

HOLY CROSS TODAY - GHANA

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

VOLUME 13 – ISSUE 3

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FOUR MAKE FIRST PROFESSION OF TEMPORARY RELIGIOUS VOWS



On Friday 9 July, 2010 four young men, who had completed their year of spiritual formation in the novitiate, made their first profession of temporary religious vows in Blessed Brother Andre Chapel at the District Center in Brafoyaw, Ghana. By mutual collaboration between the East and West Districts in Africa, two of these novices from each of the two Districts shared their novitiate year together. These are: Ghanaians **Bro. Francis Bogtir** and **Bro Eric Amoah** of the District of West Africa, Ugandan seminarian **Linus Nviiri** and Kenyan **Bro. David Leonard Onyango Omune**, of the District of East Africa.



Fr. John Ghansah, sj was the main celebrant and homilist for the occasion with some half-dozen priests concelebrating. Fr. John used as a point of reference the problems the Church is facing because of those, who had committed themselves to the Church as its ministers as priests or religious and caused serious scandal by their immoral actions. This would seem to make even more challenging the religious profession of vows today of the four young men committing themselves to God in the Congregation of Holy Cross. Fr. John emphasized the need for a strong spirituality based upon fidelity to prayer and religious life in community.



The Rite of Profession took place following the Gospel. In the absence of the District Superior, **Bro. Daniel Dardoe** and his assistant, **Bro. John Affum**, who were at the General Chapter in Rome, **Bro. Joseph Annan**, former District Superior, received the vows of the four young men, as they individually came forward for this. All present sang the hymn, *Hail Holy Joseph Hail* in honor of the Patron of Holy Cross Brothers. The cords were blessed and given to each of the professed as a sign of their commitment to live the evangelical counsels in the Congregation of Holy Cross. Following this, the Blessing of the Holy Cross Community was given by all members of the Holy Cross Family present, who standing and with hands extended, faced the four kneeling professed, praying together the designated prayer for the occasion. Concluding the Rite of Profession, the four professed stood at the front of the altar to receive the note of congratulations and bestowal of the sign of peace by each one present. A very happy moment, indeed, for the professed, their relatives, the Holy Cross community and friends! After the Communion Rite the Holy Cross Family, assisted by the choir





Franciscans, who attended this occasion, two of whom did the Readings for the Mass and some dozen novices of their community, who had become rather close friends with our own novices of the past year.

A social gathering at the Holy Cross Formation Center followed for all who were present for this with box lunches provided by a catering service and non-alcoholic drinks, the latter deemed sufficient following the already highly spirited occasion.

and others present who are now becoming somewhat familiar with this hymn, stood to sing the *HOLY CROSS ANTHEM*, which is usually included in all our special occasions in the District.

It would be remiss not to give proper thanks and praise to the **Choir of Brafuyaw Parish Church** for their most noteworthy contribution throughout the ceremonies. The District expresses its special thanks, also, to the many

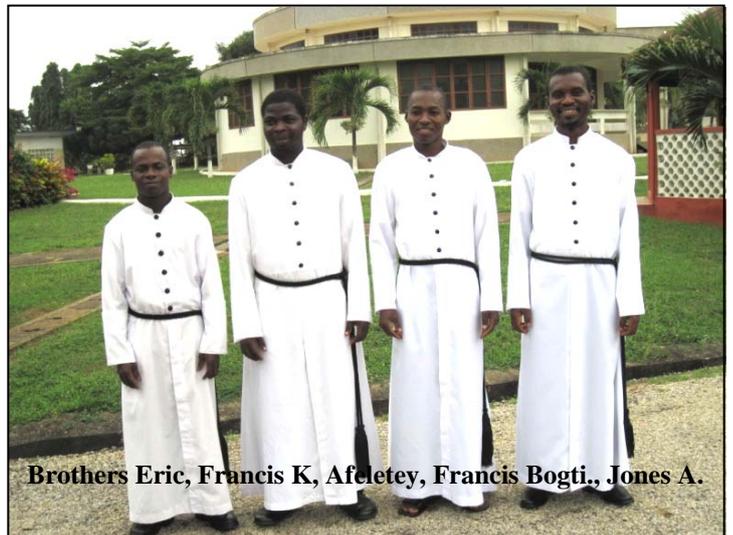


The four newly professed in 1st row right

TWO DISTRICT NOVICES MAKE FIRST PROFESSION OF TEMPORARY RELIGIOUS VOWS IN UGANDA

The collaboration between the two Districts, east and west, alluded to in the above extended as well to two of our District novices, **Bro. Jones A Agyemang** and **Bro. Francis K. Afeletey**, who made their novitiate in Fort-Portal, Uganda, sharing their experience with three novices from the District of East Africa. The Rite of Profession for Brothers Jones and Francis followed the same procedure as that indicated above for the one here in the District of West Africa. The two Brothers took advantage of their stay in East Africa to spend a few weeks touring Kenya before returning to Ghana in early August.

The photo on the right is of all four **Ghanaian** newly professed. All have been assigned to teach in the Holy Cross Vocational Training School in Takoradi.

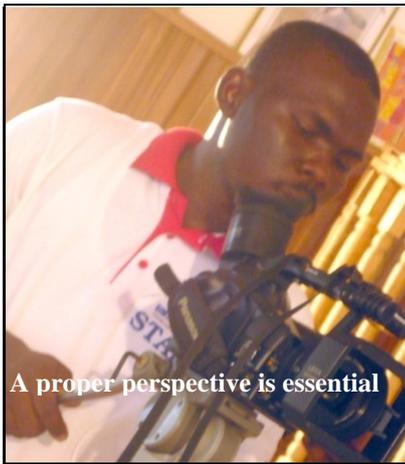


Brothers Eric, Francis K. Afeletey, Francis Bogti., Jones A.

THE HOLY CROSS FAMILY ROSARY IN GHANA

During this past year **Bro. David Kpobi**, has produced 10 film playlets relating to the Family Rosary in behalf of the Holy Cross Family Rosary ministry here in Ghana. The some 15-minute segments have been produced with a mind to have these presented on local Ghana TV, of which several have now been accepted for showing by the latter. It is hoped they might have even greater exposure through the national Ghana TV system.

The films have been produced on a very modest budget, funds mostly solicited from various sources by David. The all-amateur has been selected from a rather large number of persons responding to his invitation for voluntary participation in this venture.



David was helped in writing the scripts for each film by inputs from the cast of some dozen or so members. David, himself, was Producer, Director, and Cameraman for all--a not surprising professional *fait accompli* by David, who already has made his mark in our District and beyond through his other artistic endeavors, as well.

David will now transfer his talent to engage in a completely different kind of ministry to direct the newly scheduled Computer Program at the Holy Cross Vocational Training Center. However, David hopes that he might in piecemeal fashion be able to produce additional films as time may allow. David has placed short segments of four of the films on his link with U-Tube. These can be accessed from his special net address, entering the following in **Google/Search:** slynackpobi.

HOLY CROSS SISTER EVELYN NTIAMOAH, CSC PROFESSES FINAL VOWS

On Saturday, 11th of September, **Sister Evelyn Ntiamoah, CSC** professed her final vows of religious life in the Congregation of the Sisters of the Holy Cross at St. Martha's Parish in Kasoa. For the celebration of profession, **Archbishop Matthias Kobina Nketsiah** of the archdiocese of Cape Coast, presided. He was assisted by **Right Rev. John Martin Darko**, Bishop of the Sekondi-Takoradi Diocese. Some half-dozen priests concelebrated with them, including **Fr. Bob Gilmour, CSC** of the District of West Africa.



Sr. Joan Marie Stedman, CSC president of the Congregation of Sisters of the Holy Cross, and **Sr. Margaret Mary Nimo, CSC**, Coordinator for the Area of Africa attended as official *witnesses* to Sr. Evelyn's profession of vows. In addition to the full body of Holy Cross Sisters in Ghana, the celebration was well-attended by the members of our District of Holy Cross

and many members of the parish, who shared in the joy of our beloved Holy Cross Sisters on this occasion. The mixed choir of some 40 members was outstanding in embellishing the Liturgy with both polyphonic renditions on their own and more traditional Fanti and English hymns for congregational singing.

For this formal occasion and such in the future, the Holy Cross Sisters have adopted the use of simple, yet attractive blue dress. This identifies them quite easily in the group picture taken at the end of the profession ceremony.

There was a gathering at the Sisters' Holy Cross Center *Nyame Adom (By/through the grace of God)* for which some several hundred persons attended. Truly it was a splendid, festive celebration on all accounts.



In the last few years there has been a marked increase in the number of Ghanaian young women entering into the formation program, indicating that the Sisters are now gaining some momentum toward building up their Ghanaian community of Holy Cross. Along with the three finally professed Ghanaian Sisters, and several Holy Cross expatriate Sisters, there are three temporarily professed Ghanaians, two

Ghanaians in the novitiate at St. Mary's College compound, and several members each in the pre-candidacy and candidacy programs in Ghana. More pictures of the occasion can be viewed at:

<http://picasaweb.google.com/rgilmourcsc/FinalVowsSrEvelynNtiamoahCSC11Sep2010#>

DISTRICT ANNUAL RETREAT

The District of West Africa held its annual retreat at the District Center in Brafuyaw from Aug. 16th - 20th. Some 30 members were present, even with a half-dozen or so unable to attend. **Rev. Msgr. Matthew Edusei**, Rector of St. Peter's Major Seminary, Pedu was the Moderator for the District Retreat, presenting two conferences each day, as well as celebrating the Eucharist. The theme of the retreat was "Generations Walking Side by Side"

In his opening remarks, Msgr. Edusei stated that the retreat was "A Time of Renewal, a Time for Drawing Closer to Christ." He clearly did his "homework" for our retreat, as was evident throughout with his conferences enhanced by references to our CSC Constitutions relevant to a given topic including, as well, reflections of our Founder. He had become friends while attending Amissano minor seminary when **Brothers William Gates and Philip Armstrong** were on the seminary staff. A serious/sincere effort seemed to be made by all retreatants in the manner of maintaining a spirit of silence throughout the retreat, including mealtimes.

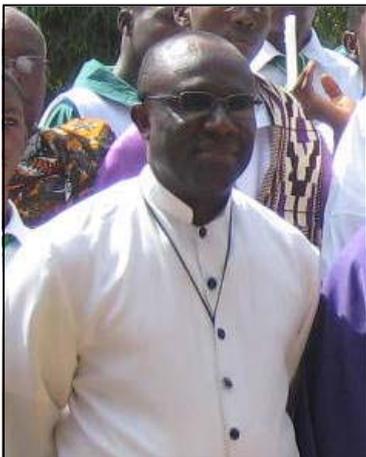
The retreat was further enhanced by the Community Holy Hour each evening. It was encouraging to note the contribution made throughout all by our younger Brothers, who also faithfully attended to washing dishes and cleanup of kitchen and dining room after meals, assisted by a "token representation" of older Brothers to a certain extent, the latter who did not wish to give the impression of having special privileges as "elders" in the community!

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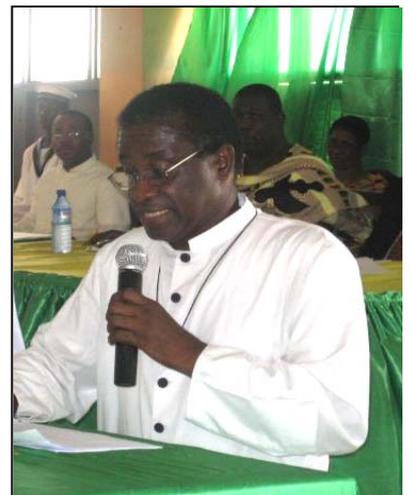
CHANGE OF HEADMASTER AT ST. JOHN'S

On August 5, 2010 **Bro. Joseph K. B. Annan, C.S.C.** officially handed over St. John's School in Sekondi, Ghana into the hands of the Metro Director of Education until such time as a new Headmaster would be appointed. Bro. Joseph had reached the Ghana Education Service's mandatory retirement age, now to receive a government pension. We thank Bro. Joseph Annan for his years as Headmaster of St. John's (from July 2001 to August 2010) and wish him well as he takes time out for a renewal program at the Oblate School of Theology's Ministry to Ministers Sabbatical Program in San Antonio, Texas.



Conjointly with this, on the previous day to the terminal date for Bro. Joseph, the Acting General Director of the Ghana Education Service forwarded a letter on 4th August 2010, appointing **Bro. Sylvester Quaye, C.S.C.** as Headmaster of St. John's Secondary School - Sekondi with immediate effect. Bro. Sylvester is now the 10th Headmaster of St. John's. He has proven himself worthy of this honored appointment by his competent performance as Assistant Headmaster to Bro. Joseph.

St. John's Secondary School marked the beginning place for Holy Cross in West Africa with the Brothers from the Midwest Province taking over the Administration of the school in Sekondi, Ghana. It thus has significant



place in the history of Holy Cross in Africa, and continues to provide an on-going role in the of Ghana's young people.

IRREPLACEABLE, BUT NOT INDISPENSABLE..?

It is with certain genetic traits and attributes, gifts, talents, intellect and will that God, in an outpouring of love, creates each of us to His image and likeness. It is the latter that gives us a sense of needing to be fully loved and to love in return, and causes us to search for a viable meaning in our lives, all of which ultimately can come only through our union with God. The latter in this life may be indirectly realized in our relationship to others in which we manifest an “other-centered”, not self-centered love, being disposed with good will toward neighbor, this pleasing in God’s eyes. In this we gain our dignity and meaningful existence that is otherwise unattainable, though we may not be immediately aware of the possibility of having eternal salvation through Christ’s redemption and of a future sharing in God’s glory. Our unique being is preserved in this transition from earthly existence to sharing in divine glory through God’s “energizing grace” (but not assimilated into His essence with loss of our uniqueness--a Hindu concept). It is this uniqueness of each person, which makes one irreplaceable and uniquely loved by God.

God calls each one for a role to play in Salvation History, giving sufficient grace to accomplish His will for us in this. In the continuing evolution of creation toward a “new heaven and earth”, we become co-creators with God in building up His kingdom on earth. However, it is possible for one in the “joy of doing” to forget from whence all that we have has come--we may let our work in God’s vineyard gradually supplant our taking appropriate times through prayer to intimately experience God’s loving presence in us.

We succumb to the occupational hazard of cherishing our accomplishments and successes, and probability of seeking our own renown and glory rather than God’s. Concerning our achievement, we personally may feel that we are indispensable, that is essential for the given cause--perhaps with a certain presumption that we have God’s blessing for longevity, so as to accomplish that which we think remains to be done--by us! There is a need to be reminded that God’s absolute Will for the ultimate fulfillment of his creation is inevitable, not to be thwarted by anyone’s departure from this life, however great the contribution that has been made. It is in this sense that absolutely no one can claim to be indispensable. (It is conceivable, of course, that one might well be indispensable for the continuing viability of a business venture or other material concern in the secular sense). Even the renowned miracle-worker, our beloved Blessed Bro. Andre, soon to be acclaimed a saint, would surely claim that he is least among the thousands over the ages through whom God has worked miracles.

There is one exception in all humankind, who is both irreplaceable AND indispensable in God’s designs. The Blessed Virgin Mary was Immaculately Conceived through God’s prevenient grace, thereby “assuring her disposition” to express her Fiat to become the Mother of Jesus, the God-Man. God’s election of other dominant figures in Salvation History, e.g. Abraham, John the Baptist, does not preclude someone else chosen after the first appointed has failed e.g. Saul, Judas...?

Summarily, the unique “giftedness” of God to us, created to His image and likeness in His incomprehensible love for us, gives sufficient reason for our ever deep and loving gratitude to God in return. And, accepting our “dispensability”, we humbly acknowledge our complete dependence on God in all things, confident as well, to rely on his sufficient supporting grace to accomplish His Will for us, bringing to fruition our labors for the sake of His kingdom. In Him we live and move and have our being, as irreplaceable, yet not indispensable beings.

--Bro. Tom Dillman

NEWSBITS

- ◆ **Bro. Patrick Osei-Bonsu**, who has been working within the Catholic Education System in Ghana, has received approval for transfer from the Catholic Education Office in Takoradi to that in Cape Coast. His new assignment began in September 2010, and his residence is now with the Holy Cross Community at St. Augustine’s in Cape Coast.

- ◆ Following his term as Director of the Pre-novitiate at the Moreau House in Sekondi for the past 10 years, **Fr. Bob Gilmour** has been reassigned to the District Center where he shall continue to serve as the District Steward and contribute in various ways at the Center and District at large as the Holy Cross District chaplain, more specifically as the Chaplain for Center Community. This is the first time there is a full-time Holy Cross priest for the Brothers, also outsiders who frequently attend services in Bl. Andre Chapel. It should be noted that Fr. Bob provided a tremendous service to the Congregation as a Secretary at the recent General Chapter, sending out on the Holy Cross website the day-to-day unfolding events of the Chapter. On behalf of all in the District especially, reflecting a corresponding sentiment from the Congregation at large, we take this opportunity to express our thanks to Bob for his excellence in performing this arduous task.
- ◆ **Bro. Anthony Koomson** has joined the Holy Cross community of scholastic Brothers now established in Sunyani. He is enrolled for his beginning year in the Catholic University in Sunyani, which brings the total number of 7 Brothers in various stages of completing studies toward obtaining Bachelor Degrees in Education. **Bro. Ken Goode** is Director of the House and also Vocational Director in the District. With its 8 members the Sunyani House is the largest in the District.
- ◆ On 13 July, 2020, **William Tawiah**, left from Ghana to begin an orientation program of some 4 weeks prior to entering the Holy Cross Novitiate, Virika in Fort Portal, Uganda.
- ◆ A Summer School Camp sponsored by the Catholic Students Union in the Archdiocese of Cape Coast was conducted for Catholic senior high school students in the archdiocese from Aug 8th to 30th as had been done over the past few years, while the regular school session students are on vacation. Some 600 boys and girls attended this program. A combination of several dozen staff members including priests, seminarians and laity contributed respective services for a very successful program. Selected courses were scheduled to reinforce academic needs of students, these being enhanced by daily Mass, and both mid-afternoon and evening half-hour or so periods for directed toward deepening the student's understanding of what it means to be a fully-committed Christian, enhanced by prayer reflection and spirited song. A similar program was inaugurated within the Sunyani Diocese this vacation period, as well.
- ◆ The Temporarily Professed Brothers gathered at the District Center from August 9th - 12th for a workshop under the direction of **Bro. John Affum Badu**, the Director of the Post Novitiate Program. Bro. John was assisted in the workshop by **Bro. Nicholas Arthur**, the newly appointed Director of the Pre-Candidacy and Candidacy Program at St. Joseph Hall, St. John's School Sekondi and **Bro. Michael Amakyi**, who has recently returned to Ghana from his Doctoral studies in the United States.
- ◆ The **Teacher Trainees Association** conducted its annual retreat for Catholic Students presently enrolled in Teachers Training Institutes/Colleges throughout Ghana at St. Augustine's College from 29th August - 6th September. Some 300 trainees participated in the retreat, this marking the 10th annual special weeklong retreat, at varied locations during this time.
- ◆ On Wednesday, 15th September, the Sisters of the Holy Cross from Kasoa *Nyame Adom* and Takoradi joined the members of the District at the Center in Brafuyaw for our Ghana Holy Cross Family's **celebration of the patronal Feast of Our Mother of Sorrows**. **Fr. Bob Gilmour**, celebrant, gave as is his custom, a very fitting homily for the occasion. All joined afterwards on the rooftop patio for the social of fine food, beverages, singing and dancing, even older members performing with no small agility. However, the Dean of the District, yours truly, the editor, who attained his 83rd BD in God's grace in August, chose to give his enthusiastic support by applause or comment in sedentary manner from the sideline!
- ◆ On 26th August, six young men entered the Candidacy Program at St. Joseph Hall at St. John's School, Sekondi. Several will be preparing for the National Exams to complete their high school requirements toward a High School diploma. The candidates are under the direction of **Bro. Nicholas Arthur**.

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