

HOLY CROSS TODAY - GHANA

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

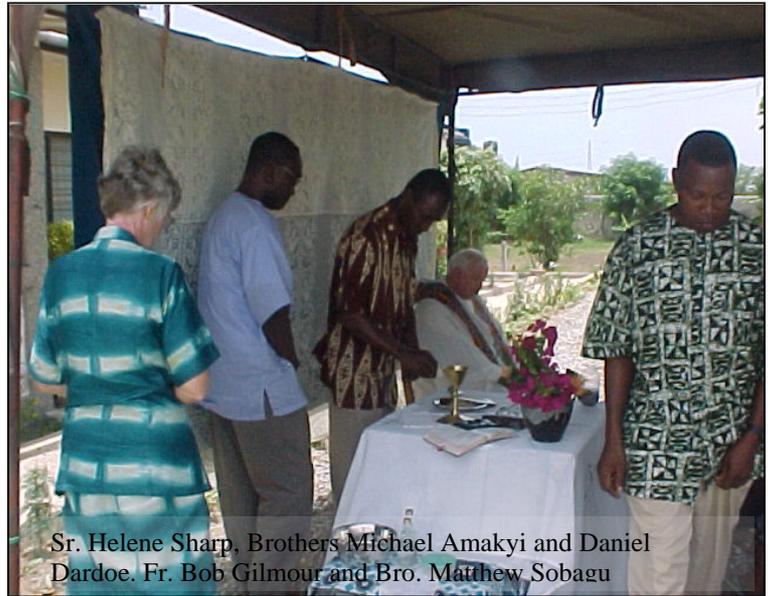
VOLUME 7 – ISSUE 2

April – June 2004

HOLY CROSS SISTERS HOST GHANA CSC FAMILY

On Easter Monday, April 11, through the kind invitation of **Sr. Margaret Nimo** of the Sisters of Holy Cross, all the members of our District of West Africa journeyed to Kasoa to celebrate our oneness in the family of Holy Cross in Ghana. All had arrived at the Sisters' house by 11 AM, and **Fr. Bob Gilmour** celebrated the Eucharist shortly thereafter outside under a canopied cover, which provided ample shade for this and the remaining day's activities. Enhancing the celebration of the Eucharist were the stunning sounds of a song bird just a few yards above in an almond tree to the right of our seating area, which continued off and on throughout—resting or rendering praise with us, I know not, at those times of our own singing of hymns abundantly laced with alleluias appropriate to the season.

The members now in Ghana in our District were all present for the occasion—24 in number along with our 4 novices. There were two Holy Cross Sisters, two of their novices and four candidates present, as well, **Sr. Jane Chantal** deciding to remain in Takoradi opting for rest instead of more travel after recent extensive travel outside the country. All together the occasion produced a rather impressive gathering of our Holy Cross Family in Ghana.



Sr. Helene Sharp, Brothers Michael Amakyi and Daniel Dardoe, Fr. Bob Gilmour and Bro. Matthew Sobagu

on the Accra-Cape Coast “Highway”—some feel “Road” more apt in view of surface conditions even before construction had begun. But it seems at long last there truly is a serious undertaking to make a new highway, which from the construction now in evidence will be a dual four-lane highway, perhaps becoming two lanes after some distance outside Accra to meet the very fine highway from Takoradi to the other side of Cape Coast. What a pleasure it should be in hopefully 2 or 3 more years to travel from Cape Coast to Accra as compared with the tortuous and dangerous route that one now must take to go the distance.

The Sisters of the Holy Cross now have the construction for their new residence in Nyame N’Adom (‘By the Grace of God’) well underway. Some of the travellers made a stopover at this new Center on the way to the Sisters present residence, Holy Cross Family Center, which is several miles from their present house in Kasoa, to take a look at things. Truly all will be an impressive looking compound of several facilities now in the planning stage for the new Center.

It was a great day of celebration and surely will continue as a planned yearly occasion for sharing our presence with one another in our Holy Cross Family in Ghana.



Novice Brothers and Sisters playing by the rules (mostly)

Kasoa is a 2 ½ -3 ½ hour journey from Sekondi or Cape Coast, respectively, somewhat extended in time now than before due to present construction

EDITORIAL: WEEDS & WHEAT

One of our young Ghanaian Brothers attending the University of Cape Coast was recently assigned to write an essay of some length in response to the question: “Would you agree with a friend who argues that we cannot reverse or eliminate sexual and domestic violence in our society?” The question truly considers only one aspect of the whole mix of good and evil in an imperfect world.

In view of the Parable of the Weeds and Wheat (Matt 13: 24 – 30) we may accept the reality that the two will coexist until the end time. It is significant to note that when the servants ask if they are to pull up the weeds they are told not to do this lest in pulling up the weeds they uproot the wheat along with them—they are to let both grow until the harvest at which time the weeds will be gathered and burned, the wheat to be stored. And truly, history has shown that an ill-founded means to eliminate one evil can thwart the efforts for growth of the expected good outcome. There is evidence of this in both the Palestinian-Israeli and Iraqi conflicts. As well, Jesus has given to us the Parable of the Net Cast into the Sea (Matt. 13:47 – 49) which indicates that the Kingdom of Heaven at the end-time will have both “good and bad” fish in the net, which will then be separated to save or throw away.

Terrible manifestations of evil have ever been part of human existence, albeit there are those who hold that the forces of evil seem much more rampant today than in previous times. Two reasons for this: the windows in our global village are now wide open to view through modern technology’s news media, and clearly the multitudes of people are increasing. However, while there existed a frightening manifestation of evil in the Holocaust, in the first century many Christians were thrown to the lions and Nero covered Christians with pitch and used them as human torches to light his garden. The victims of the Holocaust, at least, were asphyxiated in gas chambers before their bodies were burned to ashes in the ovens.

Keeping a proper prospective on things, the news media did relate the truly edifying action of the US and other nations rushing to the scene to assist in rescue efforts of entrapped victims and temporary hospital facilities to attend to the hungry and wounded. And I would like to believe contributing food, medical supplies and that somehow in God’s Providence, the response

across the world to 9/11 and motivation to eliminate terrorism ultimately will outweigh the effects of that terrible tragedy. The trauma of loved ones left behind to mourn and cope with the loss of the victims in any tragic event is not insurmountable, and life in many instances can take on new meaning and purpose with God’s grace. Indeed, those transcending their tragic experience may be instruments of God’s mercy and compassion in helping others to regain a joy and meaningful purpose in life. Modern technological development has helped in the doing of good works in the service of mankind, as well as unfortunately giving the means to evildoers for greater destruction.

There is no way we can reach a comfortable understanding with the way God has created a world in which evil is permitted to cause so much violence, pain and destruction for “good” people. That he will never renege on his gift of free will for humankind to use for good or evil has proven true through the ages. The Parable of the Weeds reminds us that evil will be ever with us. We do not know how many sheep or goats there will be at the end time (Mt 25:33), and it isn’t that significant to know in fulfilling our obligation to Love God and neighbor—including enemies!

On a more optimistic note, fortunately the parable of the weeds has a limited application. We have recently celebrated the Solemnity of Pentecost. The Spirit of Christ abiding within us works his wonder in transforming *our own weeds* and through us to *transform weeds among us into flowering plants*—far exceeding the manifestation of God’s power in changing the water into wine at Cana! Through us the Holy Spirit will renew the face of the earth—ultimately create a “new heaven and earth, when the kingdom of God is fully established. Thus victory over evil continues by the power of Christ’s Spirit acting through us.

To conclude on a note of hope—as Christians we believe that by his passion, suffering and death leading to resurrection and ascension in glory, Christ has become victorious over every evil. Evil is powerless to diminish in any way our dignity as beloved sons and daughters of our Father in heaven. Furthermore, it can be a means of growth in our union with Christ as we share in his suffering, in this our own time in Salvation History, making relevant the redemptive act of Christ to *our neighbor*, and ultimately sharing with our neighbor eternal glory in the Lord.

SISTERS OF THE HOLY CROSS: LETTER FROM KASOA

The Sisters have not been idle during the past months. In late January the Holy Cross Family Centre in Kasoa opened its doors. The Sisters have rented a building and are holding classes for both adults and children. The original aim was to tutor those preparing for JSS 3 national exams and to teach adult literacy. When they first started their program over 100 people from nursery to adult ages registered. Classes are held three days a week, with an average attendance of 65- 70 persons. Several groups and individuals in the USA have shipped more than 1000 books for the Centre. The program has been enhanced with Fridays scheduled as a "library and singing day". The space is too small, and there are always more people than chairs. There seems to be no immediate solution to the problem, unfortunately.

In February two of the novices, **Sisters Evelyn Ntiamoah** from Ghana and **Theresia Mbugua** from Kenya, arrived from Uganda for the three-month mission experience. They spent time in both Takoradi and Kasoa assisting the Sisters in their ministries, and joined the CAC (Catholic Action for Street Children) team in Accra for a month ministry experience. They returned to Uganda on April 30.

The building at Nyame N'Adom is growing fast. The workers have completed the structure on the front side and are working to cast the slab and complete the superstructure to the parapet wall and roof on the back side. They expect to complete that work sometime in June. They have planted several dozen fruit and fast growing trees to the

east of the house. These will serve, not only as a fruit and shade source, but also as a windbreak and help curb soil-erosion.

Candidate **Scholastica Ampadu's** father, **James Emmanuel Ampadu**, age 75, died suddenly on February 25. The Sisters attended the funeral in Atonsu, March 20. Scholastica was able to be with her family during the time of bereavement.

On Easter Monday the Sisters hosted the first Holy Cross Family gathering in Kasoa. (See p. 1).



Srs. Helene Sharp and Margaret Nimo with cook, Anna

On May 20, two newly graduated St. Mary's College students, **Katie Harrison** and **Elizabeth Jablonski-Diehl**, came to Ghana for a three-week volunteer experience in Kasoa. They have joined in everything, adding much life to the community. This is the first time either had been on the African continent.

Sr. Jane Chantal made the annual visit to Uganda in April and early May and has gone to the USA for her home leave and the General Chapter.

—Sr. Helene Sharp

CSC BROTHERS SPEAK AT CATHSU

The Catholic Student Union is a very active organization at St. Augustine's College, which has as its purpose the formation of solid Christian principles in Catholic students here, and to form a viable Catholic community. It thus serves to influence for the better the lives of the other students, most of whom are Christians. It also interacts with students in CATHSU groups of several other Catholic schools in the area.

The scholastic Brothers at Augusco now on vacation from studies at UCC have become more involved in student affairs on Augusco's campus. For CATHSU's weeklong program of festivities the Brothers significantly contributed by giving conferences to the members. **Bro. Robert Koomson** spoke on The Importance of Prayer in the Life of students; **Bro. Nicholas Arthur** addressed the matter of Boy-Girl Relationships; and **Bro. Kenneth Goode** covered the subject of Catholicism and Fundamentalism. Not surprisingly they were well-received, since the three gave due attention to their homework for their respective presentations.

DEATH OF THE BROTHER OF BRO. JOSEPH TSQUAYE

On Friday, May 28, the funeral Mass of **Mr. Anthony Robert Tsiquaye** was celebrated at 9:30 in St. Thomas Cathedral, Obuasi, Burial Service following. **Bishop Thomas Kwaku Mensah** was the main celebrant assisted by 12 diocesan priests and **Fr. Bob Gilmour, CSC**. Two buses and car accommodated all members of the District making the 2½ hr trip for the occasion. The deceased is the brother and uncle of **Brothers Joe Tsiquaye** and **Daniel Dardoe**, respectively.

As is now commonly done in churches to lessen the burden on celebrants and choir, the celebration conjoined the funerals of two persons, non-related —individual prayers and tributes accordingly.

Breakfast by a parish committee was graciously awaiting the travelers, who had left an hour before sunrise for the journey. And as well a very fine rice dish was provided after the service. Please remember Anthony Tsiquaye in your prayers.

Note: This is a revision of a poem appearing in an earlier issue of the District Newsletter some years ago when our publication had a very limited number of readers.

THE GLASS BLOWER

*Time has taken its toll, O Lord,
On our fragile, glasslike vessels—
Chipped and fractured, with shards that often
Cause pain to others and us as well.
We seek, O "Divine Artisan",
To be melted and refashioned
By the heat of your loving flame—
Blown into crystalline goblets
To be filled with the richest of wines—
Nectar of peerless vintage.*

—Bro. Tom Dillman

Bits & Pieces

Bro. Patrick Baah has been in the US since mid-May. He has been assisting **Bro. Raymond Papenfuss** in fund-raising for the District of West Africa, making appeals at each Mass on the weekend in parishes in several different cities. He is at St. Mary's College taking summer theology courses, and also attending studies in communication at Notre Dame.

Bro. Paul Mensah has now completed the course work and passed his comprehensive examinations at Catholic Theology Union in Chicago. There remains the writing of the thesis to complete all the requirements toward earning his MA in Theology "with concentration in Spirituality and minors in Scriptures and Cross Cultural Studies, which has a lot of systematic theology undertone". Paul hopes to finish all within the next several months or more.

Brothers Nicholas Arthur, Paul Bukari, Kenneth Goode, Vincent Intsiful, Robert Koomson and Ebenezer Prah have finished their first year of studies at UCC, all doing very well, it seems, though grades will not be published for another month or so.

A water crisis prevailed for several weeks in earlier May here in Cape Coast. The tardy rains of this year's season have finally arrived to resolve the problem. The rains were gladly received, as well, by the many small farmers in the region, who now can look forward to a bountiful harvest of corn.

The present novices are testing their respective "green thumbs" in tending a garden on their grounds to raise a variety of produce to supplant their kitchen needs. Hopefully the harvest will be bountiful enough to provide other houses at least a token share in the fruits of their labors as in previous years.

Brother Benjamin Biney has now completed his studies and exams at UCC, having only a final project report to present for approval by the university's Math Department Committee to enable him to receive his Bachelor's Degree in Math sometime later in the year.

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