

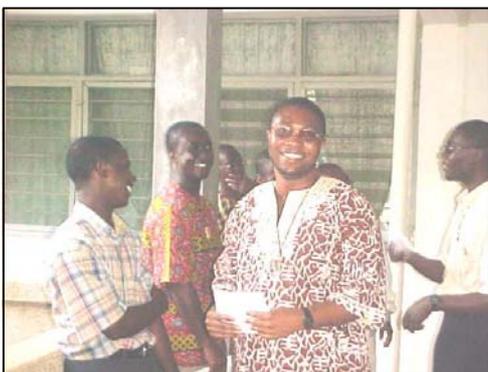
HOLY CROSS TODAY - GHANA

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

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September-November 2003

CELEBRATION OF THE FEAST OF OUR LADY OF SORROWS



Magnify
the Lord
with me;
let us exalt
his name
together!

— Psalm 34:4

On Monday, 15 September 2003, the Holy Cross Family in Ghana joyfully celebrated together the Feast of Our Lady of Sorrows at the District Center in Brafu Yaw with Mass in the Blessed Andre Chapel followed by dinner upon the District House rooftop patio. Present were the **Holy Cross Sisters and candidate** from Takoradi and Ksoa, the **Brothers and Fr. Bob Gilmour**, celebrant, also those in the formation program.

Brother Michael Amakyi, was away attending the major superiors meeting in Dublin; still pursuing studies stateside are **Paul Mensah, Patrick Osei-Bonsu, John Kwesi Asiedu and John Affum-Badu**. In union with our Holy Cross family throughout the world, we offered our own *Magnificat* in thanksgiving and praise for the countless blessings he has bestowed on all of us through our beloved patroness, *Mater Dolorosa*.

EDITORIAL: "THINKING small IS OK!"

Some years ago I was struck by a statement of G. K. Chesterton, renowned writer and speaker in the early 20th century, also outstanding polemicist for the Catholic faith to which he had been converted. Chesterton was noted for his adept use of the paradox in public debate and writings. The one coming to my mind now and again is: "*What is worth doing is worth doing poorly!*" Just an example or two will suffice to illustrate this.

Though my singing voice may leave much to be desired, I should sincerely join with others in singing the congregational hymns of adoration, praise and thanksgiving at Church service, nonetheless. My voice (somewhat muted perhaps) blending in with that of others can be a pleasing sound to the Lord. (Note: It is true that sour milk as a substitute for buttermilk with other ingredients can produce lovely pancakes!) Even more so, it is the Lord who has given us these voices, none of which even in the best of us is comparable to the mellifluous sound of the Cherubim and Seraphim, should the Lord want highest quality listening.

Again, I may not feel able to do a full regime of exercise for physical well-being, but whatever I do toward this aim is better than none at all. And a beginner's half-mile of walking, may develop into much greater distances both satisfying and of significant benefit to personal health.

In a similar Chestertonian manner I suggest that it is no less true that "thinking small" may accomplish more than "thinking big". The former may cause us "roll up our sleeves" to do what we are able; the latter may intimidate us to inaction in viewing the size of the desired ultimate goal.

In the account of our own Blessed Andre's desire for a shrine in honor of our patron, St. Joseph on Mt. Royal, it is recorded that his first act was to place a small statue of the saint at the location of where he envisioned the shrine to be. No other resources had he except faith and prayer. Today on Mt. Royal stands the largest basilica/oratory of St. Joseph in the world.

I recall an incident recorded of an encounter between Mother Teresa and a married woman. The latter, inspired by the account of Mother

Teresa's work with the poor in Calcutta wondered what she could in a practical way to make the world a better place. Mother Teresa told her simply that she should fulfil in the best possible way her responsibilities as loving wife and mother and concern for neighbors. Need it be said that the same thing applies as much or more in our personal relationships and responsibility to our brothers and sisters in Christ in our family of Holy Cross. It is upon and through such strong family and communal relationships that the Spirit will "renew the face of the earth."

In a slightly different sense there is wisdom, too, in the way we order our workday having smaller tasks with one or two larger ones needing to be done. If the option exists, it would be wise to first do the smaller jobs first to free us from the otherwise distracting concern they might have to inhibit full attention to the remaining larger task.

We may feel somewhat intimidated by the size of the problems facing us as we try to discern how best to move ahead. But move ahead we must, accepting realistically the fact that our undertaking may necessarily be smaller than we prefer—we humbly do what we are able as best we can.

In the story of the multiplication of the loaves and fish, when Jesus asked Philip how the 5000 persons might be fed, Philip implied it was impossible. It was Andrew who thought "small". He brought the five barley loaves and two fish that a boy had at hand, and gave them to Jesus. Some may interpret the consequent action in which the multitude were fed as a miraculous multiplication of the food by Jesus. Others may prefer to believe that by the initial small giving all those, who had prudently brought food baskets with them, were led to share what they had with others—a miraculous manifestation of mind-boggling sharing—food for all with enough leftover to fill 12 baskets. Philip, overwhelmed, did nothing—while with Andrew's small help the 5000 were fed.

Let us be content with simple beginnings when a desired larger goal hardly seems possible of doing. We bring to the Lord our loaves and fish, who through the power of his Spirit within us will accomplish marvels.

DISTRICT JUSTICE AND PEACE COMMISSION

At the December District Chapter there was unanimous consent by the delegates to establish a Justice and Peace Commission. Regarding

personnel, there presently are four members on the JPC: **Brothers Anthony Dadzie**, Chairman; **Tom Dillman**, Secretary; **Kenneth Goode**; and **Nicholas Arthur**, all of whom are wearing additional hats of one kind or other. Using a

similar perspective to that presented in the editorial (p 2) of issues that might be undertaken by the JPC, its members decided on a rather simple project relating to ecology, more specifically pollution as a possible viable project. Owing to the fact of limited personnel and finances, it was further determined that a good beginning would be to try to do something in the vast littering problem existing here in Cape Coast.

Credit must be given to HCIJO, more specifically to our District Superior, **Bro. Michael Amakyi**, whose article, "Tackling Ghana's Trash" appeared in the winter issue of *Perspectives*, a most noteworthy publication of the Holy Cross International Justice Office. This served as some motivation to our District JPC members suggesting this as a good starting point before attempting something of a more elaborate nature.

In his article, Bro. Michael has stated, "In Ghana, littering occurs almost everywhere and is not confined to any particular group of people...Passengers in moving vehicles have been identified as most to blame, but they are not the only culprits...Part of the problem is that water and snacks now come in handy polyethylene packaging that is not biodegradable. After satisfying their hunger and thirst people just throw

SCHOLASTICS' WOES AT UCC

There are now 8 Brothers attending the University of Cape Coast, 6 of these entering their first year. They are indeed fortunate to have been accepted into the university when so many graduates from secondary schools are not. This problem seems to have gradually increased since the inception 10 years ago of the new Secondary School System which replaced the former more sophisticated program having Forms 1 – 6. The SSS program seems to allow for a greater percentage of students to graduate, but this is also due in part to the population growth in Ghana.

The university facilities existing under the old system were fairly adequate to accommodate all students who had successfully completed Form 6. In Ghana five large government universities and a similar number of smaller private universities still serve the needs of higher education. The SSS graduates who seek entrance into the universities greatly exceed the number admitted. Some of

the packaging away, leaving it to clutter the streets..."

The District JPC has now begun a program to educate persons, who use public transport, on the adverse effects of random discarding of their "poly bags" and other rubbish. Initially members of the JPC have met with some passengers on fully-loaded buses prior to their departure, and met with the drivers of the buses in four different groups as arranged by each manager of the two divisions at Tantri Station, one of the three major bus stations in Cape Coast.

In addition to this, arrangement has been made with the local FM station for public announcements for a period of one month in conjunction with this project. The latter reaches a much broader range of Ghanaians concerning the problem of pollution through littering.

For a continuing program, an effort is being made to get the members of youth groups of two parishes, respectively, to encourage their participation in this project. Owing to a time factor, their participation in the program is not possible to workout in detail until Bro. Anthony returns from the international meeting of respective Social Justice Organizations in our Congregation of Holy Cross in Bangladesh in November. From input gained, we hope our JPC will have some better vision of attainable goals.

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those not admitted enter one of the polytechnic institutes for associate degrees.

While new dormitories have been built at UCC, unfortunately there has not been a corresponding increase of new classroom facilities. Thus in the opening week of school some classes were grossly overcrowded—several hundred students enrolled. These subsequently have been divided into two classes, but classroom space is still inadequate. It is "standing room only" for late arrivals, even with long tables and benches providing maximum efficiency of space. Thus our scholastics having a 6:30 AM class leave respective houses at 5:30 to secure a seat. More aggressive persons squeeze onto the end of a well- filled bench.

Dividing classes has made scheduling far from ideal and the need to procure teachers for the additional classes has made it necessary to employ some university grad-students. Despite all, the scholastics generally feel that they are in a viable learning situation. *Deo gratias!*

GROUNDBREAKING CEREMONY FOR HOLY CROSS SISTERS IN KASOA

On 18 October 2003, twenty years after the Sisters of the Holy Cross arrived in Ghana, ground was blessed and broken for the first convent. The event took place at Nyame N'Adom, a few kilometers from Kasoa. Thirty-five people representing the Ghana Holy Cross Family, Archdiocese of Cape Coast, Ebusuapany Botchwey from whom the land was purchased, the contractors and other invited guests were present for the occasion. All joined together to participate in the ceremony that included three essential parts: Prayers to the Four Directions; the Pouring of the Libation; and the Sod-cutting.



Sr. Jane Chantal did the honor in taking the pickaxe in hand to loosen the soil, exchanging this next for the shovel, formally beginning work at the construction site. Several representatives of the aforementioned groups took turns with pickaxe and shovel, leaving no doubt as to the serious

intent of the project to build the Sisters of the Holy Cross new convent. Work will begin by the contractor by 1 November 2003 and is expected to take about 18 months to complete.

It was a day of great gratitude to God for having gotten us to this day.

— **Sr. Helene Sharp, CSC**

BITS & PIECES

► **Bro. Anthony Dadzie** is now a fulltime teacher of economics at Aggrey Memorial Secondary School near the District Center.

► **Bro. William Gates** has been appointed as Director of the Temporarily Professed Brothers.

► **Bro. Vincent Gross** has returned to Ghana and is now fully recovered from prostate surgery done during the latter part of his vacation stateside.

► **Bro. Daniel Dardo** has replaced **Bro. Kenneth Kunditani** as Director of the Holy Cross Vocational Training Center. Kenneth is now pursuing studies at Takoradi Polytechnic to attain a comprehensive Certificate in Industrial Trades.

► **Bro. Emmanuel Minu** is on leave from HCVTC for advanced studies at Cape Coast Polytechnic.

► The novitiate program begins 19 March '04.

► In the Pre-novitiate program **Stephen Arthur** and **David Kpobi** have joined **Stephen Aidoo** and

Raymond Frimpong. There are tentatively 5 candidates awaiting national exam results before approval for next year's pre-novitiate program.

► **Bro. Nee Wayoe** served as moderator for the Provincial Chapter of the Handmaids of the Holy Child Jesus in early October.

► The 3-month ICF program which began in October has 15 participants from various religious communities here in Ghana. **Sr. Donna Webber, SSps** continues as director.

► In September the ICF facilities were used for a 10-day workshop for 28 Formators of religious communities in Ghana.

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