations was given in his usual *par excellence* fashion

The choir from Brafoyaw led the singing, accompanied by their own rhythm instruments and organ. It is remarkable how greatly the choir has improved with some several dozen mixed voices since organized just a few years ago—the Brafoyaw church is very young, now having a church building about half-completed. It is undergoing rapid growth. Some of our Holy Cross Brothers minister in the parish.

Following the celebration refreshments were served along with catering-serviced boxed lunches to accompany the happy conversation among old friends and new acquaintances springing from this encounter on this mutually celebrated occasion. The day's joyous celebration extended from 10 A to about 2:30 P, when cleanup time for the affair began by our young religious, excepting those professing vows this day, of course.

Thanks to all of you in our international Holy Cross Family, whose prayers and sacrifices offered to the Lord of the Harvest for religious vocations surely have been instrumental for God's shower of blessings on our Holy Cross Family in Africa!



DIAMOND AND SILVER JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS

On September 13, 2008 **Brother William Gates** celebrated his 60 years of religious profession in Holy Cross, most all of these in his religious ministry in Ghana. William joined the Ghanaian community one year after it established Holy Cross in West Africa, serving almost continuously in Ghana since that time. He presently directs the candidacy program in the District.

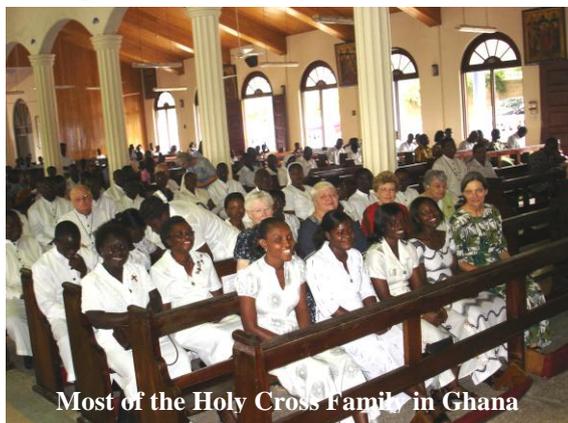
On this same date, **Brother Paul Mensah**, District Superior celebrated his 25 years of religious profession in the District of West Africa. Paul's earlier years were primarily in the area of District finances, while also gradually moving into the formation program, including Director of Candidates in the mid-90s. He went abroad for studies toward attaining his degree in Theology at the Catholic Theological Institute in Chicago with an aim to return to contribute once again in formation work. However, the District decided that at least for these past 3 years he would contribute more as the District Superior.

Relating to this great day in the lives of each, **Bro. William** reflected: "As this chapel resonates from so much work that has been done by decorating, providing sufficient space to accommodate all here present, the great hymns and beautiful music and a beautiful liturgy, to honour two religious of Holy Cross as Jubilarians. We are grateful to all of you who celebrated this occasion with us, with special thanks to our Church prelate, Cardinal Peter Turkson, Bishop John Darko and all clergy and religious. We are honoured and grateful, and give a special "Thank You" to the host village and villagers of Brafoyaw. Finally we give it all to the Almighty—the beginning and end. "MEDASI PII" (Thank you very much)!



SISTERS OF THE HOLY CROSS IN GHANA CELEBRATE THEIR SILVER ANNIVERSARY

This year the Sisters of Holy Cross celebrate their twenty-five years of service with the people of Ghana. The Thanksgiving Celebration of the Eucharist for the Silver Jubilee was held in the Star of the Sea Cathedral, Takoradi on September 21.



Most of the Holy Cross Family in Ghana

Lady of Holy Cross School was dedicated on September 27, 2008 at the Nyame Adom Center in Kasoa. Heartiest congratulations to our dear Sisters on this Jubilee occasion of two-fold nature, from their beloved Brothers in Ghana.

Also, a week later the Sisters marked in a major way the Silver Jubilee occasion with the dedication of the new basic school, which they had planned its completion with due foresight for this. Our



RELIGIOUS VOCATION UPDATE

On Thursday, 28th August, **Bro. Kenneth Goode**, Director of Vocations in the District, addressed all the students present at St. Augustine's College, on the last day of their three-week vacation school program at the college. This year some 650 boys and girls at the secondary school level were enrolled in the program, the largest group of any previous to this. The program has been in operation for some years now, being sponsored by the Catholic Students Union, CATHSU, of which many Catholic students throughout Ghana are members. The union aims at reinforcing principles of the student's Christian moral education in addition to the regular academic needs. Thus each day of the summer school the academic work is embellished with the Celebration of the Eucharist and prayer/hymn service prior to Mass and at evening time.



The final day of the vacation school was devoted to reflecting on one's Christian Vocation. There were 4 religious giving presentations, 3 of these from different Sisters' communities, along with Bro. Ken, and a priest. Ken's presentation emphasized that each of those present had a Christian Vocation by reason of their Baptism and Confirmation, which is a *call from Christ*. With this sufficiently treated, he then turned attention to the religious vocation of the Brother in the Church. Perhaps for the majority of those present this vacation school has been the first opportunity to become acquainted with someone who is a Brother. Both **Bro. Vincent Ntsiful** and **Anthony Koomson** were involved in the vacation school program.

After his presentation, the floor was open for individual questions. **Brothers Aristide Nsempe Biney** and **Pius Kweku Maison**, recently temporarily professed District members, were in attendance on the stage with Ken, and they also responded to some of the questions. They also assisted Ken in distributing leaflets with further information about the Brothers of Holy Cross. Bro. Ken felt that he was well-received in his meeting with the students.

A "COME AND SEE" program specifically for recruitment to become Brothers of Holy Cross was held at the District Center from Sunday evening, 30th August, to Wednesday morning, 3rd September. Nine young men participated for this, one of these being from Nigeria.

To more fully acquaint those participating about the nature of the Religious Vocation, specifically that of a Brother of Holy Cross, presentations were made by **Sr Faustina** of the OLA community in Cape Coast, **Brothers Paul Mensah** and **Kenneth Goode**. There was a soccer game and other recreational activities on Monday afternoon in which **Brothers Anthony Koomson, Vincent Ntsiful, Aristide, George** and **Pius** participated. On Tuesday, **Brothers Nee Wayoe, Paul** and **Kenneth** interviewed the participants. The program seemed to be well-received by all who participated.



As we proceed now to more proximate preparations for the District Chapter, it is well to reflect on the counsel of our Founder, **Bl. Basil Moreau** for community meetings in general: "If you wish to draw down the Spirit of God upon your meetings, learn how to remain calm, and practice little courtesies and mutual acts of politeness in your deliberations and discussions. Try to enlighten one another, and bring about the adoption of whatever decision impresses you as being most in keeping with equity, truth, or the well-understood interests of your houses, without yielding to self-seeking, jealousy, or prejudice. Whatever may be your motives to the contrary, always accept the opinion adopted by the majority."

DISTRICT CENTER HOSTS NARF

The National Association of Religious Formators, whose members direct those within their respective communities who still are in religious formation, held its annual meeting at the District Center from September 26 – 28. Some 35 or more members were present from a wide cross-section of the country, yet this represented less than half the total number listed who are in formation work. The enthusiasm and dedication shown in discussions and other sharing in activities and prayer by those present, however, more than made up for those not present.

The main theme for the focus of this year's discussion was based upon the *DIRECTIVES*

FOR THE MUTUAL RELATIONS BETWEEN BISHOPS AND RELIGIOUS IN THE CHURCH, also with pastors of local churches in which respective religious institutes ministered.

Clearly some religious communities suffer injustices, it would appear, relating to financial needs that should be subsidized by church authorities for whom they accepted invitations to work in the diocese or local church. Present as main speaker as resource canonist relating to the topic was **Fr. Francis Osei-Kwadwo**. However, there was considerable positive input to clarify some points of seeming contention. The significant points listed from the various group discussions relating to the topic and points of grievance all will be made available for review by the Major Religious Superiors at their next meeting.

With the conclusion of this meeting marking **Bro. Tony Dadzie, CSC** as president of NARF over these past two years, the mantle of authority was handed over to **Sr. Christina Doggu**. **Fr. Bob Gilmour, CSC** has provided his usual secretarial skills relating to all aspects of materials, records and clarifications of issues where needed. He undoubtedly will be maintained as resource person, if not actual delegated secretary for the new president.



Fr. Bob, Bro. Tony standing

HOLY CROSS COLLEGE STUDENTS VISIT GHANA

It was the District's pleasure once again to host students from HCC for their two plus week's visit here in latter July. Seven students along with their Chaperon comprised a smaller group than the usual size, but they were nonetheless diminished in enthusiasm, praise and gratitude for the opportunity to benefit from a cross-cultural experience during their stay. A study of African culture is one of the more



important aspects of the problem that was provided by presentations of select speakers covering varied topics relating to this. The students experienced a broad spectrum of sights and sounds, peoples and places, as well as a concentrated menu of mostly Ghanaian foods at meal times.

All seemed to remain in fine health of mind and body during their stay, especially spared from common malarial infections, which has often surfaced in one or the other participants in previous groups, not of any serious degree regarding the latter, however. All expressed the high satisfaction for the Ghanaian exposure, and expressed their great thanks to the District for the fine

hospitality received during their stay at the District Center.

NEWS BRIEFS

- Following his completion of the pre-novitiate program at Fr. Moreau House in Butumagyebu in Sekondi **Francisco Gillette** has left Ghana for Uganda to enter the novitiate program, sharing a year there with the several novices at Fort Portal in the District of East Africa.
- In mid-July **Brothers Nicholas Arthur** and **Augustus Mensah** left to take up residence in the District of East Africa to attend Tangaza College, Kenya. Nicholas will pursue studies in Religious Formation following this past year's ministry on the staff at the Blessed Andre novitiate. Augustus will be in a four-year program to attain his Bachelor's Degree in Education.
- **Bro. Paul Bukari** attended the special Mission Workshop held at Notre Dame in August, more precisely, the Future of Holy Cross cross-cultural and International Mission.

Five young men entered the pre-novitiate at Basil Moreau House in Butumagyebu on August 29th. These are: Mr. Jones Agyempong; Eric Amoah; Francis Afeletey; Francis Bogtir and Odela.

- **Bro. Paul Mensah, District Superior, Fr. Bob Gilmour, Brothers Nee Wayoe** and **Tony Dadzie**, who are members of the District Council of West Africa, met with the District Council of East Africa in August in Nairobi to discuss matters of common interest to both Districts in relating to formation and sharing of personnel and facilities otherwise. Fr. Bob, as reporter of the meeting, has written with great praise of Holy Cross in Kenya and Uganda in their various ministries in the District. It is interesting to note in one of the daily accounts from Bob, that the Peace and Justice Committee was given top listing among the seven different committees to which the Chapter gave its attention.
- **Bro. Nee Wayoe** conducted a retreat for the Brothers of the Immaculate Conception in Wa in September. Nee continues to present topics on relevant topics pertaining to Christian Living, Spirituality, the Church, etc. for his weekly programs on the local Catholic radio station, also writes a feature article each month for the Voice magazine, a Ghanaian Catholic publication.

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