

# HOLY CROSS TODAY - GHANA

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

VOLUME 8 - ISSUE 4

October - December 2005

## DISTRICT CHAPTER 2005: "LIVING THE DREAM AND MAKING A DIFFERENCE"

The District of West Africa held its Chapter the week before Christmas, Dec. 16<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup>. In addition to the 31 capitulants from the District, also present were **Brothers Robert Fillmore**, provincial of Midwest Province, and **Ken Haders**, Chapter Moderator, **Brother Raymond Papenfuss**, District Mission Procurator, **Bro. Jerome Kroetsch** and the **Sisters of the Holy Cross** here in Ghana.

While many important issues were discussed, clarified and/or finalized in decrees, statements or recommendations, several emerged as special points of focus as we attempt to fulfill the motto of the Chapter stated above.

Clearly, we are concerned about the state of vocations in our international Holy Cross community and pledge ourselves to prioritizing this, especially with a concerted effort to fully participate in all that the Spiritual Year signifies, as designated by the Superior General toward this aim.

It is the expressed hope that the district will become a **PROVINCE by 2010**, this to be presented as a request at the next Midwest Provincial Chapter.

An effort will be made to undertake viable

projects that will improve our District's financial

**Fr. Bob Gilmour** has provided many fine pictures of the chapter. Click on:  
<http://groups.msn.com/cscButuGhana/picture>

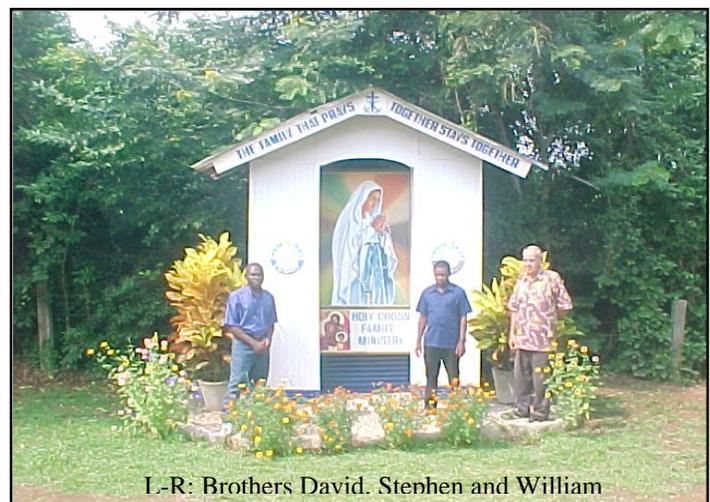
picture with the added income thus forthcoming. Most especially, the district will undertake the first step toward an eventual aim of a complete basic, secondary and teacher training college with a **basic educational school** in Kasoa. It is hoped that soon after being established it will become a significant source of income to the district.

As **Bro. Michael Amakyi** completed his term as District Superior at the end of this Chapter, the delegates elected **Bro. Paul Mensah** as his successor. All those present expressed their deep appreciation for the splendid accomplishments of Michael to bring the district to its present state with a very promising future. In like manner all expressed their confidence and hope in Paul to continue on to accomplish the aims and expectations the chapter has in "**Living the Dream and Making a Difference**"

## SHRINE FOR OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY

In late September the District Center dedicated its new Shrine of Our Lady of the Rosary in conjunction with the present effort to promote the theme of the Family Rosary Crusade—"The Family that Prays Together Stays Together". While several persons have been involved in this undertaking, the idea for the project stems from the inspiration of **Bro. William Gates**, who brought together the minds and talents of **Brothers David Kpobi** and **Stephen Arthur** in bringing original plan to reality.

One may be surprised in first viewing the now "holy place" to note that a painting rather than statue adorns the shrine. However, a truly



L.-R: Brothers David, Stephen and William

beautiful work has been accomplished through the combined efforts of Stephen and David in their respective construction and painting. David is a very capable artist, and the picture stands on its own merits whether or not to be replaced later by a more weather-resistant statue through the kindness of a benefactor.

Flowers and other landscaping is still unfolding at the hands of Bro. William to embellish the setting with nature's own homage

### THE DISTRICT'S 'EXTENDED' HOLY CROSS FAMILY GATHERING

On Saturday morning, October 1, the members of the District of West Africa and the Sisters of the Holy Cross in Ghana gathered with respective family members and/or relatives at the District Center. The occasion was to celebrate and further consolidate our unity with each other.

This marked another occasion of the several or more that have been held in the past few years in which special recognition has been given to those who are close to all of the religious in Holy Cross in Ghana because of the fact of their relationship, respectively, to our members.

After the welcoming address by **Bro. Michael Amakyi** additional introductory remarks were added by **Sr. Mary Margaret Nimo, CSC** emcee for the occasion, who then invited all to join in song—and dance for those who felt thus inspired. This prelude to the Eucharistic celebration allowed time for a few late arrivals traveling from 'far places', as well as giving opportunity for those already present to manifest their joy for this occasion. Some half-dozen of

to our Lady. A few benches have thus far been placed about the shrine to accommodate those who may wish to linger for reflection and prayer. Those who come to the Center for private retreats, along with those participating in the Institute of Continuing Formation program, seem to find pleasure in visiting the shrine.

The District members are grateful to Brothers William, David and Stephen for their efforts in providing this splendid addition to the Center.

our temporarily professed Brothers did the honors with the African rhythm instruments along with **Bro. Nicholas Arthur** at the electronic organ, who with the others continue to embellish our various celebrations so capably with their respective skills.

**Fr. Bob Gilmour**, celebrant for the occasion gave, as always, appropriate reflections in his homily emphasizing our oneness in this extended family of Holy Cross. Assisting Fr. Gilmour were **Fr. Albert Amakyi**, brother of Bro. Michael, and **Fr. Samuel**, chaplain of St. John's School, Sekondi.

The picture is of most of the family members or relatives of our Holy Cross extended family who were present for the occasion taken outside the Bl. Andre Chapel. All gathered afterwards in the large shaded area from the many trees gracing the lawn of the District House for a social before gradual leave taken to return home.

A very fine day of celebration of our oneness with each other in our Holy Cross extended family!

### ARTIST BRO. DAVID KPOBI, CSC AT CC SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF

Since David has a true gift in artistic talent he immediately put himself to the task of trying to help the deaf children have an appreciation for art, and teach them rudimentary skills such as sketching, drawing and painting.

Brief though his exposure was in the role of art instructor, the school authorities made a plea to the Formation Committee in the District to allow David to continue as a full time teacher at the School for the Deaf. Both the committee and David agreed, though it would mean the delay of a year before the latter could pursue his further study in the Arts at the university.



As a novice, **Bro. David Kpobi** was assigned to work with the children at the Cape Coast School for the Deaf as his weekly apostolate.



David thus far has had formal training in artwork only at the Secondary School level. He has done numerous high quality paintings. David feels that he has been able to contribute something to the deaf children in his art class by giving them an added dimension in expressing themselves that is inhibited by the fact of their deafness and consequent speech deficiency.

David says that the authorities seem to be doing what is within their means to improve the art facilities and provide necessary materials and supplies. However, while the students do have standard brushes, they have only acrylic paints from local hardware stores with which to paint—no oil or watercolor paints.

Regarding this matter of existing inadequacies in the art program at the school, a Holy Cross College student, **Amy DeCloedt**, has now come to David's assistance to help alleviate the problem. David's work in teaching the deaf

students came to her attention when she was here perhaps the most grandiose is that of the full wall mural at Moreau House in Butumayegbu, not to overlook the beautiful Madonna painting for the new shrine at the Center (see p 2). with others from HCC in latter July to visit Ghana to study African culture as part of their requirement for their Bachelor's program. (See July-Aug '05 issue of HCT-G). After discussing this matter of needs for a more viable program with David, she carried back to the States two of his paintings, which she felt would gain the interest of others sufficiently to purchase one or both of them if given the opportunity. Amy thus undertook the project of auctioning the paintings, first by a closed bid of not less than \$50, then an open auction just before Thanksgiving. The proceeds from the auction and others who wanted to donate something toward the cause of the art program was some \$350 to provide a very great assist to David for his art class at the School for the Deaf.

Perhaps such concern as shown by outsiders, such as Amy DeCloedt, and this initial effort by David will give the impetus toward establishing a truly viable program in Art education at the School for the Deaf. Our special thanks to Amy for the time and effort taken in helping toward this aim.

David's plan is to teach this remaining time to complete a two-year commitment to the school, and then take time to further his artistic skills through formal studies. He is not ruling out the possibility of one day returning to his ministry at the School for the Deaf.

## STREET CHILDREN IN NEW PROGRAM AT HCVTC

In 1982 the Skills Project was established to offer trade skills training to young men, who for one reason or other, mostly financial, were unable to get into regular academic institutions, even those providing vocational training. Initially, providing the funding for such a program was a constant struggle, but remained to some degree viable through the generosity of benefactors, the marketing of projects, and income from an ever so small school fee, the latter in some cases *gratis*. Suffice to say, the program gradually gained momentum through fund raising projects and financial grants undertaken primarily by **Brothers Raymond Papenfuss** and **Jerome Kroetsch, CSC**. Today

the original project has gained beautiful and functional facilities, now named the Holy Cross Vocational Training Center and located in Anaji near Takoradi. At present **Bro. Daniel Dardoe** is Director of the Center

Over the years every effort has been made to keep school fees minimal, even some scholarship assistance provided. However, it has not been possible to provide a truly free education, including room and board, to these generally poor, if not marginalized, aspiring students in vocational training. This clearly excluded with few exceptions those commonly referred to as "street children". The latter as implied in the name are homeless and without financial

support. If not orphans as such, they are left to shift for themselves being sent away from homes—perhaps choosing to leave on their own accord where very minimal resources, if any, are at hand to provide them with the necessities of life. While there was an awareness of the potential of the “Skills” program to assist such children, the funds just not at hand to make this possible. Hope nonetheless continued.

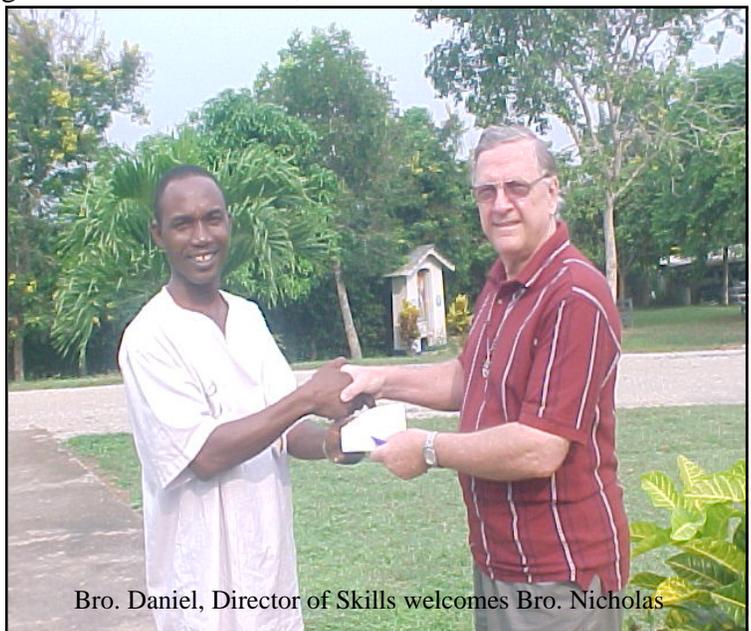
Now the dream has become a reality through the generosity of one man and his wife, who prefer anonymity at present, who had been wanting to give assistance in a more significant way than by ‘random’ giving to various charities in focusing on the needy in the developing world. Their intention providentially came to the attention of Bro. Raymond Papenfuss through a mutual friend. After reviewing possibilities open for financial assistance in one or more ministries of Holy Cross in Ghana, the tragic situation of the street children and their need for help became more and more evident. The fact that a place already existed with a potential toward this aim through vocational skills training made the decision clear—the planning stage began.

To provide for the homeless ones, there is need for a full coverage of room and board in addition to the cost of their education. The initial funding by the aforementioned will provide for a large dormitory to be fully equipped with essential furnishings. Also additional tools, materials and supplies will be needed for the increased number of vocational students, as well as a director of the affairs of these special students. The benefactors have agreed, as well, to provide the funds deemed necessary to keep the program operating in a viable way.

**Bro. Nicholas Thielman, csc** (Southwest Province) arrived in early November to be the director of this specially privileged group. He terminated his mission in Bangladesh after 38 years, this mainly in educational administration. In the latter years, however, he had worked with organizations sponsoring assistance to street children, and in the past few years has been

directly involved in ministering to underprivileged children.. The expertise he thus brings gives no small promise to hope for a similar successful establishment of the new program at the Holy Cross Vocational Center for street children here in Ghana.

Working plans toward the construction of the new 2-story dormitory are now at hand and actual work will get underway when the students return from school in early January. All other buildings at HCVTC the work has been done mostly by the staff and students at the Center. However the fact that this dormitory will be a two-storey construction and is to be completed as soon as possible will require skills beyond those of the Skills trainees. Thus an outside contractor has been attained and construction will be done mostly by his workers. Skills students shall, however, assist to some extent



when possible to do so that they might benefit from ‘on the job’ experience corresponding to their respective areas of learning in vocational skills.

We sincerely express our appreciation to the two benefactors who have contributed the funds necessary for this new program and to the Southwest Province for relieving Bro. Nicholas of present apostolic ministry in their province to allow him to direct this new important work here in the District of West Africa.

## NEWS NOTES FROM OUR SISTERS OF THE HOLY CROSS

The sisters in Kasoa have been involved with their usual activities at the Holy Cross Family Centre, St. Martha's Church and various ministries in the church community. All participated in the main harvest from which the proceeds to construct a new, larger St. Martha's Church.

In Takoradi, **Sisters Esther and Evelyn** have been very busy ministering in Archbishop Porter Secondary School for Girls, the latter also has a full round of duties as the secretary at Holy Cross Skills Training Centre. All joined Sr. Esther for the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration for the school on December 3<sup>rd</sup>. It was a joyous occasion, one deserving the accolades given.

Two volunteers, **Claire Higgins** and **Leah Gillock** from St. Mary's College, spent three months with the sisters in Kasoa. During their stay they visited with Sr. Esther and Evelyn in Takoradi, taught at St. Martha's School and the Holy Cross Family Centre, wrote and prepared a play for some of the youth in the parish for which the Children's Choir, organized and directed by **Sr. Maggie**, will provide the music. (Unfortunately they will not be here to attend the play on December 24<sup>th</sup> to see the fruits of their

labor). Other activities included full participation in the first Corpus Christi procession in Kasoa -coinciding with the Feast of Christ the King rather than on the actual feast day here in Ghana. Sr. Maggie took them and **Sr. Edith**, recent arrival from Uganda assigned to their community, for some sight seeing and to the National Eucharistic Congress in November. When they left on December 10<sup>th</sup> each expressed gratitude for what they had learned which has given them a new direction in life. They expressed hope that they might one day return to Ghana.

**GOOD NEWS!** Work to complete the building at Nyame N'Adom will resume sometime after January 1<sup>st</sup>. All will be happy to have it done.

For those wanting to come to visit the Sisters in Kasoa, there is no longer reason for your procrastination—the refuse dump (Bolla) is gone! It is now some distance away to become after sufficient filling the Tipper Truck Park.

All the Holy Cross Sisters in Ghana wish a blessed Christmas Season and an abundantly blessed new year to each and all.

—Sr. Helene Sharp

## Bits & Pieces

● **Corrections:** (1) In the July-Sept issue of the newsletter inadvertently the article on **Bro. Bernard Klim** was titled: A Yen Experience for Temporarily Professed. Clearly this should have been "Zen", not Yen! (The writer in reflecting on Bro. Bernard's "Yen for Zen" might have caused a slip of the finger on the keyboard). (2) In the article on the "Battery of Workshops for Temporarily Professed", that which was credited to **Bro. Joseph Annan** should have been to **Bro. Paul Mensah**.

● In early October **Bro. Paul Mensah** conducted a Workshop on Financial Reporting—to establish uniformity in the matter of the recording/accounting of individual expenditures by all members within our District of West Africa. Members present seemed appreciative of the insights thus gained.

● Over the past few years **Bro. Michael Amakyi** has been able to squeeze in sufficient

hours from his demanding schedule as District Superior to finish a special executives' course at Ghana Institute in Management and Public Administration correspondence earning his Masters Degree in Management and Administration. The District commends Bro. Michael for undertaking this challenging project, and his untiring effort bringing it to successful completion. Our sincere congratulations to you, Michael!

● On Saturday, Nov. 26<sup>th</sup>, the District members shared in a Day of Recollection. We were fortunate to have **Fr. Lawrence Krah**, a friend of Bro. Michael and Brothers in the Sekondi area. Fr. Lawrence for his Advent theme the somewhat provocative title, "When the son of man comes will he find anything on earth?" The occasion was held at Moreau House in Butumagyebu, **Fr. Bob Gilmour** as gracious host and ample provider for the social following. Later in the afternoon members met once again

for an hour or so primarily relating to the forthcoming District Chapter.

- **Brother Jerome Kroetsch** made a long-delayed return to Ghana in December to receive a more formal farewell from members of the family in the Holy Cross and friends whom he knew and worked with during his 12 years here. He was at the original Skills Center in Sekondi, later to become the present Vocational Training Center in Takoradi, where he was director until illness forced his return rather suddenly in 2002. He had a very important role in the building of the new Center and equipping it with tools and machinery. Owing to his sudden leave there was no time for the usual formal farewell celebration honoring ones contribution to the District. His visit coincides with the District Chapter which opportunely had brought us all together following the Chapter to bid Jerome a proper

farewell and expression of thanks for his many years of service here. Jerome's present ministry is in Phoenix, Arizona assisting the CSC priests in their present building program.

- **Brothers Benjamin Mensah-Biney, Patrick Kojo Baah and Matthew Sabogu** of the District of West Africa will be making their Final Profession of Vows on December 30, 2005 at St. Paul's Pro-Cathedral in Sekondi. **Fr. Bob Gilmour** will have a special article with photos of the occasion in early January.

- The editor will be going stateside for his biannual vacation over the next three months. The next issue of the District newsletter will be in June. **Fr. Bob Gilmour** will continue to give his usual updates on significant events in District affairs during this time.

*"We have heard the prophets proclaim the One who is to come as child to lead us into the reign of God unfolding toward completion (Is. 9:6). We recognize him in the infant sung by angelic hosts as the one in whom peace is made for all humankind. But in all the liturgies of the joyful season, the angelic melody is sung in counterpoint to all the other texts recalling that our peace is made not through his clinging to childhood but through his growing into that fully divinized human glory of which the child was only the promise. It is through dark passages of suffering and death that the Christmas child (in completing his mission on earth) shall lead us, stripping us of every hindrance we have gathered over the years, until we are set free to join him in that mature wholeness, as yet beyond our imagining." (Commentary for the Christmas Season – Holy Cross Ordo 2006)*

*Let us not linger to gaze on the crib,  
Though in rightful homage and praise  
To the Babe at Bethlehem.*

*He calls us now to follow him,  
The Suffering Servant of all mankind,  
On our own journey to Jerusalem.*

*Br. Tom Dillman*

Editor – *Bro. Tom Dillman, CSC*  
Consultant/Photo Asst. – *Fr. Bob Gilmour, CSC*  
Quarterly publication - *Holy Cross Today-Ghana*  
E-mail – [cscghana@africaonline.com.gh](mailto:cscghana@africaonline.com.gh)