

HOLY CROSS TODAY - GHANA

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

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CHRISTMAS 2010 - REFLECTION

Aided by latest technology scientists continue their probe searching the outermost limits of the Universe, obtaining astounding pictures of numerous galaxies in the heavens that are millions of light years away from planet earth, and dwarfing our own galaxy with its countless array of stars. Our Universe, a cosmic symphonic display of motion, includes stars with their revolving and rotating planets and moons in galaxies of glorious grandeur, spectacular nebulae, the novas' blinking and pulsating stars, or more remarkable exploding clusters of stars within a super nova, and the mysterious dark holes of "anti-matter" of phenomenal mass and energy, the celestial system seemingly expanding ever outward. Reasonable pondering prevailing, one can accept that a system of such magnitude, magnificence and, so well-ordered for all therein, exists only by the reality of an existing Creator, incomprehensibly omnipotent, omniscient Designer of the Universe. Even Albert Einstein claimed this a reasonable deduction. Would it not seem realistic, though, to perceive as presumptuous--preposterous--that this awesome Architect of such a glorious Universe would be concerned about any of us, who exist on this relatively small planet, a seemingly imperfect people in an imperfect world?

Ah, but the unfathomable magnificence, love and goodness of this Supreme Being, which underlies all that exists in creation, will ever elude the scientist using only his advanced digital and optical instruments. Yet, it is this Being, whom we acknowledge as God, who has revealed to us that he is above all a God of Infinite Love, who has created humankind to his own likeness, with knowledge, free will and the capacity to love. He had spoken through his prophets of old to assure us of this. But humankind failed to comprehend the significance of his message of love. Nonetheless, God's unsurpassable Wisdom knew no bounds.

Inadequate are the words in trying to explain the Mystery of the Incarnation, God's final, marvelous revelation of His Infinite Love for us. Acknowledging the Trinitarian concept of the Godhead, we accept that God sent His only Son into our world to become one with us in our humanity through the power of His Holy Spirit overshadowing the Virgin Mary.

Christmas is the celebration of God's greatest gift to us, Jesus, the God-man, who is the Light, Truth and Way, by which we become aware of the supreme dignity that is ours in Christ, and to live out our lives in meaningfulness with joy in whatever unfolds for us. We confidently hope in the promise Christ has given of ultimately sharing in His glory if we follow in His way. Through Christ we are made sons and daughters of the Father, and in the Love of his Spirit, we become brothers and sisters in Christ.

This Christmas Day we rejoice in the renewed awareness of God's supreme, unconditional, love for us, while striving with full hearts in our return of love for Him, as manifested by our love for one another in Christ.

We in the District of West Africa joyfully extend to all our prayers for God's Special Blessings this Christmas Season and with Hope Renewed for a Happy and Grace-filled New Year!

THANKSGIVING CELEBRATION: CANONIZATION OF BR. ANDRE

On Saturday, 23rd October 2010 the District of West Africa celebrated with great thanksgiving to God the canonization of St. Andre Bessette, our beloved Brother in Holy Cross in St. Andre Chapel at the Center in Brafuyaw. Owing to the expected number of persons who would be coming for this occasion, the celebration was held outdoors just outside the chapel with the some 400 persons benefitting from shade by canopies that had been set up or surrounding trees. Many religious communities in the archdiocese and beyond were present for the occasion.

The Celebrant was, **Most Rev. Matthias Nketsiah**, the recently appointed archbishop of Cape Coast, who was assisted by **Right Rev. John Martin Darko**, bishop of Sekondi-Takoradi diocese and some dozen diocesan and religious priests, including our District Chaplain, **Rev. Bob Gilmour, CSC**. Both Holy Cross Sisters and Brothers did the Readings of the Liturgy and/or presented special reflections or



comments relating to St. Andre. The choir of some 40 members from the Catholic Church in Brafuyaw did a most commendable job in giving its own renditions of appropriate music, as well as lead the congregation in a rich variety of hymns for the occasion.

Immediately following the Eucharistic Celebration, **Sr. Margaret Mary Nimo, CSC**, Area Director of the Sisters of the Holy Cross in Africa, and **Bro.**

Daniel Dardoe, CSC, District Superior, gave separate reflections



on the life of St. Andre. Then conjointly Bro. Chester Freel, the two bishops, and Bro. Daniel Dardo unveiled the very large portrait of St. Andre, after which two members of the Knights of St. John International carried it before the large encirclement of the crowd, so that all present could have a closer view of the portrait of this first saint of our Congregation of Holy Cross. The District's growing-in-renown artist, **Bro David Kpobi**, did the honors in painting it for this occasion. During the exposition of the portrait of St. Andre, prayer cards faced by the picture of our new saint and a thanksgiving and prayer on the back were distributed to those present.



Very appropriate for this occasion was the **Testimony of our District Chaplain, Fr. Bob Gilmour**, of his miraculous healing through the intercession of then Bl. Andre. (This seems noteworthy to the extent of giving a more detailed account in the insert below this article).

On behalf of all our Holy Cross Family in Ghana, **Sr. Esther Entsiwah, CSC** gave a vote of thanks to all who joined with us on this most happy occasion of the Thanksgiving Celebration of the Canonization of our beloved St. Bro. Andre Bessette.

Bro. Chester Freel, CSC Midwest Provincial then presented his own reflections on this occasion, taking the opportunity for "Launching the (St.) **Bro. Andre High School** for boys" that is in the beginning stage of being constructed on a very large land area of some 90 acres in Koso, near Accra, the former now one of the most rapidly growing communities in Ghana. There are definite plans to establish the school for both day and boarding students. The Sisters of the Holy Cross have already successfully established a Primary and Junior High



School for girls at their Center some several miles removed from the location of the planned Bro. Andre HS. Bro. Chester made an appeal for financial assistance to the project, initially requiring some \$5 M for the first phase of the operation of the high school and ultimately about double that for the Teachers Training College, which would need the viability of the high school program as its foundation.

A reception followed, persons generally remaining in previous places with food and drinks being served to them by the younger members in the Holy Cross Family, the Brafuyaw Parish Choir again providing appropriate music to enhance the social activity.

LIVING TESTIMONY OF A MIRACULOUS HEALING THROUGH BRO. ANDRE

Our District chaplain, **Fr. Bob Gilmour, CSC**, is not a stranger to most all who were present at this Thanksgiving Celebration. Perhaps not many were aware that he had been favored in a most special way from a vary serious malignancy in his larynx several decades earlier, for which he firmly believes he was healed through the intercession of St. Andre Bessette. After his arrival at St. John's School, Sekondi in 1975 he had been engaged in campus ministry to the young men at St. John's Secondary School in Sekondi, the students finding Fr. Bob always available and concerned for their well-being, helping them by his counsel to resolve a given problem of social, academic or religious nature. His homilies at Mass for the students and Brothers were always of significant substance, well-received by all. And Fr. Bob is a most contributing member to the business of the District as Secretary and Steward.

It was some ten years later that Fr. Bob noted a swelling in his throat that did not respond to normal medication. He had been praying to Blessed Bro. Andre along with members in our Holy Cross Family for God's healing in this affliction, which thus far seemed not to be God's will. Returning to the US for subsequent treatment of one kind or other from specialists there, all to no avail, the last resort then was to be a removal of the larynx. Providentially, as it turned out, the surgeon had to postpone by two weeks the scheduled date for this. When the doctor returned and re-examined Bob prior to the surgery, there was no trace, whatsoever, of the previous malignancy--this day was 6th January, the feast day of Bl./St. Bro. Andre! Though owing to the medical treatment earlier applied for this healing, albeit to no avail, the Church would not give its formal acceptance of such as a miracle. However, Bob has no doubt that his healing was truly a miraculous occurrence through the intercession of Bro. Andre, now venerated as a saint in the Church.



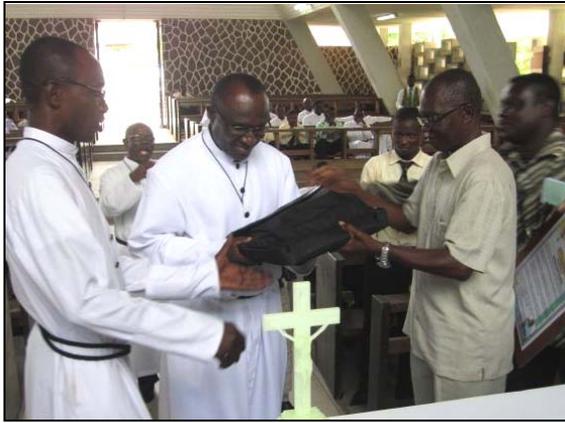
ON MIRACLES - Using the perspective of the relationship between God and the world, Karl Rahner states that God has not only permanently established a world different from and outside himself with its structures, laws and its own dynamism, but has also made himself the ultimate and highest dynamism of this world and its history. The laws of nature are thus conditioned to be elements within grace, God's self-communication reaching beyond the question of interruption of the laws of nature. The "miracle" is a grace-filled moment of God's freely acting under these conditions in the lower order of nature that has been established by, and subject to, the higher order of God's Province. (See Foundations of Faith/Miracles, Karl Rahner)

INDUCTION CEREMONY OF HEADMASTER AT ST. JOHN'S

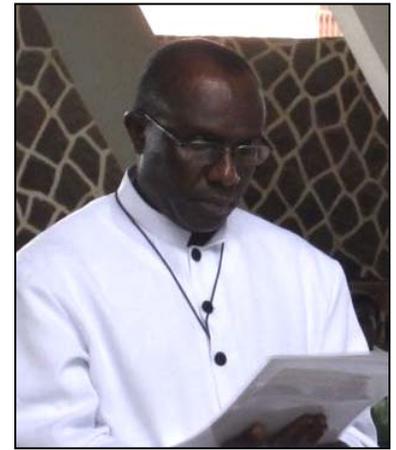
On Saturday, 27th November, 2010 the Induction Service for **Bro. Sylvester Quaye, CSC**, was held in Holy Cross Chapel at St. John's High School in Sekondi. The celebrant for the occasion was **Rt. Rev. John Darko**, Diocesan Bishop of Sekondi-Takoradi. Among those in attendance were the School Chaplain, **Fr. Samuel Erzah Bulu**, the Board of Governors, Staff, Students and Old Boys of St. John's, along with members of the Holy Cross Family, relatives, friends.

Bro. Sylvester had been the Assistant Headmaster during the term of office **Bro. Joe Annan** had held the Headmaster position. He proved himself very capable and highly respected in his relations to both students and faculty. Thus it was no surprise to learn of his appointment to follow Bro. Joe as the new Headmaster.

Indeed it was a joyful occasion at which Bishop Darko also witnessed the profession of Bro. Sylvester to live up to the responsibilities as Headmaster with utmost effort, integrity and concern for all over to whom he would be ministering. Blessing the "keys of office", the bishop then



formally handed them over to the new Headmaster. At appropriate times, those present came forward to offer their greetings and best-wishes to Sylvester, and a number of gifts were presented to him, as well. In the photo at the left, Bro. Sylvester is being given a computer notebook by the Old Boys of St. John's.



Bro. Sylvester affirming his intentions to Bishop Darko

The Holy Cross community is quite pleased at the appointment of Bro. Sylvester and prays for God's blessings for the wisdom and courage to maintain the new level of academic performance by St. John's students that has now been restored through the former Headmaster Bro. Joe Annan after a long hiatus of downhill status during the time Holy Cross had relinquished its role in administration of the school.

HOLY CROSS SISTERS MEET FOR AREA OF AFRICA ASSEMBLY

On Wednesday evening, 10th November, the District of West Africa officially welcomed the Sisters of the Holy Cross to Brafuyaw for their Area of Africa Assembly. They joined the District community for an

Evening Social - Dinner - Cultural Display. The sisters stayed at the District conference center from November 6-13. The sisters from Uganda and Ghana were joined by Sr. Joan Marie Steadman, CSC, President of the Congregation and Sr. Geraldine Hoyler, CSC, Congregation Finance Councilor. Sr. Joan Marie gave excellent presentations on Holy Cross Charism and Holy Cross spirituality and Sr.

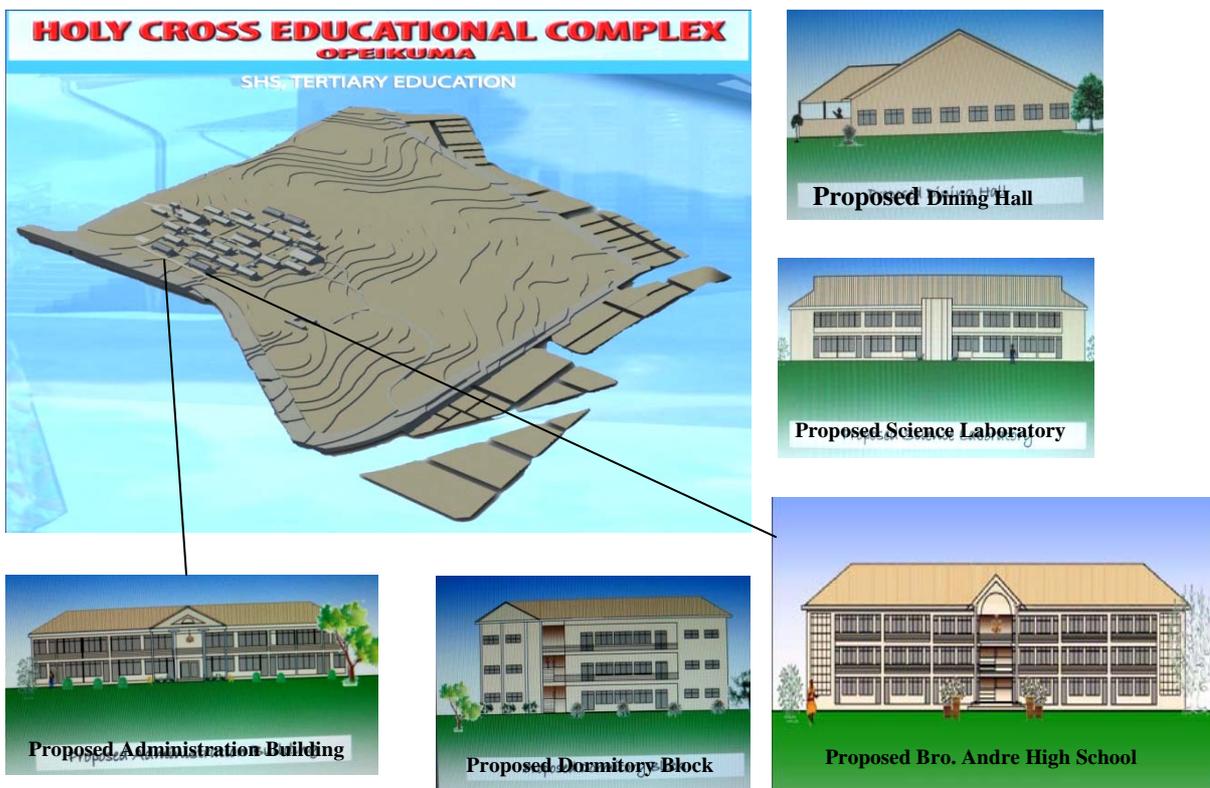


Geraldine's presentation on the various financial and budgeting matters, was both enlightening and practical. The Sisters of the Holy Cross thanked the Brothers for continuing the Family Spirit of Holy Cross..

FUND DRIVE BEGINS FOR BROTHER ANDRE HIGH SCHOOL

On Thursday, 9th December, **Bro. Raymond Papenfuss**, Mission procurator for the District, made his presentation for Bro. Andre School, Kasoa, Ghana initiating the Fund Drive for construction of the new high school to be owned and administered by the Brothers of Holy

Cross. Below is the layout of the Holy Cross Educational to include this facility, and other buildings for staff and students. A few of the proposed buildings are shown below, which will be included among the cluster of miniaturized buildings in the building complex. It is hoped, if things progress as envisioned, that there will ultimately be a Holy Cross Teachers Training College on the Educational Complex.



NEWS BITS

● On Thursday evening 18th November members of the Holy Cross Family in Ghana gathered at the Center to give a welcome return to **Bro. Joe Tsiquaye**, the Dean of all the Ghanaian Brothers back to Ghana after his 10 years on the General Council, mainly focusing on religious vocational promotion and respective needs in various communities within our International Holy Cross Community. A brief thanksgiving service in St. Andre Chapel preceded a long, evening-social on the rooftop patio at which Joe filled in upon request in his remarks of some interesting aspects of his ministry and travels all over the world during his tenure as Assistant General.

● On Christmas Day 2010 the members of the District of West Africa will have gathered with the Sisters of the Holy Cross in Ghana at the District Center for our traditional Holy Cross Family Christmas celebration. It is always a joyous occasion when we in the District meet at our Center and the Sisters' for Christmas and Easter Monday traditional gatherings. We usually begin with the Celebration of the Eucharist, **Fr. Bob Gilmour**, celebrant on past occasions, and concluding with a splendid social and Christmas dinner on respective rooftop patios. Always a beautiful time together.

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