



Society of the Divine Word (SVD)

SVD Lay Partners

Newsletter - from Around the World

Issue 17, December 2021

A Visit in Steyl (Part 1)



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Editorial

Chaos at Christmas!

It's the first Christmas night. And it's chaos in Bethlehem. Israelites from all over Palestine are pouring in this little town. Mary and Joseph are traveling in a caravan, with Mary riding much of the trip on a donkey. It's roughly an 80-mile journey to Bethlehem from Nazareth in Galilee. The nights are cold. The atmosphere surrounding the little town of Bethlehem is laden with fear of tyranny, loss of freedom and uncertainty about what lay ahead. Why has the emperor Caesar Augustus ordered a census at this time? More taxes? More oppression? More domination? Nobody is sure. Amidst this chaos and questions, Mary and Joseph reach Bethlehem. They desperately look for shelter as Mary is close to giving birth. But there is no place anywhere. They have to make do with a dark, smelly, cold stable.

Then it happened! Against that gloomy setting; in the cold and chaos, the Holy Light of Bethlehem arrived! A thrill of expectations being realized and a weary earning to rejoice! In the middle of all of the chaos, Peace was born in the form of a baby. He is the Hope born in to the world. Jesus, God among us! It was not a picture-perfect time when God sent His Son. But it was the right time.

It's not a picture-perfect time now. The chaos continues. Several countries are churning with ideological and political turmoil. Narrow nationalism and arrogance is threatening a fragile peace. Humans hating humans is slowly getting established as a new religion. Powerful nations are unwilling to stop exploiting the environment. Researchers are struggling to tally mortality statistics as the coronavirus pandemic still rages. Uncertainty, chaos, questions are all with us. And yet, this is the right time to accept the invitation of Christmas. The invitation to journey. The invitation to search. The invitation to give birth. The world awaits the birthing of its renewal, where equality, justice, love and peace will shine brightly.

Have a Blessed Christmas!

Susan Noronha
Editor in chief



A Visit to Steyl

Part 1: The Village Center and the Mission House St. Michael

In this and following issues the special topic will deal with Steyl, the roots of the congregation and its tradition. In four parts we will visit the village of Steyl with the Mission House St. Michael,

the parks and St. Gregor, the Sacred Heart Convent and the Holy Spirit Convent.



The statue of Christ on the village square near the Mission House St. Michael, unveiled in 1928, depicted as a divine sower. It is a dedication to Arnold Janssen and his greenery. The copper plate on the pedestal commemorates the sending of the first two missionaries Josef Freinademetz and Johann Baptist Anzer to China in 1879.



It took 38 years for the mission house to reach its present size. It was enlarged in several construction phases according to the respective requirements. Construction began in 1876 and the last phase was completed in 1914. In the 1980s, necessary modernisation work was carried out, including lowering the entrance to street level.

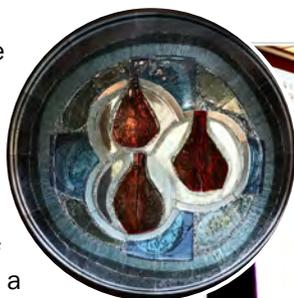


The mission house today and around 1900 without the south wing which is now the home of the guesthouse Centrum St. Michael (CSM).

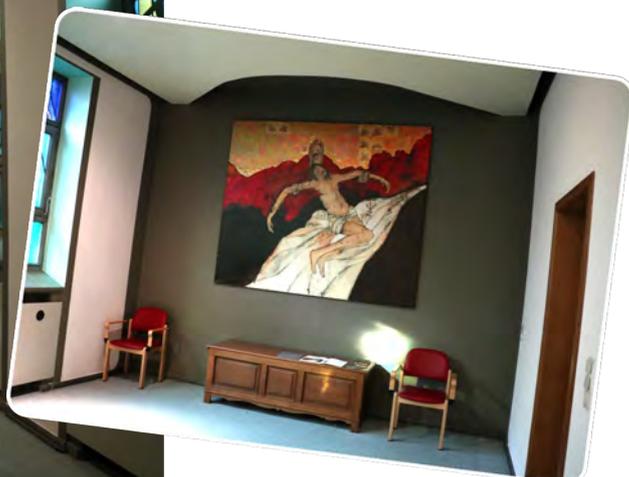


The entrance hall with a painting of Arnold Janssen at his desk. At the wall in his back a painting of Steyl. Next to the painting on the Plexiglas panes, "Peace be with you" is written as a welcome greeting in many languages. And five stools, representing the five continents, offer the possibility of a short rest.

The rector's office is located on the first floor. Next to the door is a round window with symbols for the Trinity (three circles / trefoil) and the Holy Spirit (tongues of fire).



From here, the corridor branches off to the former living quarters of Arnold Janssen. Today they are a chapel, the Oratorium. A bronze plate with the Latin inscription REV. P. ARNOLDUS JANSSEN HIC HABITAVIT ANNO 1878-1905 is a reminder of this. (Rev. Fr. Arnold Janssen lived here. In the years 1878-1905).





In the corridor by the Oratorium next to the memorial slab is a display case with a swaddled baby Jesus. This baby Jesus was carried into the church every Christmas by Arnold Janssen for matins. This is commemorated by a window in the old sacristy of the upper church. A picture of this window is the cover picture of this issue.

A special feature is the church of St. Michael. From the ground plan it is only one church, but since this area was not sufficient for a rapidly growing community and there was no space for a larger church, it was built higher and two churches were created one above the other, the upper and the lower church. Arnold Janssen was able to reach the upper church via a small staircase near his living quarters. Here he had a prayer stool at a side altar directly behind the main altar. So he could go into the church at any time of the day or night without being disturbed or disturbing anyone.

The upper church was originally the church for the fathers. Today it is only used for special occasions such as the celebration of religious jubilees and ordination anniversaries. It is still decorated as it was during Arnold Janssen's lifetime, in the neo-Gothic style.



The lower church, originally the church of the brothers and pupils, is now the church of the community for Liturgy of the Hours and Holy Mass. It was modernized in 1972. Since the canonisation, the sacrophagus of Arnold Janssen is also located there. The church is also freely accessible to all worshippers during the day.





AFRAM ZONE



South Africa (BOT)

SVD Lay Partners Malamulele – Formation and Activities

SVD lay partners in Malamulele are continuing with their monthly scheduled meetings, though at times we fail due to other activities in the parish. We expect to have a retreat soon so that we can grow in our spirituality.

SVD Mission Week Celebration

We were able to celebrate the 146th Founding Anniversary of the Society of the Divine Word with our St. Benedict Parish priests: Fr. Marsel Samon, SVD and Fr. Mobin Joseph, SVD.

We also participated in the webinar organized by Fr. Jay de Leon, SVD entitled “Mission, Spirituality, Mental Health and the COVID-19 Pandemic” with Fr. Antonio Pernia, SVD, Fr. Peter Dusicka, SVD and Dr. Puleng Mokoena–Molepo as speakers. We also encouraged our young people in the parish to attend the online Bible Quiz and Talk on Discernment. The SVD mission week ended up with our special fundraising for the SVD mission at St. Benedict Parish, Malamulele.

Mission Rosary Month and Online Rosary

The Malamulele SVD lay partners led and participated in praying the Online Rosary organised by Fr. Jay de Leon, SVD for the month of October. The lay partners took turns on every Saturday to pray with other lay partners from South African countries, viz., Zambia, Zimbabwe, Botswana, South Africa and Madagascar.

Outreach Programme

Though we are still lacking in financial resources, we received blessings from Good Samaritans, the “Limpopo Indian Community”, who donated some funds through our parish priests. We managed to identify the needy in the community, especially within Catholic members and few non-Catholics, and bought some groceries for them. Fr. Marsel Samon, SVD, Elizabeth Baloyi and lay partners helped in packing groceries for distribution.

Thandi Mazibuko



Angola (ANG)

Associação de Leigos Missionários do Verbo Divino – Missionary Month of October



Associação de Leigos Missionários do Verbo Divino in Angola participated in three meetings: two international and one regional held virtually. Through these meetings, we received orientations from the Generalate on our work as lay missionaries and we also shared our experiences. In addition, we had a meeting with our Spiritual Director who gave us an overview of the current situation of the Association and informed us that the province is working to approve the statutes of the lay associates.

Missionary Rosary

It is worth to note that the activities marking the celebrations of the mission month were held in modest ways. Due to security reasons and the restrictions of COVID-19, we did not organize the usual missionary vigil. However, we planned to carry out missionary rosary prayers in harmony with our brothers and sisters of Mozambique on Saturdays from 5 to 6 pm (Angola time) until the end of the mission month.

We also held a session to discuss the message of Pope Francis for the World Mission Day.



Mission Animation

In the context of mission animation, we organized the celebration of Mission Sunday on 24th October. On this day, we displayed in procession the symbols and traditional artefacts of mission, to portray our call to be missionaries. In his presentation, our Spiritual Director who animated the celebration, talked about the missionary works of the Divine Word Missionaries all over the world, and in Angola in particular. He highlighted the theme and activities of the SVD General Chapter, the guidelines of Pope Francis and the directives of the Bishops of Angola that dedicate the triennium to children. He appealed to the Christians to give themselves more to Christ's mission. Religious articles on St. Arnold Janssen were distributed and fundraising appeals were made to support the missions. There was a strong appeal to parishes in the urban centres to sponsor mission work in remote areas of the country. The celebration ended with launching of the Synodal process in the parish.

As part of our social activities, we mobilized lay groups to offer a solidarity meal to the needy and underprivileged in the community. We closed the mission month with recreational and sporting activities.

José Miguel Mateus



Ghana (GHA)

Friends of SVD – Mission Month and Provincial Chapter



Mission Month

Friends of SVD undertook several activities from 17- 24 October 2021 to celebrate Mission Sunday.

St. Arnold Janssen Chapel Community located at Tesano in the Archdiocese of Accra, launched their Mission Month on Sunday, October 10 at the Holy Mass celebrated by Fr. John Acheampong, SVD. The following activities were slated out by Mr. Daniel Lamptey, SVD lay partner and a member of community.

- Sale of poppies to support SVD Missions.
- Rosary prayers every Friday on Mystery of Mission with Reflections.
- Special intention prayers and visits to the sick and aged. During the visit, members prayed the Word of God, sang praises and interacted with them. Holy Communion was administered. This gesture brought a lot of smiles on their faces. They expressed their gratitude and appreciation for the visit.
- Thanksgiving Mass was celebrated on Mission Sunday, 24th October.

Friends of SVD from the following parishes also sold poppies: St. Augustine (Ashaiman), St. Luke (Lebanon-Ashaiman), St. Charles Lwanga (Abeka), SS Peter and Paul (New Aplaku) and St. Margaret Mary (Dansoman). Friends from Christ the King Parish distributed envelopes. Proceeds from the sale and fundraising will be given to the Missions Office in support of missions.

Friends from St. Charles Lwanga parish held vigil and Rosary procession on the eve of Mission Sunday. Special prayers were said for missionaries.

Provincial Chapter

SVD lay partner Helen Dzikunu was invited to participate in the Ghana Provincial Chapter held from 10–15 October 2021 on the theme; “Intercultural Living: Renewing our SVD Identity to Address the Challenges of our Mission”. The Chapter began with morning prayers, a recollection and opening Mass. Reports from the Provincial Districts were given. After extensive deliberations, resolutions and recommendations were made to



guide the Province for the next three years. A resolution was made on SVD lay partners on their Formation in the Arnoldus Spirituality. The Chapter ended on 15th October with closing Mass.

Daniel Lamptey



Kenya (KEN)

Friends of SVD – Activities after the Lockdown



Activities After Easing of the Second Lockdown

We have had lockdown of Churches twice in Kenya since COVID-19 pandemic started. This year like in 2020, once again the Churches were closed as we approached the Holy Week. Currently though re-opened, we strictly observe the health restrictions along with government directives.

We participated in various activities throughout the year. This year however we suspended our annual convention due to the pandemic. Amidst this challenge of global crisis, we never ceased to play our role, for God has been faithful and merciful to us. He empowered us to engage in activities such as follows.

Final Profession and Deaconate Ordinations

On 5th August 2021, we attended final vows of three SVD Brothers at their Formation Center in Nairobi, Kenya. The Holy Eucharist was officiated by the Provincial Superior of Kenya-Tanzania Province, Fr. Tony Amisah, SVD.

On 21st August 2021, we participated in the Deaconate Ordination celebrations and the Priestly Ordination of two deacons.



Priestly Ordination and Thanksgiving Mass

We participated in the Thanksgiving Eucharistic Celebration of Fr. Nicholas Mwangi, SVD on 29th August 2021 in Muranga, Kenya and Fr. Yosephus Ogachi, SVD on 8th September 2021 in Kisii, Kenya and prayed for God's blessings on both the newly ordained priests.

Formation and Inauguration of New Members

Thanks be to God, for this year each of our parishes received new members as SVD lay partners in the blessed hands of the Mission Secretary, Fr. Jerome Olianga Mfute, SVD. On 18th October 2021, he commissioned eighteen members in Eldoret, Kenya.

Condolence Visit

The Mission Secretary and the representatives of the groups visited the home of one of our lay partners to offer their sympathy to the family after the death of her spouse.

May the heart of Jesus live in the hearts of all people. Amen.

Grace Akinyi



Togo (TOG)

The SVD Associates (AsSVD) – Introduction



In order to support the missionary work of the SVD, the lay partners experience a close collaboration with the Divine Word Missionaries in the country. Considering our commitment with Christ and the challenges of mission in the Togo/Benin Province and in the world, we, the lay people, formed an association of the SVD lay partners - The SVD Associates (AsSVD) - that shares the charism of SVD. In Togo, AsSVD was established on 13th March 2015, it has currently 38 members.

Aim and Purpose

The aim of AsSVD is to support the missionary work of the SVD so as to respond to the call of lay missionaries in the Catholic Church, accompanying SVDs in their mission of evangelization and supporting SVDs in their apostolate.

Means of Action

Spiritual and apostolic endeavours; volunteering; income generating activities, etc.

Membership

Membership in the Association is open to every catholic lay faithful who is ready to contribute to the promotion of the SVD

mission in Togo and worldwide. Before becoming a member, a written request must be submitted to the office; and after a thorough study, a membership card will be given to the new member. The executive office comprises: President, General Secretary, two Reporters, Treasurer, Vice-treasurer and two in charge of the organization.

Spiritual Formation

- Teachings on SVD spirituality
- Retreats, Recollections and Holy Mass every 1st Friday of the month
- Printing of prayer booklets translated to French
- Celebration of the AsSVD's day on 13th March and participation in SVD activities; SVD week, patronal feast, etc

Charitable Endeavours

- Visits and support to the SVD parishes in the remote areas.
- Visits and material support to the postulants.
- Fundraising campaigns and income generating activities

Communication

- Relationship with the SVD and lay partners of other countries
- Periodical publication of articles related to the activities of AsSVD in the SVD and SVD lay partners' magazine

Source: Presentation at AFRAM Zoom meeting, 19th June 2021





ASPAC ZONE



India (INM)

Disciples of the Divine Word (Pune) – First Anniversary



The first anniversary of the DDW Pune group was celebrated on 3rd October 2021, at the Divine Word Seminary, Pune. Fr. Jesuraj Rayappan, SVD and Fr. Gregory Arockiam, SVD celebrated the Eucharist. After the Mass, Leena Xavier, President, presented the Annual Report.

With the cooperation from the members, the group was able to take decisions and coordinate the different initiatives and projects.

Spirituality: A prayer meeting was conducted by the members in a virtual mode on 22nd August 2021. During the prayer, Word of God was shared by our Spiritual Director Fr. Gregory Arockiam, SVD.

Mission Support: Three of members have sponsored three SVD Seminarians for their Formation studies for four years at the Divine Word Seminary, Pune. Some members and benefactors contributed towards the First Vows of SVD seminarians at Khurda Novitiate.

Feed the Hungry: The members enthusiastically cook and distribute food to the hungry people twice a month on the streets of Pune.



Members have participated in the ASPAC webinars held in December 2020 and June 2021. The message from these webinars about the spirituality of St. Arnold Janssen; the formation of lay partners group; the role of lay partners and challenges; and the contribution by lay partners especially during the pandemic were shared by the members who attended these sessions with the rest of the group.

Our future goal is to reach to Raigad missions - Sarva Vikas Deep, Mangaon and Janseva Society, Tala and other SVD missions.

As we look ahead to the next year, we wish to deepen our commitment as SVD lay partners by conducting Retreats, Recollections and Bible study. We are in the process of drafting our statutes and will be seeking approval from the INM Provincial Council. Finally, we will seek greater collaboration and networking with other lay partner groups in India and overseas.

Leena Xavier



India (INM)

SVD Lay Partners Mumbai – New Group

The second SVD lay mission partners group in Mumbai (INM) had Holy Mass and lunch at the Institute of Indian Culture, Andheri, Mumbai. Members were from neighbouring parishes in Mumbai; from St. Theresa's and St. Andrew's Parishes in Bandra, Sacred Heart Parish in Santacruz, Immaculate Conception Parish in Borivali, Good Shepherd Parish in Four Bungalows, Andheri west and Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Malad.

All the members of our SVD community joined the Mass. Fr. Donald D'Souza, SVD was the main celebrant. The members prepared food from their home to celebrate the occasion.

The group joined every Saturday for the SVD lay mission partners' Global Rosary.

They plan to meet next to month to visit the SVD minor seminary in Vasai to interact with the seminarians.

Fr. Jolly Mudakkampurathu, SVD



India (INM)

Disciples of the Divine Word (Mumbai) – Be Rich by Giving

Disciples of the Divine Word (DDW), from its very inception, were moved by one thought, "No one has the right to be happy alone." Moved by the same philosophy, it started a program on 8th September, 2019, called "Feed the Hungry."

Why the poor in our lives? Those who have the eyes of faith realize that God has identified himself with the hungry, powerless and the unloved.

Jesus is the partisan of the poor (Hans Küng) therefore our faithfulness to Jesus has to take us where there are the hungry, unloved and the powerless. Jesus has told us "Whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me" (Mt. 25:40).



The worst social sin of today is the sin of insensitivity and indifference to the poor and the hungry. The sin of the rich man was his failure to notice the hungry Lazarus at the gate of his house (Lk 16:19). As Pope Francis said during his homily given in Lampedusa, "In this world of globalization we have fallen into a globalization of indifference. We are accustomed to the suffering of others, it doesn't concern us, it's none of our business."

DDW members constantly remind themselves that their sensitivity and concern for the hungry should never be limited to just giving them something to eat but treat them with dignity and respect that is due to the children of God and learn from them by keeping their minds open and hearts humble.

No family or religious community which is inward-looking without any concern for the poor and the hungry can enjoy growth and fullness. So, let us make ourselves rich by pursuing something that money and gold cannot buy but the poor and the hungry can give us freely.

Fr. Gregory Pinto, SVD
Source: *Prakashan* September 2021

Indonesia (IDJ)

SOVERDIA – Mission in All its Facets



Share with those Affected by COVID-19 Pandemic

SVD lay partners, this time in collaboration with JPIC of the IDJ Province, carried out social activities to share love with those affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. We distributed vitamins and basic needs for those who are undergoing self-isolation due to COVID or other illnesses and who are economically affected. We reached out to people on the islands of Sumatra, Java, Bali and Kalimantan, regardless of their religion, whether Hindu, Muslim or Christian/Catholic.

Support And Supporting SVD Missionaries

As members of the SVD family, we regularly provide support for SVD missionaries assigned around the world in the form of mission rosary prayers, coin collection in the *Coin for Mission* movement, visits to missionary parents, and also hosting small gatherings for the missionaries who are on vacation to share their mission experiences.

Condolence Visit to our Members

When a relative or a family member of Soverdia dies, we raise a charitable fund and hand it over when we visit the bereaved family. This simple expression of love can be meaningful and uplifting for a grieving family.



Collaboration with SVD Brothers

Soverdia Bali lay partners work together with SVD Brothers processing the *jaboticaba* harvest at SVD Pancasari Plantation, Bedugul, making *jaboticaba* jam and *jaboticaba* wine. This collaborative activity is a tangible form of SVD lay partners support to the SVD. We are delighted to help SVD Brothers and we hope that this joint activity will continue in the future.

The Archangel Triduum

Soverdia Bali every year holds the Archangel Triduum from 26 to 29 September. This Triduum Salve aims to prepare people's mind and spirit, in celebrating the Feast of the Archangels Gabriel, Michael and Raphael. This activity is also a means of catechesis for the people so that they can know and understand the three archangels better.

Paulina Suharsi



Indonesia (IDT)

Paguyuban Soverdia Timor – Strengthening the SVD Lay Partners in three Districts of Timor Province



From 27 to 30 September 2021, the Mission Secretary of the Timor Province, Fr. Agustinus Hironimus Daesoro, SVD together with the coordinator of the Timor SVD lay partner group, Isidorus Lilijawa and the head of Producers Cooperative of St. Arnold Janssen, Br. Engel Nadut, SVD visited three districts in SVD Timor Province.

On the first day, we visited the city of SoE, the capital of South Central Timor Regency. The SVD lay partner group of SoE was inaugurated on 29th January 2020. Marselinus Seran is the Chairman. During the pandemic, there were a few activities, only regular prayers and fundraising for the mission.

Second day we met the lay partners of Kefamenanu District in North Central Timor Regency. During the visit a new committee of the lay partners of TTU was formed. Gabriel Olin is the Chairman.

On the third day, we went to Atambua in Belu District. We met the SVD lay partners at the SVD novitiate at St. Yosef Nenuk, Atambua. The members have formed a temporary committee to communicate and coordinate before the formation of an official group.



During our visit, we shared information on the SVD lay partners and their commitment in the mission. We also spoke about the first SVD lay partners gathering in Tagayatay, in November 2019. We discussed on the future actions and work programs of the group in Timor.

To conclude our visit, we had a social gathering with the Producers' Cooperative of St. Arnold Janssen. The members of this cooperative are SVD priests, brothers and lay partners. The purpose of establishing this cooperative is not only to develop the SVD mission, but also to increase the income and empower the members.

From this three-day agenda, we are grateful for the collaboration between SVDs and the lay partners.

Isidorus Lilijawa



Indonesia (IDR)

Persaudaraan Misioner Sang Sabda (PMSS) – Pilgrimage with Mother Mary



PMSS ID-Ruteng Province (SVD lay partners of ID-Ruteng) ended a series of local rosary prayers and virtual Mission Rosary prayers of Indolestes Subzone during this October with a “Marian Pilgrimage” on 30th and 31st October 2021. The pilgrimage route was from the SVD main house of Ruteng Province to Labuan Bajo.

During the pilgrimage we stopped and prayed the Rosary at Mother Mary’s place of “Rekas” at Rekas Parish, the oldest parish in Ruteng Diocese, which was established in 1924. We also stopped and prayed the Rosary at the Mother Mary’s site of “St. Mary the Nature Protector” at Wae Lia, Dalong Parish, which was founded by two SVD missionaries in 1986.

We concluded our pilgrimage of the Rosary in Labuan Bajo by visiting and praying the Rosary. We celebrated the Holy Eucharist presided over by the Spiritual Director of PMSS Fr. Vitalis Hiburdin, SVD, at the Mother Mary’s site of “Golo

Koe” at the Holy Spirit Parish of Labuan Bajo.

With such an activity, we believe that Mother Mary will always walk with us throughout our life-time. We surrender ourselves to walk with her, because we believe that she being by our side, we will always find happiness, especially in the form of a 'solution' from every problem in our life.

Fr. Vitalis Hiburdin, SVD



The Philippines (PHC)

The Lay Society of St. Arnold Janssen (LSSAJ) – COVID Fatalities and Challenges



The record-breaking tallies of daily COVID-19 cases fueled by the highly contagious Delta variant during the second quarter of 2021, wrought havoc in the lives of everyone.

Our former President Fabs Pagaduan and his entire family were severely affected. His only brother succumbed, tragically followed by Cecile, wife of Fabs, a very active leader of LSSAJ. Fabs is still recuperating at this time.

Former Chairman, Elmer Sarmiento, current Chairman Charles Avila and his family, former BOD member Architect Felino “Jun” Palafox and several other members were also hit by this monstrous virus. With God’s mercy, they recovered.

In my own family, we lost three members, one of whom was Fr. Victor C. Leones, SVD, the first Filipino SVD missionary to Ghana, where he devoted a half century of his life.

SVD priests and SSpS nuns were not exempted. Twenty-six of the SSpS tested COVID positive, four of whom eventually died. Four retired SVD priests also tested positive at the SVD retirement home (Villa Cristo Rey); one died. Pink Sisters Convent and the Villa Cristo Rey were ordered locked down for several weeks.

In the midst of this battlefield, prayers were the best shield. Keeping close in God’s presence gives us comfort and provides hope. LSSAJ, together with the XVD Family Rosary Movement



continued to pray the rosary. We pulled our resources to support the needs of SSpS and Villa Cristo Rey community.

Our poverty alleviation program provides skills training to rescued street dwellers particularly in the making of organic medicine capsules of moringa and other medicinal leaves. We support the livelihood project initiated by Fr. Ben Beltran, SVD by selling organic fruits and vegetables produced by the Agtas, a group of indigenous people. We also support, feeding of the hungry, use of firefighting equipment, legal and political aid, religious and social webinars, recollections and group sessions.

The battle against the COVID-19 pandemic rages on. But the assurance of God’s sheltering place allows us to weather this particular storm of life with hope. When we learn to lean upon Him, instead of worry and fear, He will see to our needs (Phil. 4:6-7, 19). He will never fail us nor turn us away empty-handed (Matt 7:7-11).

Daisy Leones



The Philippines (PHN)

SVD-PhN Mission Partners – Virtual Activities



The Partnership Grows, the Mission Continues

St. Arnold Janssen was an innovator during his time. He found ways on how he can reach out to more people by writing and publishing. Driven by his example, we consider it our duty to proclaim the Word of God to all..." (Con. 102) by maximizing all tools available. It is in this light, the SVD-PhN Mission Partners has intensified its presence on the web, particularly on different social media platforms where netizens spend most of their time.

Launch of YouTube Channel

The challenges and limitations by COVID-19 has inspired us more, to look beyond and find ways, where we can reach out to more people, be present in their daily lives.

The Philippines (PHS)

Collaboration Between SVDs and SVD Lay Partners

The celebration of SVD Mission Week in PHS this year started on 31st August 2021, with Novena Mass in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The online prayer activities were facilitated by the DYRF, the official radio station of the Province. There was a video-making contest that encouraged SVD communities and institutions within the Province to showcase the collaboration between SVDs and lay partners and at the same time promote vocation to the Society.

On the morning of 4th September 2021, Mission Conversations took place. Three missiologists were invited to give their reflections on selected topics. At the same time, four SVDs were chosen to share their missionary experiences based on the shared issues. Five lay partners participated in the Lay Partners Assembly held on the afternoon of 4th September. They came from Cebu, Bohol, Surigao City, Trento and Veruela. Fr. Roger Bag-ao, Provincial Superior of PHS, gave an input. He encouraged the lay partners and showed them the direction to be further led in helping the SVDs.

The celebration culminated with a family mass wherein the jubilarians of the Province were honoured. Then followed by a

On 21st August 2021, the SVD-PhN Mission Partners' YouTube channel was launched.

🔗 [Link: YouTube Channel](#)

Most of the videos uploaded are original creation expressing the heart and spirit of St. Arnold and SVD charism. The playlists range from prayers, formation talks, mission animation, vocation promotion, etc. We invite you to subscribe to our channel and help us share the Good News in a new platform where boundaries are limitless. St. Arnold used to say, "The pastor of souls has to make use of all the means indicated by the signs of the times."

Philippine Sub-Zone and ASPAC Virtual Rosary

While it has been two years since the SVD-PhN Mission Partners from all five districts, came together every first Wednesday of the month, for the virtual Mission Rosary: The Mysteries of the Mission. In October 2021, being the month of the Rosary, it was a different experience. Following the SVD Generalate Mission Office's invitation to meet on Province, Sub-zonal and Zonal level via Zoom, SVDs and SVD lay partners of the Philippine Sub-zone and the ASPAC Zone came together for a virtual Rosary on 20th and 27th October respectively. To have more participation, on both occasions, the Rosary was livestreamed on Facebook by *Laico Misionero* (SVD-PhN Mission Partners).

The virtual Mission Rosary may be viewed on the following YouTube links

🔗 [Link: Mission Rosary 6th Oct 21](#)

🔗 [Link: Mission Rosary 18th Oct 21](#)

Mary Geraldine Paderon

banquet with a tribute to the SVDs organized by lay partners in Cebu.

Fr. Franlou Bardon, SVD
Mission Secretary

Source: *Arnoldus Nota*, November 2021



EUROPA ZONE

Switzerland (ECP)

Freundeskreis der Schweizer Steyler Missionare – Bye-Bye Marienburg



Year 1961. I entered, at 15 years old, the SVD Minor Seminary of Marienburg. There we lived like little monks. Besides classes and homework, there were daily prayers, Sunday liturgies with Gregorian Chant and other wonderful music, Spiritual Readings and hours of silence. Missionaries of all the continents visited us and told about their lives. So, I emerged into the atmosphere of the world-wide SVD.

In 1929, the SVD bought the Weinburg (castle of Wine) in Thal, near the lake of Constance. They gave it a new name: Marienburg – castle of Mary. They opened the Minor Seminary. Since then, many dozens of young men entered the SVD and became missionaries all over the world, some teachers in the Marienburg and others priests in the parishes. Many former students are engaged as parish priests, as catechists or as lay people in the Dioceses of Switzerland. Even our Bishop of St. Gallen, Markus Büchel, is one of the former students.

Now the day has come, when the SVD had to close the high school and to sell the Marienburg. Too few students. Merely a handful SVD fathers. Lack of financial support by the government. Three of the fathers will now move to the SVD-House Maria Hilf in Steinhausen, where they celebrated “100 Years SVD in Switzerland”. The other priests of the Marienburg will continue with their parish work in our region.

Marienburg was also the center of our SVD – Freundeskreis, with more than 1100 members. Here we met every year. Had contact with many missionaries – and also with the SSpS. On Mission Sunday, 24th October 2021, we had our last Holy Mass in the Chapel of the Marienburg. With our Provincial, Fr. Stephan Dähler, we thanked God for many blessings. An Ad-hoc-Chorus gave praise. With more than 200 friends, we took farewell from the Marienburg. But our mission - the contact, support and collaboration with the SVD, goes on.

Philipp Hautle



Slovakia (SVK)

Misijná Rodina - Activities and Visit from the Generalate

In Slovakia, we have several groups of SVD lay partners in the country. They were established mostly in parishes closely associated with the SVD missionaries. Though the beginning was around 2009, *Misijná Rodina* (**Missionary Family**) was officially established with its name, in 2015.

The groups have different structure for members. Each group does different activities and these activities are adapted to the needs of the individual parish. To each group one SVD priest is assigned to help with our spiritual growth. We also have one special group called the prayer community of mothers in Rimavská Sobota. They pray for particular missionaries and financially support SVD. All groups are guided by the Mission Secretary in Nitra.

Activities

1. Regular meetings: With prayers, Bible sharing/Lectio Divina, talks on SVD spirituality, etc. We also plan for future events.
2. Spiritual activities: Retreats, Eucharistic Adoration, prayers for missionaries and SVD missions.
3. Other activities: *Misijný jarmok* - Mission fair. It is a very popular activity organised during Advent to raise funds to support the missions overseas. Every Sunday after the morning Mass, we prepare coffee for people visiting the Church. It is the time to meet people, make friends, to strengthen relationships and create new ones. We help to organise other community activities - feast days, Mission Sunday, Deaconate and Priestly Ordinations and we also help everywhere where the SVD community and people need help.

Jan Ruhalovský

Source: Presentation from SVK at Zoom meeting, 5th June 2021



Br. Guy Mazola Mido, SVD, General Councilor meets the Slovak SVD lay partners

During September 2021, Br. Guy Mazola Mido, SVD, General Councilor visited the Mission House of St. Arnold Janssen. On this occasion, the SVD lay partners had the opportunity to meet him in person. The meeting was held on 12th September. We met representatives of the younger and older groups of SVD lay partners working with the SVDs on Krupinská Street in Bratislava.

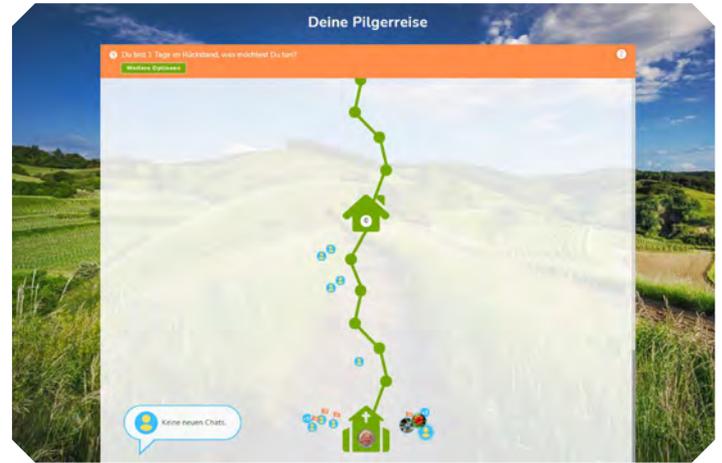
Br. Guy introduced us to what the work of the General Visitor entails, encouraged us in our work and expressed great gratitude for everyone who in some way is involved in helping the SVDs, and thus we can be a great enrichment for each other. Each of the groups, through their representatives, illustrated to Br. Guy the activities we are trying to do in the spirit of the teachings of St. Arnold Janssen.

The meeting was held in a very pleasant and friendly spirit and I think I will say a big thank you for this opportunity for each of those present. We pray for Br. Guy for strength and God's blessing in his mission.

Margaréta Bencelová

Germany (GER)

SVD-Partner – World Day of the Poor 2021: Prayer Bridge and Pilgrimage in Everyday Life



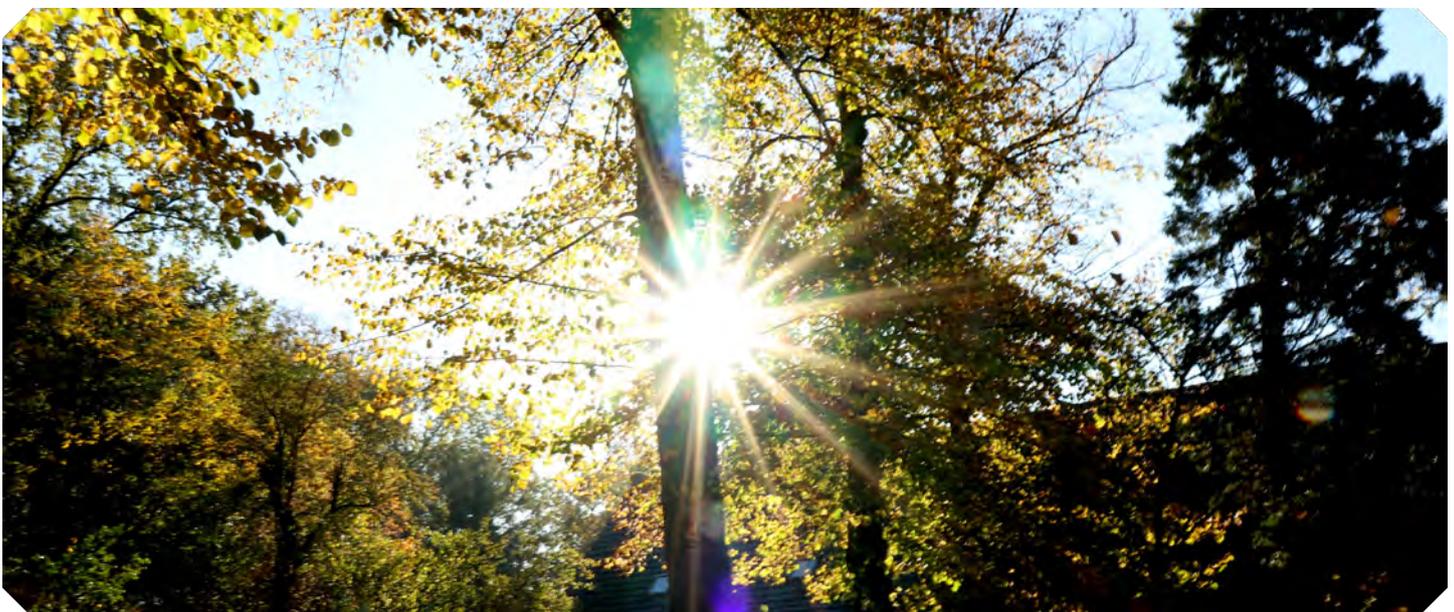
On the occasion of the 5th World Day of the Poor, SVD-Partner again invited to an International Prayer Bridge. The prayer, the impulse text and the novena intercessions took up the motto “The poor you always have with you” and could be downloaded in German, English, Spanish and French from the website. In addition, the prayer was again translated into another language, this time Urdu. The translation was done with the support of Bishop Samson Shukardin OFM from Hyderabad / Pakistan. There was also feedback from Russia and India that the prayer for the local people had been translated into Russian and Kokborok. (Kokborok is the native language of the Tripuri people of the Indian state of Tripura and neighbouring areas of Bangladesh).

New was the invitation of the SVD-Partner and Steyler Freundeskreis Swiss to a seven-week pilgrimage. In preparation for the World Day of the Poor, the group went on pilgrimage in everyday life, i.e. each person went on pilgrimage for a certain time from Monday to Friday, wherever he/she happened to be. They used the virtual pilgrimage app developed by the Association of Christian Churches in Germany (ACK). At the weekend, all met in a virtual hostel and

exchanged ideas in the chat café. In addition, every Sunday evening an impulse was sent to all by e-mail to take with on the way through the week.

Pilgrimage in everyday life was a new experience for everyone. Sometimes there were technical problems with the app to overcome, and sometimes it was a special challenge to find the time for pilgrimage. But it was not compulsory to walk, it was mainly about taking time for oneself and engaging with the intentions of the World Day of the Poor. This could also be prayer and meditation. So, it is not surprising that a pilgrim celebrated her 90th birthday during this time.

Maria Wego





PANAM ZONE



USA (USW)

Misioneros Laicos del Verbo Divino (MLVD) – MLVD Mission Animation



Hoping that our efforts bring others to grow in relationship with our Lord Jesus Christ, we continue to seek for opportunities to fulfill our mission as SVD lay partners. With St. Paul as the inspiration of the 18th General Chapters' theme "For the love of Christ impels us" we too recognize that God's love is what helps us move forward.

We were invited to help in the community of St. Kevin in San Francisco, California. Our task was to help their newly appointed Pastor, Fr. Miguel Ruiz, SVD provide Initiation Retreats for both the English and Spanish-speaking communities. Both retreats were a great blessing for their community and has begun a new chapter in spiritual life of the parish. As in many large cities, parishes are suffering from constant decrease in participation of Mass and Sacraments. But things here are changing rapidly through the efforts of the new evangelization.

In the words of St. Arnold Janssen "*Announcing the Good News is the first and the greatest act of love to your neighbor.*" And these words have permeated our activities as lay missionaries. We share our personal experience and

testimonies of the transforming power of having a personal encounter with the risen Christ. After retreat we accompany the participants with weekly classes that allows them to grow spiritually as individuals and together as a community. This renewed life in the spirit gives way to a more united and active community that becomes a magnetic force that attracts even more people who are intrigued by the enthusiasm and fervor of its members.

The parish had been losing about forty members a year reaching the lowest count of participation to a little over two-hundred participants. In just a few months of tireless preaching and striving, the weekend masses are over four-hundred participants for the glory of our Triune God!

Mariana Flores



Brazil (BRA)

Amigos do Verbo na Amazônia (AVA) – Introduction



What is AVA?

Amigos do Verbo na Amazônia is a group of lay people committed to the Divine Word mission, through the spirituality and missionary charism of St. Arnold Janssen and the Arnoldus family.

How did AVA come about?

It came about from meetings with lay people between 2005 and 2010, the 2010 SVD Congress (Santarém-PA) and support from the Divine Word Missionaries.

Objectives

- To follow the Word guided by the Holy Spirit, and to create a deep missionary spirit through prayer, witness of life and sharing among the members and with the poor.
- To promote prophetic dialogue with all people.
- To help awaken religious vocations and missionary volunteerism.
- To pray for the priests, religious and seminarians of the Divine Word.
- Support the activities of the SVD in the Amazon.



How Does AVA Work?

- AVA elects a coordinator from the parish or pastoral area. The coordinators of the groups form the coordination of AVA Regional (District)
- AVA and the base groups are financed through membership fees, voluntary donations and fundraising.
- AVA participates in SVD Assemblies and Retreats.
- The grassroot groups promote popular devotion to St. Arnold and St. Joseph and share the traditional prayers of the congregation.
- AVA groups help develop the SVD profile in parishes and communities, marked by Missionary Animation, Biblical Ministry, JPIC and Communication.
- AVA participates in meetings, celebrations of the SVDs, missionary activities, collaboration in the awareness campaigns of the Church and missionary solidarity.

Challenges and Joys

Geographical distance, few lay missionaries for the mission, lack of knowledge of the SVD in some parishes and missionary areas, lack of family support and finances are our challenges.

Formation of AVA groups with the advice of the SVD missionaries, solidarity and support among members of AVA and SVDs who work in the region, are our joys.

Base Groups (AVA) in Formation: Placas, Trairão, Jamaxim and in the future Curuá.

Pedro Rodrigues de Sousa

Source: Presentation Zoom Meeting, 5th June 2021

Mexico (MEX)

Misioneros Auxiliares del Verbo Divino (MAVD) – Region A: A Story That Needs to Be Told



Jalisco is a state in western Mexico bordering the Pacific Ocean. The state is known for the mariachi music and tequila that are said to have been born here. The capital, Guadalajara, has colonial plazas and iconic sites, such as the neoclassical Degollado Theatre and the majestic Guadalajara Cathedral.

Following God's call to missionary activity, in a laity way, a group of people met with Fr. Manuel Myvett, SVD, the then Mission Secretary of Mexico Province of the Divine Word Missionaries, on Sunday, 21 February, 1982, at the *Templo Expiatorio* in the city of Guadalajara, Jalisco. There was born, in a very simple way, the missionary movement that took later the name of *Misioneros Auxiliares Del Verbo Divino (MAVD)*.

Our Base Groups

Group *Santa Faustina Kowalska* from Zapopan, was formed in 1995. We are currently seven members. (Arturo, Lety, David, Arantza, Luisa, Sofi and Karol).

Group *San Alberto Magno* from Guadalajara, was formed on 3rd November, 2003 at the bookstore of the Divine Word Missionaries. On 10th November, 2012 we moved to the Church

of *San Alberto Magno*. We are fourteen members including children, youth and adults.

Group *El Señor Grande* from Guadalajara, formed in September 2019 in the parish of *El Señor Grande* with the support of the late Fr. Gustavo Villavicencio, SVD (May his soul rest in peace). Currently we are three families with six adults and two girls, in total we are few, but crazy!

Group *Amely* from Laja, after several years of Formation we continue in this missionary call.

Group *Jesús Amigo* was formed at the beginning of this year 2021, and we have all the encouragement to continue walking in this beautiful movement.

Group *Santos Mártires*, Zapotlanejo, (MAVD group)

Group *Nuestra Señora del Rosario*, Manzanillo, (MAVD group).

Miguel Bermejo



Paraguay (PAR)

Laicos Verbitas – Bible Contest and Anniversary of the SVD



Eighth Bible Contest

On 3rd October 2021 the traditional “Bible Contest” was held, organised by the Biblical Apostolate of the parish of *San Roque González de Santa Cruz*, Encarnación.

The SVDs arrived here more than 100 years ago, and worked tirelessly in Alto Paraná, Itapúa and in the city of Encarnación, south of Republic of Paraguay. The parish of *San Roque González de Santacruz* was founded by the Divine Word Missionaries. Fr. Carlos Winkel, was the one who began the construction of what is now the Church.

In 2012, the mission of the “Biblical Apostolate” began with the first Biblical Congress held at Divine Word Retreat House, Pikyry Alto Paraná. The main objective was to encourage people to read the Bible and to learn the Word of God. One of the activities included Bible Contest, to close the month of the Bible.

Conducting the quiz was a big challenge, mainly because of the pandemic. This year it was aimed at young people in Confirmation catechesis, in order to support their preparation for Confirmation. The book of Ruth (Old Testament) and the Gospel of Luke was used for the quiz.

On the day of the contest, it was pleasing to see the youth arriving with Bible in their hand, reading the Word to strengthen their knowledge and to become winners. There were prizes for all participants. However, big winners were the youth who read the Word and the greatest prize was to have known more about our Saviour. Fr. José Pereira, SVD, and Fr. Stany Lobo, SVD guided the event.

146th Anniversary of the SVD

On 8th September, we celebrated the 146th Anniversary of the SVDs and Nativity of Virgin Mary in the parish of *San Roque Gonzalez de Santa Cruz*. The Thanksgiving Mass was presided by Fr. Stany Lobo, SVD, a missionary from India, who in his homily stressed “Precious is the life dedicated to the mission”. The parish priest, Fr. José Pereira, SVD, also from India, and Fr. Aloicio from Indonesia were concelebrants. SVD lay partners were a part of this celebration. After the Holy Eucharist, a toast was shared among those present.

We thank God for having inspired St. Arnold Janssen who founded the Society of the Divine Word, which has brought missionary charism of bringing Good News into the world.

Froilan Armora González



Chile (CHI)

ALMA Verbita – A Long-Awaited Meeting!



COVID-19 was undoubtedly an event that has definitively marked our time and our lives.

When the immediate crisis is over, many people will have suffered unimaginable losses. Large numbers lost loved ones, destitute numbers may become unemployed and homeless, and several hundred million experienced the anguish and loneliness of social isolation.

When we use the word crisis, intense states of alert, emergency, danger immediately come to mind. But in fact, the word derives from the Greek “krisis”, which means nothing else than “decision”. The dictionary defines a crisis as a “profound change”. A definition that certainly implies a redirection, a new point of view, a new way of following, thinking and acting.

It is in this context, and after almost 2 years, living in this quarantine, in this long and difficult winter, that our Alma Verbita community was able to experience a face-to-face

meeting. This was a moment longed for by all of us. Meeting, seeing each other, looking into each other's eyes was an instance of great happiness, nostalgia and emotion for the whole community.

Aware that life is not the same and that our missionary journey must take a different route, with new challenges, we focused on sharing where we want to go as a missionary community and how to reach our goal from now on. Because we are still dealing with a pandemic that does not go away, but mutates often.

We feel committed and realistic about this new way of living. We will set together our new routes, the paths that lead us to a mission with the other, with a greater awareness of preparation, formation, and mutual growth.

Today we stand up again to weave networks of fidelity, solidarity, new paths towards the mission entrusted to us by our Father. As the motto of Universal Mission Sunday says, “We cannot keep silent about what we have seen and heard” (Acts 4:20).

This is the invitation and the challenge for all of us missionaries in these times of pandemic.

Elena Ortiz



~ Last but not Least ~

Global Online Recitation of Rosary

Review of the prayer initiative



Four lay partners – Sophie Wego, Maria Wego, Susan Noronha and Mervyn Rodrigues – met online and thought of having a global online recitation of Rosary. Their initiative was on gathering together the lay partners, praying together with PRMs and countries during the month of October. They thought that this could also serve an occasion to invoke special blessings during this pandemic to have healing. A simple initiative turned into a big network. Most of the PRMs in our Society and all the Zones took keen interest and showed enthusiasm and passion towards reciting Rosary together. Well, Pandemic does not allow us to come together physically, thus the virtual platform was a big help and all Zones planned, cooperated with one another and organized this prayer session for the lay partners. A few PRM superiors and confreres too joined in this session. The Mission Secretaries played a good role to coordinate and arrange this prayer session.

PANAM Zone had participation of many PRMs in this global meet, Fr. Nevil D'Silva, the Zonal Coordinator took care to coordinate the lay partners in the Zone and they recited the Rosary. In AFRAM, some neighboring countries came together and organized this prayer session. Particularly, Fr. Denis Pereira, the AFRAM Area coordinator for Mission Secretary encouraged everyone to participate in this prayer session and also organized in Angola the virtual prayer session. Fr. Stephen Dogodzi gathered the lay groups in Ghana and recited the prayers. Fr. Jay de Leon from South Africa organized for the neighboring countries.

In the ASPAC Zone, the subzones of India, Philippines and Indonesia organized the sessions connecting various lay partners groups. Fr. Glenn Paul Gomez (PHC), the ASPAC Area Coordinator for Mission Secretaries took efforts to invite the lay partners from other countries and organized this session. Frs. Ronald Pereira (INE) and Vitalis Huburdin (IDJ) took keen interest in their Subzones. Fr. Andrzej Danilewicz, EUROPA Area Coordinator for Mission Secretaries contacted the persons in the Zone and prayed together. In Hungary, the lay partners gathered in the Chapel, in Germany the lay partners connected with one another and in Poland and Russia too they were

connected with one another in prayer. Their efforts and interest to be united is great.

In most of the places, the first Monday of October month was fixed to recite the Rosary. While some groups found other days to pray together. Thus, a simple initiative of a few lay partners turned into a worldwide momentum. During this gathering, the lay partners inspired one another to pray for the missions, for the sick and for one another's welfare. This is truly a remarkable coordination and participation of lay partners. In unity we find the strength and through prayer we get the strength and by making efforts we are blessed. I believe that everyone enjoyed the prayer and received the power of the Spirit. Certainly, it has healed ourselves and others. I thank all the lay partners who organized and participated in this session, I am sorry that I am unable to name the lay leaders in this effort of coordinating various participants for this event. I appreciate all the Mission Secretaries for their keen interest and promoting this event.

Fr. Stanislaus Lazar, SVD
Mission Secretary, Rome



AFRAM

“Incredibili Amore Matrem Dei Venerabatur – With Incredible Love We Venerate the Mother of God” (St. Arnold Janssen). With the words from our Founder, we relived the Global Rosary with our lay partners in AFRAM zone.

To facilitate with local languages and to have more participation and impact, we divided AFRAM zone into Sub-zones. The lay group of Angola joined with Mozambique to pray the rosary on every Saturday. Prior to the Rosary, we had a meeting of coordinators of both the groups accompanied by Fr. Fabian and Fr. Denis. We prepared two texts to pray the Rosary. On first Saturday, we prayed alternatively reciting and leading the rosary with Marian hymns by each group. We used WhatsApp due to poor internet. After evaluation and with the feedback received from both the sides, we changed the way of praying the Rosary. Instead of leading alternatively the mysteries, we opted that each Province will conduct the complete Rosary and others follow. This gave a positive impact. Many more could participate actively and pray the Rosary.

Praying the Rosary virtually was the first-time experience for all the lay partners. We could see the approach and active participation of the members every time. Thanks for this idea of praying together the Rosary globally. May the Immaculate Heart of Mary be our throne of Salvation!

Fr. Denis Pereira, SVD
AFRAM Area Coordinator for Mission Animation



ASPAC

Praying the Rosary was a great experience of journeying together along with our dear Mother Mary. On five Saturdays we reflected on five mission themes: Incarnation, Epiphany, Calling of the Twelve Disciples for the Mission, Washing of the Feet and Sending of the Disciples to the World. The purpose of praying Global Rosary was to pray for the entire mission of the Church and in particular to pray for the SVD missions, priests, brothers and lay partners who are associated with SVD provinces/regions/missions.

Global Prayer - Rosary for October 2021
Society of the Divine Word (SVD) - India Sub-zone

Rosary participation from all Provinces & Region on the following days and led by

- 02 October - India Mumbai Province (INM)
- 09 October - India Hyderabad Province (INH)
- 16 October - India Central Province (INC)
- 23 October - India Guwahati Region (ING)
- 30 October - India Eastern Province (INE)

Rosary a chain of love and the rose are purple

Virtual Rosary Format

- Opening Prayer
- Reflection or Spiritual Reading
- Rosary - Creativity is left to the local organizers
- Litany
- Mother Mary hymn/video
- Final Prayer

06:30 pm onwards on all Saturdays

Chief Coordinator : Fr. Ronnie Pereira, SVD
Mission Secretary, India Sub-zone

ZOOM Meeting
Details will be provided

Miracles Experienced during the Rosary

On first Saturday, in the midst of technical glitches, miraculously we were able to create a zoom platform for 500 participants, and we prayed the Rosary without any problem. On the fifth Saturday one of the lay partners reported that miraculously she has conceived naturally when doctors had suggested for IVF (In Vitro Fertilization). As per medical reports it was not possible for her to conceive naturally. When she went for IVF, medical examination revealed that she was in the initial stages of her pregnancy. These two miracles deepened our own faith, helping us to realize the power of praying together the Rosary.

Overwhelming Participation

Praying the Rosary in India Sub-zone was an enriching experience. Praying together has helped us to know each other. Many gathered in groups to pray the Rosary while others prayed with their families. We were encouraged to have the participation of Mission Secretaries, some of the Provincials, Regional superior, including Archbishop John Barwa, SVD, who prayed the concluding prayer and gave us his episcopal blessing. While I thank all the participants, I pray that may the spirit of the Lord continue to guide us and love of our Lady of Rosary enable us to deepen our faith towards the mission of the Church.

Fr. Luvis Ronald Pereira, SVD
Mission Secretary, India Sub-Zone

Inspired by four of our lay mission partners, it was decided that we have the global online Rosary recital once a week during the month of October. The lay mission partners under the leadership of SVD India sub-zone Mission Secretary Fr. Ronald Pereira, SVD in collaboration with all the PRM Mission Secretaries decided to pray the Holy Rosary on Saturdays at 6.30 p.m. We chose the Mission Rosary from the SVD Vademecum prayer book.

All the four SVD Provinces and one Region took part in the virtual Rosary. This was a first-time experience for all of us. I personally experienced the interconnectedness amidst us as mission partners journeying together in prayer from North to South and West to East. It was amazing to experience the richness of our SVD charism of internationality and multiculturalism. Another encouraging aspect was the support of all the Provincial Superiors and Regional together with the respective Mission Secretaries.

On the last Saturday His Grace John Barwa, SVD the Archbishop Cuttack Bhubaneswar joined in praying the online Holy Rosary. All in all, it was awesome experience of networking with all lay mission partners in India and the Mission Secretaries in India. No pandemic can separate us from one another. God bless us all.

Fr. Jolly Mudakkampurathu, SVD
Mission Secretary, INM

The SOVERDIA, SVD lay partner group prayed the Global Mission Rosary on every Monday at 6.30 P.M. on zoom by involving all SVD lay partner groups in the Indoleste Sub-zone as follows:

- 4th October – IDJ (Java Province)
- 11th October – IDR (Ruteng Province)
- 18th October – IDE (Ende Province)
- 25th October – IDT (Timor Province)
- 31st October – TLS (Timor Leste Region)

We prayed the virtual Rosary every week with more than 200 participants. Many SVD missionaries joined us from their respective mission areas. This joint virtual prayer activity has become a means of strengthening brotherhood among SVDs and lay partner groups within the Indoleste Sub-zone. It was proposed that the virtual prayer activities may be carried out at least once a month.

The Rosary was also attended by SVD Provincial representative as well Mission Secretaries from each Province, i.e. Fr. Antonius Eko Juliantoro, SVD (IDJ), Fr. Yan Lobo, SVD (IDE), Fr. Agustinus Hironimus Daesore, SVD (IDT), and Fr. Vitalis Hiburidin, SVD (Coordinator for Mission Secretaries of Indoleste Sub-zone). Also, few Indonesian SVDs participated from their assigned missions, viz., Chile, Poland and The Philippines. Where there were network issues, lay partners from Malang, Denpasar, Mataloko, Nagekeo, etc., gathered in big groups (around 20 members) using one zoom account.

Paulina Suharsi
Indonesia - Timor Leste Sub-Zone



PANAM

**MISIONEROS DEL VERBO DIVINO
ZONA-PANAM**

“PARTICIPEMOS Y RECEMOS JUNTOS”

ACTIVIDADES: OCTUBRE MISIONERO

- * 11 de octubre, Rosario Misionero Interzonal

A nivel ZonaPanam

- * 1 de octubre, Reflexión Misionera y Santo Rosario, Responsable: **Mesoamerica** (6 pm. Hora de Ecuador)
- * 8 de octubre, Reflexión Misionera y Santo Rosario, Responsable: **Subzona Brasil** (6 pm. Hora de Ecuador)
- * 15 de octubre, Reflexión Misionera y Santo Rosario, Responsable: **Subzona Andina** (6 pm. Hora de Ecuador)
- * 22 de octubre, Reflexión Misionera y Santo Rosario, Responsable: **Subzona Sur** (6 pm. Hora de Ecuador)
- * 29 de octubre, Reflexión Misionera y Santo Rosario, Responsable: **Subzona Norte** (6 pm. Hora de Ecuador)

The Love of Christ Impels us - El amor de...
«No podemos dejar de hablar de lo que hemos visto y oído» (Hch 4,20)

EUROPA

In Europe, the initiative was taken up by Hungary, Poland, Russia and Germany. Yet it was prayed for five times. Why? Well, the German worshippers wanted to participate in the Russian prayer, but the Zoom room had been changed and the message had not reached us. So we waited for a while in the wrong room and then spontaneously held a prayer. Lourdes Scholz did a wonderful job (preparation time about 1 minute). Afterwards we received the PowerPoint pages from Russia - very lovingly designed!

You can find the Hungarian prayer on YouTube.

● [Link: Rosary 4th Oct 21](#)

Maria Wego
Germany

Global online Rosary

25th October 8:00-8:45 pm MSK

- Opening prayer
- Rosary
- Bible reading and reflection
- Closing prayer and blessing

Meeting ID: 378 991 6821

Passcode: AveMaria

Link for Zoom:
<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/3789916821?pwd=OC9LSoRpV1ZjdGRlVXZ2dDhkoNoV0QJ09>

Vladimir Mother of God, Our Lady of Vladimir.
Painted in 1131

Silent Workers in the SVD Vineyard

Simon Sigg - Switzerland



Simon Sigg lives in Gossau, Switzerland. He is member of the 2021 Readers' Council of "Leben jetzt" and his work also has a lot to do with media.*

How long have you known the Divine Word Missionaries and how did you get to know them?

I distributed the *Stadt Gottes** and the *Michaelskalender**. In Rheineck, my home parish, I was involved in voluntary work in my spare time. Through the commitment of the Divine Word Missionaries I came more in contact with the Fathers. During my theological studies, SVD supported and motivated me. Today I am on friendly terms with them.

How do you help the Divine Word Missionaries?

I am active as a board member in the *Steyler Freundeskreis Schweiz* (Friends of SVD of Switzerland). Above all, I am responsible for the homepage and social media. In our association we have over 1,000 members spread all over Switzerland.

What do you particularly enjoy about this work?

"Mission is where we people begin to use good words to encourage others and ourselves to live in dignity." I find this attitude of the Divine Word Missionaries strong. Above all, they stand up for people who are endangered and threatened, and they do so all over the world. This is where the universal church becomes concrete. I would like to give something back to the Arnoldus family with my commitment.

Interviewed by Maria Wego

* The SVD-magazine *Leben jetzt*, former called *Stadt Gottes*, is published in the German speaking countries Austria, Germany and Switzerland. *Michaelskalender* is a calendar.

Living with the Marginalised

30 Years Working in Cebu (The Philippines)



Our work started some 30 years ago with encounters of people living and suffering in one of Cebu's garbage dumping sites. Something had to be done, we felt, to help these people and among them particularly the children, elderly and sick.

Over the years, we got to know more and more poor communities, families, and individuals. Among them were those in other garbage dumping sites, in impoverished fishing and farming villages, in city slums, those living along rivers, in cemeteries, people in the streets, and then children and young women suffering in Cebu's red-light districts as victims of human trafficking. Also, a steadily growing number of people living with HIV/AIDS and more recently those suffering from the COVID-19 pandemic became a genuine concern.

It was trying "to step into the shoes" of these people, making friends, journeying with them in their day-to-day lives and miseries that opened our eyes. The people themselves taught us what they needed and then also educated us how meaningful and relevant help had to be given.

Like everybody else getting involved with the poor, soon we realized that we could really help only those who were willing to help themselves. The poor had to do their part and, moreover, become protagonists in working on their own development. Having friends on their side who showed genuine interest in their plight worked wonders and encouraged many of the poor. We experienced too that journeying with the poor would not



only slowly improve their situation but that it would also transform us. We learned that human-made suffering can be changed by humans, if they join hands, enter into dialogue, are willing to learn from each other, and partner with others. We realized that even in seemingly hopeless situations and in the face of enormous challenges, in spite of our limitations, we could contribute and make a difference in the lives of those who suffer, independent of our age, profession, background, language, culture, and color.

Daily encounters with the poor in more and more communities made us reflect on what better ways there could and should be to help. In 1999, we organized an NGO, named Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation – Integrated Development Center (JPIC-IDC) as a faith-based Non-Government Organization (NGO). We wanted to do more and this more systematically in partnership with the poor and also to give a chance to ever more volunteers to put their faith into action.

It is probably not merely the numerous projects and all those hundreds of people who have benefitted that count. Equally important, what cannot really be measured, is that all of this has given meaning to so many lives, including those who shared so generously; and that many others have been inspired to also get involved in helping the poor with creative projects on their own. For a faith-based NGO like JPIC-IDC, all the achievements serve as "testaments to God's love for humankind" and the credit is due to Him.

Fr. Heinz Kulüke, SVD



In Memoriam

For God so loved the world,
that he gave his one
and only Son,
that whoever believes in him
should not perish,
but have eternal life.



Anastasia Yulia Murni Hendi Astuti

† 11.09.2021

SVD Lay Partner IDJ (Java)



Cecile Pagaduan

† 01.10.2021

SVD Lay Partner PHC

Gone from our sight, but never from our hearts.

We will miss you!

Rest in Peace



Impulse

Men in a pasture
In the middle of the darkness of the night
an inexplicable light
strange figures float by,
proclaiming peace on earth,
brought by a newborn child.

Peace on earth?
Peace - where the country suffers
of the occupying power?
Peace - where opinions clash
so irreconcilably?

But the hope and desire
for peace are great.
So great that they set out
and seek out the child in the nearby stable.

A newborn - like all newborns.
small, wrinkled, red in the face, exhausted
and yet something emanates from him
inexplicable as the light in the night
and
they bend their knees.

They see and believe
and return to their changed lives.

Let us also see the light,
the love of the child
and go our way in faith
in the peace of God.

**Merry Christmas
and
Happy New Year**

Susan
Sophie
Laura
Matilda
Daisy
Isabel

Sophie Wego

Imprint

Editorial Team

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Sophie Wego (Germany)

Layout

Sophie Wego

Photos

Br. Heinz Helf, SVD; Karl Hans Fluch; Fr. Vacláv Mucha, SVD; Maria Wego, Sophie Wego

Contact: svdlaicos@gmail.com

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