

HOLY CROSS TODAY - GHANA

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

VOLUME 10 - ISSUE 1

January-March 2006

DEDICATION OF THE HOLY CROSS HOME OF HOPE

On Wednesday, 28th February, 2007 the Brothers of Holy Cross dedicated the Home of Hope in



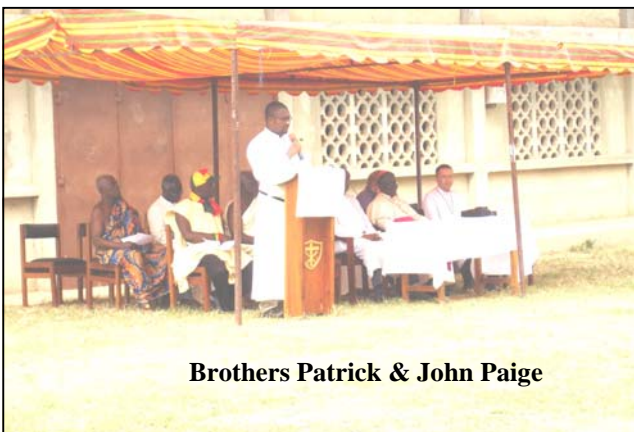
Anaji, at the Holy Cross Skills Training Center. This official opening of the Home follows the actual beginning of the program in mid-October for the express purpose of educating impoverished male teenagers, ages 17–18, who have completed education through junior secondary school. There are 20 young men in this first program of three years duration.

The Home construction was heavily funded by **Peter and Debbie Keefe**, who have also committed them to provide regular funding toward covering operational expenses. Peter and Debbie

undertook the Home of Hope Project as a memorial to their parents. There is a plaque on the wall by the main entrance into the Home in honor of the donors and parents.

Brother Patrick Baah is the Director of the Home; he is assisted by **Brothers Joachim Ratan Gomes** and **David Kpobi**. The young men are also under the tutelage of other Brothers on the Skills

staff, whose classes they respectively attend in Automotive Maintenance or Electrical Related areas.



Brothers Patrick & John Paige

The occasion was also honored by the presence of two members of the General Council, **Bro. John Paige**, Vicar General and **Fr. Eric Jasmin**, Asst. General, who had been in Ghana for the General Visitation to the District. Bro. John, Guest Speaker for the occasion emphasized to the young men living in the Home o make the most of this opportunity given them. He elaborated how since its beginning under our Founder, Venerable

Basil Moreau that Holy Cross has had as its concern to be me of hope to bring to others such as regarding this Home of Hope Project. He pointed out the interesting conjunction of this being the Golden Jubilee of Holy Cross in Ghana, the 150th Jubilee of the founding of Holy Cross in 1837, and the fact that this year is also the Golden Jubilee of Ghana's Independence.

Following the address, all then proceeded some 50 yards up the hill to the Home of Hope, where **Bishop John Martin Darko** of the Sekondi-Takoradi Diocese preceded from ground level up though the first and

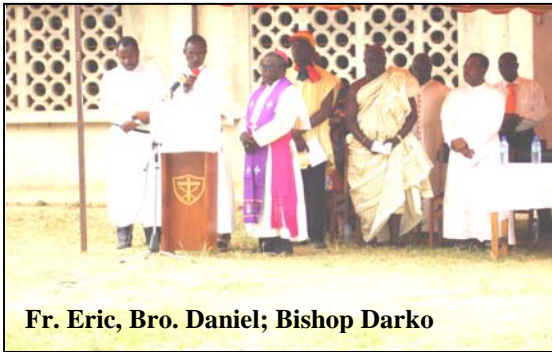


second floors, thoroughly mediating God's blessing to every part of the building. **Bro. John Paige**, accompanied by some of the other dignitaries there present, unveiled the plaque, after which all returned to the main assembly area for the concluding ceremonies.

Along with the "Silver Collection", several prominent persons in attendance gave rather handsome donations for the project. Bishop Darko gave his "Word of Encouragement" to all involved in the Home of Hope Project.

At several points during the program those present were entertained by a local musical group of which the quartet of singers and equal number of instrumentalists gave a commendable performance.

Bro. Daniel Dardoe, Asst. District Superior, gave the closing remarks, in lieu of **Bro. Paul Mensah**, who had an urgent need to be in Accra on this day. The concluding prayer was said by **Fr. Eric Jasmin**, after which all adjourned, special guests returning again to the Home for a brunch and beverage.



Fr. Eric, Bro. Daniel; Bishop Darko

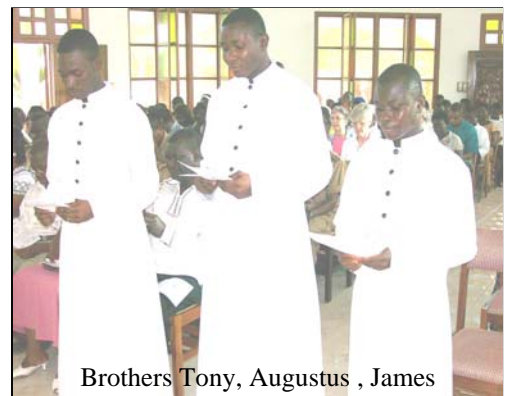
May this auspicious beginning with the program already successfully underway for some several months formally inaugurated on this day continue with God's special blessings on this most worthy project.

We would be remiss were we to fail to acknowledge the great contribution to the Home of Hope project given by **Bro. Nicholas Thielman**, who with collaboration of the Province of Bangladesh with the District, came to Ghana at the very outset in latter 2005 to set up the program, oversee construction of the building, procure furnishings, and to supervise the selection of the present participants in the program. Again we express our deep gratitude to Nicholas for all that he has done to make the project a successful undertaking.

DISTRICT CELEBRATES TWO GREAT OCCASIONS ON THE SOLEMNITY OF ST. JOSEPH

On Sunday March 19th, the District used the occasion for the Solemnity of St. Joseph to celebrate the temporary profession of vows of our three novices **Brothers Anthony (Tony) Kwan-Korfuah Koomson, Augustus Mensah and James Boachie Yiadom**, and honoring **Brother Joachim Ratan Gomes** on the occasion of his Silver Jubilee. **Father Bob Gilmour, CSC** was the main celebrant for the Liturgy with several other priests assisting.

The parents of the young Brothers were present for the occasion, along with their many relatives and friends. Bro. Joachim, of whom both parents have died some years ago, is of the Province of Bangladesh. During these past two years with us in the District, Joachim first became a staff member at the Skills Vocational Institute. Owing to his youthful, cheerful and optimistic manner in attending to his ministry with a dedicated and capable effort, he has



Brothers Tony, Augustus, James

been chosen to now work with the participants in the new Home of Hope project.

The blessing of the newly professed, immediately following their profession of vows, was given by the celebrant with all the members of the Holy Cross Family there present standing with right arm raised in symbolic gesture of their support, as all together read the special blessing for this—a rather moving moment for the members. Following this, the Holy Cross Anthem, which has been composed especially relating to this Golden



Jubilee of Holy Cross in Ghana, was sung by all in the Holy Cross Family. At the end of the Mass a

special blessing was given again by the celebrant for the Jubilarian and the three newly professed, with the whole congregation this time raising their hands over the four in prayerful support.

After the ceremonies the gathering moved to the roof-top patio of the District House for refreshments. The latter were enhanced with the distribution of portions of the large beautifully decorated Silver Jubilee cake after Bro. Joachim deftly made the initial slice. A great day in Holy Cross in Ghana and in our Holy Cross Family.

(Note: **Fr. Bob Gilmour** has extensive pictures of this great day of celebration in our district at the following website: <http://new.photos.yahoo.com/rgilmourcsc/album>. You need to enter this address on the internet).

DISTRICT MEMBERS PLAY SIGNIFICANT ROLE IN ST. MARY'S 60TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

On Tuesday, February 14th, four Brothers of our Holy Cross District, **Brothers Nee Wayoe, Nicholas Arthur, Kenneth Goode** and **Paul Bukari**, gave presentations to faculty and students at St. Mary's Secondary School in Takoradi on the occasion of the school's 60th anniversary. While the anniversary celebration continued throughout the week, the Brothers had received special invitations from the Assistant Headmaster, **Fr. Albert Amakyi**, brother of **Bro. Michael Amakyi** to address, respectively, the faculty, and students in Forms 1, 2 and 3. Last year, with the exception of Bro. Nee, the other three Brothers along with Bro. Michael responded to a similar invitation to speak to the Form 3 students only. Owing to its success, this year the involvement was expanded, such that each of the Brothers gave two-hour presentations to the individual respective groups.



Brothers Nee, Kenneth, Nicholas and

Bro. Nicholas dealt with the matter of the National Exams that all Form 3 students must take, trying to help them attain realistic preparations for these. Bro. Kenneth broached several topics, including Communications, striving to attain a proper understanding of the situation before making decisions. Bro. Paul presented some aspects of Group Dynamics relating to such as group discussions, group projects or other group activities.

Bro. Nee met with the St. Mary's faculty. His topic was STRESS MANAGEMENT with the aim of helping them to deal positively and effectively with stress. He tried to impress upon them that poor handling of stress has adverse effects on creating a learning environment for students and has also negative impact on the individual.

The headmistress, **Mrs. Margaret Larmer**, met with the Brothers for refreshments at the end of the program for lunch at which time views were shared and evaluations made of the occasion.

Metro TV, one of the several different channels operating here in Ghana, featured various activities of the 60th anniversary, including Tuesday's program, in one of its newscasts during this week.

FOUNDER'S DAY CELEBRATION AT ST. JOHN'S

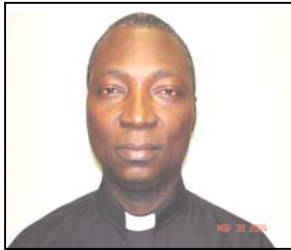
On Saturday morning, 24th February, the faculty and students at St. John's School in Sekondi gathered at 8:30 for the celebration of their Fourth Founder's Day Celebration since its inauguration in 2004 by **Bro. Joe Annan**, Headmaster. Many members of our Holy Cross Family in Ghana and "Old Saints" (alumni) were present for the occasion. Also **Fr. Eric Jasmine** and **Bro. John Page** were here for the General Visitation to the District, which enabled them to be present for the occasion. **Fr. George Pepra Addo**, Master of Ceremonies, capably kept things unfolding as planned.

The program included such as a Poetry Recital and Cultural Display, along with the Headmaster's address, a Goodwill message from the Old Saint Association.

The guest speaker, **Mrs. Sophia Awortwe**, Director of Science Education for all of Ghana, related her address to the theme for the occasion “*The Role of Education in Curbing the Moral and Social Decadence Among the Youth*” . It was apparent that her remarks flowed from her own Christian moral convictions, which surely permeated her own life, albeit in the practical day-to-day science pedagogical world. She did well in helping all to have a greater awareness and concern relating to this problem that exists here in Ghana as elsewhere in the global community.

The Eucharistic Thanksgiving Service for the occasion was held on Sunday, next morning in Holy Cross Chapel –St. John’s School, with **Most Rev. John Maritn Darko**, Bishop of the Sekondi-Takoradi diocese as main celebrant.

From the Desk of the District Superior



Dear Friends and Benefactors:

This March edition of *Holy Cross Today: Ghana* coincides with three major events in Ghana: the Lenten season; Ghana’s Golden Jubilee celebration as an independent country; and the Golden Jubilee of Holy Cross ministerial presence in West Africa and Ghana in particular. The Sacred Scriptures draw our attention to the fact that there is time for everything. The Seasons also make us aware of life’s movements, so too does the Church remind us through its liturgical season, of our salvation history – God’s love of humanity. The Church, through the Scripture readings during this period of Lent, calls us to a life of Gospel conversion and holiness. A call to conversion and holiness not only demand of us a change in our life, our old selves especially in our attitudes but also a call to personal transformation.

The second major event this year for us is Ghana’s golden jubilee as a country. Ghana gained its independence from Britain on 6th March 1957. As the first country south of the Sahara to gain its independence, Ghana became a rising star for the rest of African countries. This rising star was dimmed. About half of the 50 years of Ghana’s freedom was punctuated with military adventurism slowing the development of the country. The peace and tranquility prevailing in the country the past twenty-six years Ghana has seen political stability allowing economic and democratic development taking place. As a country we have every reason to be grateful to God for this fifty years of self-rule.

The third major event marking this period is 50 years of Holy Cross ministerial presence in Ghana. We launched this jubilee on December 2, 2006 and climax it on December 2, 2007. This yearlong celebration is interspersed and grace filled. On February 28, 2007, we will bless Holy Cross Home of Hope, a residential facility for young men studying at Holy Cross Skills Training Center at Takoradi. This home is one of the options for the poor for the Congregation of Holy Cross. This residence is made possible through the generosity of the Keefe family of the United States of America. We want to express our sincere gratitude and appreciation to this family for giving hope to our young men who otherwise would have lost reason to live. On March 19, at the patronal feast of St. Joseph, three young men will profess their first vows in Holy Cross.

For us in the District of West Africa, this year is a moment of grace. With new members, we avail new opportunities to serve the Lord in diverse ways. To our numerous benefactors who have contributed and continue to sustain Ghana mission as partners in God’s mission through Holy Cross in West Africa we ask you to join us in “a more tangible way” to express our gratitude to God. There is still one major project that is going to engage us for the next 5-10 years, that is, opening a new ministry, a new school at Kasoa, Ghana to respond to the needs of quality education in Holy Cross tradition to the people of Ghana. This, we will need your support. I will talk more about this ministry in our next newsletter.

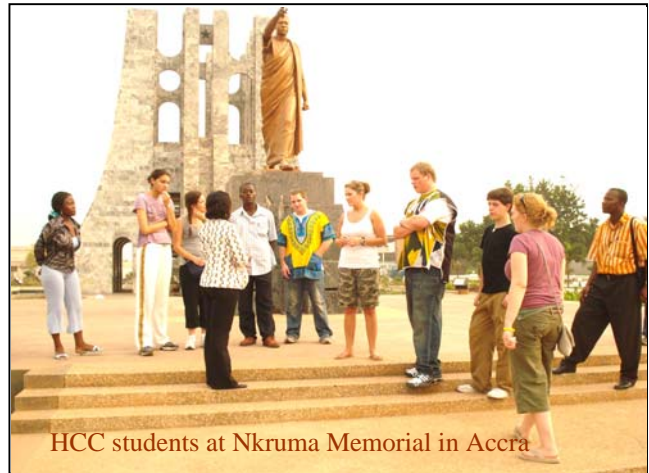
With heartfelt gratitude and appreciation for your support let me thank you again and ask for God’s blessings on your endeavors. We assure you of our continual prayers for you and your family.

Sincerely in Holy Cross,
Brother Paul Mensah, CSC District Superior

DISAPPOINTMENT SHORT-LIVED

In the latter part of this past year, eight students in their Baccalaureate Program at Holy Cross College were looking forward to their visit to Bangladesh. A study of the developing world's people, culture, environment and economic structure is one of the more important aspects of the program. And what better way to gain this knowledge and understanding than to visit for a time and personally experience the life in the given country. However, this original plan was thwarted owing to the developing political instability in Bangladesh, and ruled out under the directive of the US government concerned about the safety of its citizens.

In view of the high praise given by previous HCC students in this program, who had made Ghana their choice to visit, this present group were quick to accept the alternative choice and thus arrived in Ghana on January 3rd.



HCC students at Nkruma Memorial in Accra

As always before, the accommodations for their stay were provided by the District of West Africa Holy Cross Brothers.

While in Ghana, the students had great pleasure in experiencing a broad spectrum of sights and sounds, people and places. The students found it necessary to keep to a rather fast moving schedule to accomplish their aim; the rather sudden change in plans did not allow the full time of exposure that previous groups had enjoyed. Nonetheless, they did enjoy all aspects of their stay, even (for the most part) the rather different food preparations, including fufu, kenkey, banku, plantain & beans, and rice, not to overlook the renowned Ghana breads.

The students left on the late evening flight back to the States on January 10th with many happy memories and very little, if any, regret at their opportunity to experience the Ghanaian world, rather than Bangladesh.

GHANA FIGHTING CHILD LABOR ABUSE

Some weeks ago an article appeared in global news media regarding the high incidence of child labor abuse in Africa. One segment of the article featured its appearance here in Ghana, parents selling children as indentured servants to work under very harsh conditions for fishing masters in the Upper Volta region—their lives akin to that of slaves. There is now considerable effort being made to correct this inhumane situation by the Parent and Child Foundation (PACF), a child welfare non-governmental organization in collaborations with International Labor Organization (ILO) conjoined with the International Program for the Elimination of Child Labor (IPEC).

In the first phase of its work, PACF has been successful in attaining the withdrawal of 200 children from five stone quarries in the West District of the Greater Accra Region country. And these children from ages 6 to 14 now have been placed in schools. With the intervention of the Ghana Education Service all the children were provided with school uniforms, footwear, book-bags, stationery, even PTA dues and assigned to schools.

The children, of whom many had to drop out of schools for financial reasons prior to working in the quarries, were overjoyed at the opportunity offered them under the project. And the supervisors of the quarries were full of praise for the project and stated that they would make sure no child of school age would work any longer in the quarries. The program for eliminating child labor in Ghana is set as a two-year project. There is still a very high incidence of young girls working in domestic services and of young children working on cocoa farms in addition to the fishing industry. Hopefully the increased motivation stemming from this first undertaking will assure that, indeed, "Success breeds success."

NEWS BRIEFS

- For this year of the General Visitation to the District of West Africa, **Brother John Paige** and **Father Eric Jasmin** of the General Council were here with us from February 22nd to March 2nd.

Bro. John had been to Ghana several times in the past, while this was a first-time experience for Fr. Eric, who found much of interest outside our community as well as within. They both actively participated in two major events in our District: Founder's Day at St. John's and the Dedication of the Home of Hope. (See articles of each in this issue).

- **UPDATE ON THE SISTERS OF THE HOLY CROSS IN GHANA:** The Holy Cross Sisters in Kasoa moved into their new house at Nyame Adom ("By God's Grace") on February 4th, and the Sisters have now fairly well settled in. Hopefully in the next issue a more detailed update will be at hand, including a picture of the Sisters' new dwelling place.
- During January and early February the Brothers pursuing Bachelor Degrees in Education at the University of Cape Coast spent some 4 weeks as practice teachers in several different secondary schools: **Bro. Nicholas Arthur** at Mfantshipim School in Cape Coast; **Bro. Kenneth Goode** at St. Augustine's College in Cape Coast; **Bro. Robert Koomson** Elmina's Secondary School; **Brothers Paul Bukari** and **Ebenezer Prah** at St. John's in Sekondi. During this time **Bro. Vincent Intsiful** continues in his regular academic work toward attaining his Bachelor's Degree in Math/Science. Hopefully all six of these young Brothers in the District will successfully complete their studies in May of this year.



Bro. Vincent Gross & Scholastics at Bro. Paul Bukari's birthday on March 7th at Augusco.

- **Brother Kenneth Goode** was appointed Director of Vocations for the District of West Africa beginning in mid-January,
- **Bro. Stephen Aidoo** continues in Administration-Secretarial studies at Cape Coast Polytechnic Institute. He also is actively involved in a pastoral ministry relating to members of the parish church in Brafu Yaw.
- **Bro. Raymond Frimpong** teaches in the Junior Secondary School in Brafu Yaw. He also is significantly involved in work in the parish church in Moree, the latter being principally a fishing village below the high ridge upon which the District Center is located. He works with the youth in the parish, as well as assisting the pastor at Eucharistic celebrations on Sundays and other special occasions.
- **Bro. David Kpobi** is now assigned to live with the community that staffs the Holy Cross Skills Training Center in Takoradi. He uses his skills as an artist to enhance his work with the young men now living in the Home of Hope on the Center's campus.
- **Bro. Stephen Arthur** in his work assisting **Bro. Vincent Gross** in matters relating to maintenance of buildings and grounds at the District Center. He recently has been given permission and funds, the latter provided by **Bro. Ray Papenfuss**, Mission Procurator for the District, to undertake the project of raising chickens as a means of providing a more economical expenditure for chickens and eggs to houses in the District, as well as to increase income to the District through marketing same. He has now completed the construction of necessary facilities on the campus near the maintenance shop, which presently houses 95 fryers weighing around 0.5 Kg, losing only 5 chicks during the vulnerable early weeks period.
- The Institute of Continuing Formation has 23 religious, 14 Sisters and 9 Brothers in its present program, which is the largest ever since it was established in 1992. This present session is also a return to the longer period of 9 months, which had been reduced to a length of 3 months the past few years. This latter was done to enable many religious



Some of the ICF participants

to participate, the longer session ruled out, because of ministry-time constraints.

The religious come from 9 different countries and 16 different religious communities, which is a record regarding countries and communities, and one less than the record in participants. **Brother Bob Aron, CFC**, continues as Director of the program. Some thought is already being given to make a viable use of the ICF building when the program is moved, according to present plans by the Major Religious Association in Ghana, to its new location in Vroomdrop near Elimina.

- Former Brothers **Godfred Ashun** and **Benjamin Biney-Mensah** have terminated their membership in Holy Cross. We pray that they may find meaningful purpose and joy in whatever new life situations to which they feel God is leading them.
- **Archbishop Cardinal Peter Turkson**, met with all the religious in the Cape Coast Archdiocese on Friday, Feb. 2, in a Program for the Day for Religious. Essentially the program included the usual interaction (dialogue) between the Archbishop and the Religious. Considerable interchange of views relating to important matters in the archdiocese surfaced, generally to the benefit of all there present.

GHANA CELEBRATES ITS 50th YEAR OF INDEPENDENCE

Suddenly awakened seemingly by the sound of bomb blasts and small gunfire, apprehension beset me momentarily, but no, thank God, a quick look at the clock with hands at 12 and at the sky through my window, all was merely the result of a spectacular fireworks display ushering in the new day, March 6, the great day for celebration by all Ghanaians of its **Golden Jubilee year of Independence**. Here in Cape Coast the complete renovation of facilities and grounds at Queen Victoria Park were completed right on time to afford proper accommodations for all students from primary through senior secondary school assembled on the parade grounds, along with all local government security service, army, police, and Fire Service. Each took its turn marching to pass in review before many distinguished guests, most noteworthy of these latter being:

Hon. Nana Ato Arthur, Minister of the Central Region including Cape Coast; **Mr. Papa Owusu Ankomah, the Minister of Education**; and **Cardinal Peter Turkson, Archbishop of Cape Coast Archdiocese**.

St. Augustine's enhanced the occasion significantly with its newly formed marching brass band of only a few months in the making, the latter belied by the accomplished music rendered by a variety of brass horns and drums. They marched with the 1500 Augusco students as they passed in review, the crowd loudly applauding. This day initiated the year long celebration of the Golden Jubilee.



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