

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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HOLY CROSS FAMILY MINISTRY IN GHANA

Within this past year, **Bro. Michael Amakyi**, has been involved in a significant way in promoting the Family Rosary. This has served, as well, as a preparatory stage toward establishing the Holy Cross Family Ministry in Ghana. On Saturday, September 11th, the Holy Cross District of West Africa had a gathering of interested persons in the Family Ministry in Ghana at the District Center. It was on this occasion that the District of West Africa formally endorsed this program.

We were fortunate to have **Fr. John Phelan, CSC**, President of the Holy Cross Family Ministry, as our main guest speaker for this occasion. Some 50 members of the ministry in Ghana were present for this occasion. Also speaking at the occasion was **Mr. Anthony Annan**, active member in the Holy Cross Family Ministry. All took place in Bl. Andre Chapel, except for one session for discussion of family prayer with three groups formed of those there present.

In his introductory remarks to the gathering the District Superior, **Bro. Michael Amakyi**, cited that this date was also that of the 3rd anniversary of the Board of Trade Building disaster in New York of worldwide consequences. It was recalled that more than 30 Ghanaians were among those who were victims in that holocaust. Thus there was an underlying general intention in our prayers at this gathering for the victims, not only of that specific occasion, but of the countless victims of terrorists that continues even today throughout the world.



Fr. John Phelan, CSC



Holy Cross Family Ministry in Ghana

focused on the main ideas of: improving our individual prayer life and that within the confines of the family. There was also a time following the two presentations for group discussion.

In his remarks Fr. Phelan stressed the point that the common family prayer, the rosary, is a very simple form of prayer. He explained how the rosary evolved into its present form, and most recently with the Joyful, Sorrowful and Glorious Mysteries of the rosary being embellished with the addition of the “Mysteries of Light”. His presentation included a number of experiences of his own or of others he has known to support ones belief that the rosary is indeed a very powerful means of prayer.

He mentioned that the process toward introducing the cause of Fr. Patrick Peyton for beatification is moving ahead. Regarding this he pointed out that the members of the Holy Family, which we especially venerate in our Congregation, ironically are respectively closely associated with the three members of our Holy Cross Congregation, whose Causes are now being promoted. in process toward beatification or canonization. Venerable Father Moreau had a great devotion to the Sacred Heart; the (page 3) →

This day's agenda

EDITORIAL: CROSSING BORDERS

The theme for the General Chapter now completed was “Crossing Borders”. A significant topic in our recently concluded General Chapter concerned changes in the infrastructure of our Congregation to fully embrace the concept of its internationality. The continuing growth in numbers and ministries in our third world provinces and districts has made necessary increased financial support from first world provinces in recent times. The action taken by the Chapter indicates that there is a general willingness to undertake this sharing of financial resources of the more financially solvent Holy Cross communities with those who are marginal at best, and resolutions have been made toward this aim. Other changes in our Holy Cross infrastructure also may become necessary.

It should be evident that unless some dramatic change occurs in the first world Holy Cross communities, there will be a corresponding need to consolidate some provinces as has now been done in conjoining priests and brothers into one province in Canada. Perhaps this may serve as a precedent to encourage other provinces struggling financially and/or facing decreasing numbers to similarly merge?

This change in the infrastructure of provinces causes considerable apprehension among some of our members owing to the disparity in status existing in earlier years between priests and brothers—the latter the aggrieved party—before autonomy of our respective societies was established some 60 years ago in the US and Canada. Such separation seemed necessary for the brothers’ identity/stature to mature at that time within our congregation. This latter having now become a reality should preclude any resurgence of a disparity between CSC priests and brothers if merging into one province proves necessary.

Our District of West Africa follows norms set by the Midwest Province and consequently accepts candidates to become Brothers only. Many in our District feel that we would be much more effective

in a shared ministry with our own Holy Cross priests if we had a mixed District of both priests and brothers. It has been somewhat disheartening in the past several years to have young men wanting to become priests in Holy Cross, who are precluded from this by the existing policy. These have been attracted to Holy Cross often through their relationship to the Brothers. Nonetheless a few have opted to enter Holy Cross to become Brothers, but a desire to become priests later resurfaces during their formation. Ultimately they have left to join another religious community to become priests, yet often retain close friendships with our community. Our founder, Venerable Basil Moreau, must be shaking his head over this anomaly of Brothers Only!

If we have a really viable international mentality and capability, our members in the third world may sooner than later “cross borders” to assist us, at least with personnel, as was done in the earlier history of Holy Cross in establishing their communities. Our diversity is increased even more as our third world communities expand. But diversity is not divisive, and can strengthen our unity, allowing for a more effective implementation of respective gifts and talents through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit to build up the Kingdom of God on Earth

Our lives and respective ministries are grounded in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit of Christ. It is thus that our family bond remains despite the conflicts that may occur, just as the latter happens in natural families. We are imperfect people in an imperfect world regardless of religious vows and living in a “graced environment”. In the light of the Holy Spirit we shall find a way to resolve conflicts and “bridge troubled waters”, all with God’s grace becoming opportunities for growth both individually and communally. We should have no fear of undertaking changes and adjusting to new structures—“*status quo*” is an anomaly in the vocabulary of the Holy Spirit!

We take this opportunity to express appreciation to **Fr. Bob Gilmour, CSC** of our West African District for his excellent reporting of the unfolding daily events at the General Chapter, which surely was an additional burden to that of his task as Secretary i.c. of the Chapter. Fr. Bob continues as Secretary here in the District to provide voluminous, precise minutes of our own District meetings and Chapters. He also provides Liturgical booklets for the Community Prayer and Mass for special occasions, such as religious profession, retreats, and Chapter, and yearly calendar of scheduled important events in the District.

(Family Ministry cont'd)

Servant of God, Father Patrick Peyton is closely associated with devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, especially in promoting the rosary as a family prayer; and Blessed Brother Andre, of course, in his personal devotion to St. Joseph and successfully encouraging others in this, as well.

After this Mr. Annan spoke at some length on different ways one's prayer life in general could be developed. His presentation stemmed in great part on the experiences within his own family and relationships. He showed current liturgical publications and a catechism text which he has found quite helpful. He suggested certain ways of remedying problems relating to difficulties in getting the family together to pray the rosary.

Then followed an opportunity for discussion of what thus far had been presented, as well as to bring up any other ideas one might have to enhance the praying of the rosary individually or as family. Three groups were formed.

One major problem did appear to be that of trying to schedule a convenient time at which all family members could be present for family prayer. Often enough children in secondary school and/or university studies may necessarily be absent. Some alternatives were suggested by which members who are away from the family can still share remotely in the prayer.

All reconvened in the chapel where a representative from each group related the main points discussed in his/her respective group.

The program was concluded with the rosary interspersed with a few hymns to Mary, followed by the singing of the Litany of the Blessed Virgin. An expressed intention was for peace and for the victims of terrorism throughout the world.

All then proceeded to the rooftop patio of the Brothers' residence for a social gathering and very fine dinner, with respective departures in the late afternoon.

BROTHER NEE WAYOE – RADIO EVANGELIST

The Archdiocese of Cape Coast has bought time slots on the various radio stations in the Cape Coast area for radio evangelization. One of these slots is filled by **Bro. Nee Wayoe, CSC**, who presents the program: "AT THE FEET OF THE LORD" on a government-owned station at 92.5 FM. The program each Tuesday morning from 5:15 to 5:45 consists of a weekly reflection to help guide listeners to live as persons of faith.

Owing to the relatively short radio time, there is no provision for listeners to call in. However, listeners do have an opportunity to call in on another program, FAITH AND MORALS, which the archdiocese also sponsors. It is on a different station for one hour on Wednesday afternoons.

Bro. Nee has no way of knowing the number of listeners tuning into his program, but there has



been a good response from persons who have expressed in one way or other their pleasure and appreciation for the reflections he has given.

Nee was invited by the archdiocese to serve on

the Board for radio evangelization, since he had given talks some years ago, 1998-99, on a program called: "ALONE WITH GOD". This program was sponsored by the radio station, itself. Nee had to discontinue this work at the time he went to the US for advanced studies in psychology and counseling.

For his programs Nee chooses his own topics or themes, and there is a very broad spectrum of issues he has selected thus far. All is aimed at enabling the listener to respond in a responsible way for his own spiritual growth and building up of the kingdom of God.

A sampling of past topics presented includes biblical quotes as "Some have eyes, but do not see" or "You are the light of the world". He sometimes chooses themes, such as: thoughtfulness; empathy; sympathy; or others bearing on sensitivity to the needs of others. Relating to the celebration of May Day in Ghana, Nee presented reflections relating to proper attitudes to work and the dignity of labor. Likewise he has used other current events as the basis for his reflections. The archdiocese wants the program to be an ongoing thing throughout the year, continuing under Nee's direction until he wishes to resign, at which time someone else will

be appointed.

In addition to this special radios evangelistic ministry, Bro. Nee continues to be available for counseling at the University of Cape Coast. His clientele includes not only students, but also whoever of the faculty come to him with their

WHAT I SAW IN GHANA

Going to Africa was an experience that I will never forget. Being there still seems unbelievable. I have been touched both mentally and spiritually by what I witnessed and by those I met along the way. The thesis for the trip to Ghana was, "Do you see it?" In other words, what are the ways we now see areas of the world after our visit than that held prior to it? During my stay I was able to learn and gain a better understanding of their culture. I am very grateful for many conversations with the Holy Cross Brothers, when misconceptions that I had were cleared up.

The visit to the slave castles along the Atlantic coast continues to weigh heavy in my heart. I can remember the smell of the markets with the persistent sellers and eager buyers. I met students who valued their education but could also appreciate occasional breaks for basketball games or soccer matches. I also remember how excited the children were to see our group and as we were to see them; and how they would walk "miles" to keep up with us—AND to keep us going! Nana's "home cookin'" left our stomachs content and our hearts happy.

The Sunday Mass in Elmina, was an astounding experience. The faith in God was amazing. I remember how crowded the church was and the people sitting outside along the church windows; there were people there of all ages to hear God's words of inspiration. Each encounter was an experience of a lifetime. What I saw in Ghana was pure beauty. Although some places we visited in Ghana did not have material wealth, their hearts were wealthy with love. Their love for life and strong faith are what keep them going, and it was evident during the walks through the villages. They have what America is in desperate need of.

particular need for counseling. His counseling involvement at UCC is also voluntary.

It should be noted that along with these two voluntary roles, the major ministry of Bro. Nee is being the Director of Novices, which challenge he commendably continues to fulfill.

The people in Ghana are rich with physical, emotional, and spiritual blessings for which people in other countries long.

In the bumpy, four hour, but unforgettable van ride to Ghana's airport in Accra, the others and I agreed that our lives will never be the same because of this experience. When I think of Africa, the first thing to come to mind will not be poverty and slavery. Instead, I will think of



Holy Cross College Students (& friend) in Ghana -

Africa, Ghana in particular, as a place that has courage, integrity, faith, love, and honor. I will be sure to remember everything I encountered and learned. I will also never forget the people I met and the generosity that they bestowed upon my friends and me. I would like sincerely to thank Brother Michael and all the Brothers of Holy Cross for showing us the way and being a part of the adventure with us.

My visit to Ghana leaves me wanting to know more about it and yearning to return. But until then, I saw it, I embraced it, and I will never forget it. — Kimberly N. Green, (picture upper right)

We have recently celebrated the feast of Our Lady of Sorrows. Mary shared most intimately—mystically—in the Passion of our Lord at the foot of the Cross—there given to us as our Mother. We accept that the Cross is our only Hope, and thus, too, may proclaim our Lady of Sorrows as our Mother of Hope!

FEAST OF OUR LADY OF SORROWS

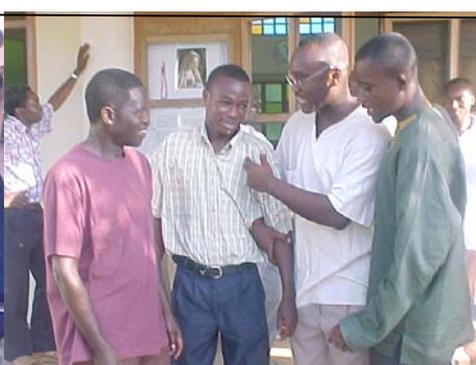
On Wednesday, September 15th, our District members of Holy Cross, together with the Sisters of the Holy Cross, met together at an early evening hour to celebrate the Eucharist honoring our patroness, Our Lady of Sorrows in Bl. Andre Chapel at the District Center in Brafu Yaw. We were indeed fortunate to have **Fr. John Phelan** still present with us as celebrant for the occasion, as our District chaplain, **Fr. Bob Gilmour**, usually celebrating the occasion, was not to return for another week from his stateside vacation.

As our number of young religious increases, so too, we note an increase in the size of our community musical combo accompanying the singing with organ, drums and assorted African rhythm instruments. The enthusiasm displayed in their performance encouraged similar response for the singing of the hymns appropriate to this great occasion. “Unfortunately” our Holy Cross *manly* voices by the fact of numbers at such conjoint occasions still dominate those of our beloved Holy Cross Sisters, but whose community is also increasing in number and hopefully one day their mellifluous voices will sweeten the sounds to make such occasions even more worthy of the honor and praise due our *Mater Dolorosa*.

As Father Phalen remarked in his homily, it is well for us to remember as we celebrate this patronal feast of our congregation that that Mary, our Lady of Sorrows, had compensating joys in union with Jesus even into his public ministry, e.g., the Wedding Feast at Cana. At the conclusion of his homily Fr. Phalen embellished his remarks with a beautiful hymn to Mary, which he sang in his “easy listening” baritone voice. The lyrics, tracing the role of Mary, who so closely shared with Jesus throughout his life even to his death and her own glory in Him, served as further inspiration to us.

Truly, Mary, now in her glory, and for the honor bestowed on her as the Mother of God’s People, given to us by Jesus on the Cross, is the “Cause of our Joy” and worthy of all the wonderful titles assigned to her by God’s People in the Litany of the Blessed Virgin. Just as the Cross is our only Hope, so too Mary, who shared so closely with Christ in his crucifixion, has thereby become our “Mother of Hope”!

Following the Liturgical celebration all gathered at the rooftop patio of the Brothers House to fittingly conclude today’s occasion in true Holy Cross camaraderie. An early evening departure with gladness of heart for all of us to have had the opportunity to celebrate together another great occasion in our Holy Cross family.



WORKSHOP (I): LITURGY

In early July the temporarily professed participated in a five-day workshop on the Liturgy under the direction of **Fr. Mac Maanu**, archdiocesan liturgist. The primary focus of the presentation was to gain insight and better understanding of the reason for the liturgical practices that now exist. Fr. Maanu emphasized that the Liturgy: (1) celebrates the life of Christ; (2) the Liturgical Year is centered around the life of Christ; and (3) that the components of the Liturgy have gradually developed to their present form, all to the purpose of making the first two aims more feasible.

There was general agreement and appreciation of the information thus given. There was some disagreement with the insistence of Father Maanu that it was wrong for anyone, including religious, to assume the role for distributing the Holy Eucharist, even more so, to conduct a Communion Service.

Apparently one must undergo a Communion Rite course before undertaking such activity. There seems room for exceptions to the rule, and here at St. Augustine's College, for example, both distribution of Communion and conducting a Communion Service have been done by one or other of the Brothers in residence. On Sundays the number of communicants among our 1200 boarding students and staff is too large to reasonably expect the celebrant not to have an assist. For Masses during the week, students of individual boarding houses are assigned a given day, and sometimes the chaplain may be away, if not ill, with the consequence of a Brother

conducting a simple Communion Service.

Fr. Maanu mentioned the Church's approval or rejection of certain practices regarding other parts of the Liturgy. For instance, there should be no processional dancing as the celebrant enters from the back of the church for the beginning of the celebration, though dancing may accompany the bringing up of the gifts in the Offertory Procession. Fr. Maanu held very strongly to the view that no reading should substitute for the approved scripture readings, e.g., Constitutions, Reflections from the Founder of the religious community. However, pastoral letters are permitted.

It may come as quite a surprise to an expatriate—possibly shock to a conservative liturgist from the western church—when first encountering the practice of a member of the congregation singing a seemingly unscripted solo of praise to “Christ the King” at the time of consecration on special Feasts/occasions. This may extend over several minutes before the normal Eucharist Prayer form continues. This hymn of praise stems from a cultural practice in some places in Ghana in which a designated person sings with full-throated voice honoring and praising the merits of the tribal king/chief. This solo rendition inserted within the Liturgy seems to be generally accepted by the bishops here in Ghana.

The Liturgy in Ghana does indeed allow for the full participation of drummers and other African musical instruments, rendering highly spirited rhythms appropriate to the given parts of Mass.

WORKSHOP (II): LEADERSHIP SKILLS

Brother Roy Smith CSC of the Midwest Province and his brother, **Joseph Smith**, from Indianapolis, Indiana, arrived in Ghana, West Africa during early August to conduct a workshop for the young religious Brothers of Holy Cross in the District. For more than a week they shared leadership skills with the Brothers stemming from their own respective leadership experience over the years in various administrative positions.

The first part of the time in the workshop focused on the basic skills required to be self-motivated, as well as leaders within the Congregation of Holy Cross. Chief among these

four skills that were developed was that of the “imaginary leadership role playing”. One envisions himself in various situations in which he would be required to function as an effective leader in the given setting. These exercises required participants to take inventory of self and reflect upon what is required to be able to see oneself as a leader.

Many of the exercises allowed for interaction and discussions centered on particular topics. Along with these were numerous examples from Bro. Roy, who has been in counseling for more than 30 years, and from Joseph, who has

worked in this arena for much the same length of time.

A great deal of time was devoted to the ethical considerations required when one is in a servant role. Most of the ministries addressed in the District of West Africa are centered on service.

The last two days of training were devoted to social work. Brother Roy has a MSW, while Joseph has a JD. They have extensive background in social work and they shared many examples of what skills and sensitivities it takes to be

successful in this field. Mrs. Doris Peck on the last day of the workshop shared her vast experiences as a school social worker.

As the workshop ended, several of Bro. Roy and Mr. Joseph Smith's relatives joined them for a few days of touring various parts of Ghana.

Reports from the participants indicate that this was a very successful workshop in regard to both interesting presentation and significant benefit to the participants as future leaders within the Congregation of Holy Cross.

—Bro. Roy Smith

NEWS FROM OUR HOLY CROSS SISTERS

The convent building in Nyame N'Adom ("By the Grace of God") continues toward completion according to schedule, which latter, not all that common here, might indicate special benefits of Providence already accruing from the well-chosen title of the Sisters' compound. There should be a complete report in the next couple of months.

Our two candidates, **Catherine Beforc** and **Martina Dery** help with youth and tutoring at Holy Cross Centre.

On September 15, 2004, **Scholastica Ampadu, Theresa Fameyeh and Bette Soge** were received into the novitiate of the Sisters of the Holy Cross in Jinja, Uganda. They will be in the novitiate for two years.

The Sisters of Area VII will hold the first Post Chapter Assembly in Entebbe, Uganda, September 27-29, for which all of the Holy Cross Sisters in

Ghana will attend. The focus of the meeting will be on the recently completed General Chapter proceedings, as to how best implement the decrees and recommendations thereof for this area. The assembly will also include election of new leadership for the area, at which time **Sr. Jane Chantal** will step down after her commendable job over the past 5 years as Coordinator of the Sisters of the Holy Cross in Africa.

Following the assembly **Sisters Evelyn Ntiamoah** and **Barbara Kamara** will make their First Profession of religious vows on October 1. Sr. Evelyn will return to Ghana with Sr. Jane as a member of the Sisters community in Takoradi. Her ministry will be related to some yet to be determined role in the infrastructure of the Holy Cross Vocational Training Center in Takoradi.

—Sr. Helene Sharp

Bits and Pieces

Bro. Daniel Dardoe has recently completed a condensed course in administration at the Catholic University in Sunyani.

Emmanuel Minu is no longer a member of the District. He now has moved close to Cape Coast Polytech to continue studies there.

Bro. Vincent Gross is expected to return to Ghana in November after his rehabilitation following apparently successful surgery for a detached retina.

Novices Stephen Aidoo, Stephen Arthur, Raymond Frimpong and Davod Kpobi have begun their "living in community" experience for

one month beginning mid-September.

While **Bro. Benjamin Biney** still patiently awaits the formal date of graduation, **Brothers Nicholas Arthur, Paul Bukari, Kenneth Goode, Vincent Intsiful, Robert Koomson and Ebenezer Prah** have begun second year studies at UCC. The latter all successfully completed the first year in all courses.

Brothers Nicholas, Kenneth and Robert participated in a special Vocation Program on Sunday, September 12th at Holy Child Secondary School. Cardinal Peter Turkson was present for the occasion.

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October Devotions to Mary

