

HOLY CROSS TODAY - GHANA

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

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CHRISTMAS 2008

*Christ the Lord is born today, the Savior has appeared.
Earth echoes songs of angelic choirs, archangels' joyful praise.
Today on earth his friends exult: Glory to God in the highest. Alleluia!
—Christmas antiphon, Lauds*

Christmas reveals the magnitude of God's love for us--
God's Gift to us of His only beloved Son,
Who in sharing our mankind
Has enabled us to become sons and daughters of the Father.
The Lord of Light illumines our darkness—
He makes our night clear as the day.

*For all in our Holy Cross Family, our relatives and friends,
we pray for God's blessings that you may have a very*

***Merry Christmas and a New Year
Filled with peace, hope, and joy in Christ!***

--Members of the District of West Africa

2008 WEST AFRICA DISTRICT CHAPTER *The Competence to See and the Courage to Act*

On Wednesday, 17th December, members of the District gathered at the District Center for the Day of Recollection, which prefaced the beginning of the District of West Africa's 14th Chapter. There were 33 District members present of the total number of 34 professed members and **Bro. Ken Haders** the Chapter Moderator. Also present were **Bro. Ray Papenfuss**, Assistant Provincial of the Midwest Province and District Mission Procurator, and **Fr. Fred Jenga**, Director of Family Ministries, District of East Africa. **Bro. Joe Tsiquaye**, Assistant General, was necessarily absent due to obligations relating



**Delegates, Sr. Margaret Nimoo and
Bishop Matthias of Cape Coast Diocese**



At Breakfast



Getting Ready



Bro. Dan Dardoe – New DS



On the Day of Recollection



Our Liturgical African Music Combo

to Vocational matters of the Generalate.

Bro. Ken kept things well-ordered, preserving efficient use of time while maintaining quality performance by delegates in one or other of 5 major topics for respective reports to be considered and approved by chapter members. **Fr. Bob Gilmour** attended to all secretarial work in his usual most capable manner, assisted in a significant way by **Bro. Ebenezer Prah**. Bob also provided a most functional booklet for the Chapter, which included the Liturgy: Mass, Morning and Evening Prayers, as well as schedule and three different lists with three different groupings to provide a desired variety for discussion of respective committee reports covering the 5 days of Chapter. The coordinated efforts of all enabled the chapter work to be concluded one day earlier than anticipated, ending mid-afternoon on Monday 22nd December.

There has been a change in the administration for the District with **Bro. Daniel Dardoe** as the newly elected District Superior. For the District Council, in addition to the District Superior, 3 members were chosen, one elected by the delegates, the other two appointed by Bro. Dan. Not too surprising that the delegates elected one of the younger finally professed **Brother John Affum**, and another young religious, **Brother Paul Bukari**, was chosen by Dan along with **Fr. Bob Gilmour** to comprise the District Council. Paul Bukari had been elected earlier as a delegate to the Midwest Province Chapter. Both young Brothers are capable and held in high regard by both young and older members in the District.

Among many other areas of concern for maintaining a viable Holy Cross ministry in Ghana, two matters were the subject of much discussion. The Chapter strongly supported the District's intention to establish a Basic School at the new Holy Cross Educational Centre in Kasoa as the beginning of a development of successive levels in education including the establishing of a Holy Cross Teacher Training College at the final level. The Chapter also continues to support the District intention of becoming a Province by 2016.

It was indeed encouraging to observe the active participation by our younger Brothers with several chairing or acting as secretaries of the various committees. It is evident that the District has been blessed with a talented array of young members, with several already emerging in administrative positions. The future bodes well, indeed, for Holy Cross in the District of West Africa to maintain and move ahead in new directions for a viable ministry here in Ghana, hopefully soon in

missions beyond our borders. The feeling was high seemingly by all present at this Chapter that it was a successful undertaking, indeed. Praise the Lord!

TRY PRAYER CONTEST

On Friday, 11th October 2008, at our Lady Star of the Sea Cathedral, Holy Cross Family Rosary Ministries held its annual "Try Prayer" Contest Awards Day. It was good day, bright and sunny, and the sounds of Gospel Music greeted those arriving into the cathedral, all enhancing the jubilant mood of the large assembly.



Bro. Paul Mensah awarding JSS student

District members present, who were especially involved in the program were: **Brothers Paul Mensah**, District Superior, and **Patrick Baah**, Co-Directors of the HCFRM, **Bro. Paul Bukari**, serving as MC for the program, and **Fr. Bob Gilmour**, acting chaplain, also a number of other Brothers were present for the occasion.

As the teachers and students of invited schools entered the Parish Hall they were greeted with Gospel Music which set the mood for the program to follow. After the invited schools and guests were seated Fr. Bob Gilmour said the opening prayer.

Bro. Paul Mensah gave the welcoming address, in which he emphasized the binding power of family prayer, and the effectiveness of the Rosary in this. Then followed a Gospel Song to preface the recitation of the Rosary. Fr. Bob had blessed a large container of rosaries, these being distributed as needed to those in the assembly by the Moreau House pre-novices, after which Bro. Patrick Baah led all present in praying the Rosary.

After the Rosary the presentation of prizes began. Many Primary and Junior High Catholic Schools in the Sekondi-Takoradi diocese participated in the contest, in which awards/prizes were given for 1st, 2nd and 3rd places for art and poems. Bro Paul did the honors for the Primary Schools, and **Mr. Michael Buah**, Manager of Catholic Schools for the Diocese of Sekondi-Takoradi. For the Art category, students related their paintings to the Saints, as did those for their Poems.

Following the awards to the Primary Division with the mood now one of celebration, the MC invited the primary students to be “on their feet” for jubilant dancing to some great Gospel Music thus provided. In like manner this was repeated to celebrate the awards for the Junior High Division.

Completing these presentations, Ketan Catholic School JHS was given the Best School Award. The individual student winners and their schools received cash awards and furniture (chairs), which were made by students of the Holy Cross Skills Training Center. **Mrs. Theresa Aryepaah**, a mother, educationist, media practitioner with Skyy Power FM and TV and an

outstanding member of the Family Rosary Ministry gave the main address, counseling students to lead good Christian lives, supported by faithfulness in prayer. **Mr. Michael Buah**, the Regional Manager for Catholic Schools, gave concluding remarks followed by the closing prayer of Fr. Bob Gilmour to end the very worthwhile program.



Jubilant moment - dancing to the Gospel music.

—Submitted by Fr. Bob Gilmour

GHANA’S NATIONAL ELECTION

Six political parties are in contention for various offices, including presidency, in this year’s national election. The 2-term limit of office for the highly regarded incumbent President John Kufuor of the National Patriotic Party (NPP) comes to an end in January. The election on Sunday, December 7 thus seems a more hopeful occasion, especially for the second major political party, the National Democratic Congress (NDC) for the possibility of their candidate winning the election. Campaigning, including TV ads, signs painted on the large buses, mass numbers parading, public gatherings, and a great proliferation of posters pasted to walls of buildings, houses/huts, and utility poles, and flags of respective parties tied to taxis and hanging from houses. The demonstrations all seem to have been relatively orderly, though lengthy parades—imagine a continued column of hundreds of people exiting

from one exit in a stadium after a game—here in Cape Coast, with its many narrow roads, held no recognition for traffic. Drivers' pleas for a small share of the road to pass by were responded to by a can increase in singing and dancing in praise of their candidate. This writer was even given a small party flag as he sat grumbling at first, but then felt coerced to "laugh with the clowns", giving in to the joy and enthusiasm of the crowd. A 30-minute or more late-arrival at one's destination is par for the course on such occasions. Interesting to note is that all demonstrations of any kind were to have ended at midnight on Friday, 6th December, and not to resume for celebrating victory of given candidate until 24 hours after election

And all has been well-organized by the National Electoral Commission. Over the past year no person of legal voting age was denied registration, The registration card contained picture, signature or thumb-print to be carried to the polling station, rather conveniently dotting the country so that all would be accommodated on the single voting day. **And all the Catholic Ghanaian Bishops had promulgated some weeks ago that there would be no Sunday Mass on 7th December—the Sunday Advent Liturgy would be celebrated in all parishes on 6th Saturday, to encourage all to fully respond to their civic duty!**

The supervision of precincts seemed to be fully covered, the National Election Commission having appointed various select, responsible, organizations to provide qualified persons to oversee the action at each precinct. Among such groups was the **Ghana Catholic Bishops Organization**, which was given the responsibility of covering 450 different precincts. Thus, District member, **Bro. Tony Dadzie** was one appointed to evaluate the proceedings at four different precincts. He was given a special shirt so designed by the National Election Commission to signify his official status, along with a large picture-name tag to wear for the occasion. All designated persons were given a booklet with several pages of specific points to observe and evaluate: starting and closing time of polls; diligence by workers in checking each voter's status and recording same, security, crowd control, unseemly incidents, etc., also the final tally of each candidate at each polling place. The precincts were located sufficiently near, so that Tony was able without too much inconvenience to make respective visits throughout the day at his four assigned places.

In general, on Sunday the day unfolded peaceful enough and orderly as some 8.6 M voters, some 72% of the nation's qualified voters, queued up at their designated polling stations—only at a couple of polling places was there disorder, one of these a serious interruption when some 20 or so thugs overpowered security personnel and made off with ballot boxes, these later recovered and returned, however. All things considered the presidential election was a marvelous example of the democratic process here in one of Africa's most politically and economically stable nations!

The final tally of votes indicated the need for a runoff election, this on Sunday, December 28th between the incumbent NPP's party and NDC's at 49% and 47%, respectively, the remaining 6 other parties having received a total of only 4%. The election runoff is scheduled for Sunday, December 28th, the winner thus to be determined after this newsletter has already gone on to our Holy Cross website.

NEWS BRIEFS

- **Justice and Peace Update.** The Inter-Congregational Organization held a Training Session in early November, during which special emphasis was given to Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation. . **Bro. Tony Dadzie** was present for this occasion as a representative for both the District of Holy Cross in Ghana and the Archdiocesan Peace and Justice Organization to which he had been appointed earlier as its Director. At the recent Training Session Tony was elected as National Director of Peace and Justice. He continues as Director of the District Justice and Peace Commission.
- **Brother David Kpobi** traveled to the USA in early November for about 6 weeks to understudy **Fr. Steve Gibson** and **Bro. Richard Johnson** to enhance our work in Family ministry program. He will return on December 13. Please pray for his safety and for a good experience.
- **Brothers Robert Koomson** and **Vincent Ntsiful** began a 9-month's program in September at the new Institute for Continuing Formation (ICF), now in Elmina suburbs.
- **National Catechetical Association.** A seminar for the National Catechetical Association was held

from October 26-29 at the Holy Cross Center in Brafuyaw. Some 40 catechists participated in the program, having come from dioceses throughout Ghana. Director of the program was **Fr. Aidon**. His initial presentation was followed by much discussion in dialogue with Fr. Aidoo discussing various problems they had encountered in their catechetical ministry relative to their respective roles. Much sharing occurred among participants both in and outside the classroom, most all seemingly very enthusiastic about the program.

There seems to be no uniform policy regarding salary to the catechists for their ministry, though it appears that all who are full-time employed do receive salaries, while others who participate as instructors for such as Sunday School, or other rather limited involvement receive less or are volunteer ministers.

The venue for the program was the Bl. Andre Novitiate, conveniently available, since the only District novice, **Francisco Gillette**, is presently in the District of East Africa novitiate program. The provisions and general supervision of material needs was attended to by **Bro. Ebenezer Prah**.

The facilities and landscape of the Center compound enhanced the pleasure of the participants, some taking time to express this appreciation in random conversation with District members, also formally acknowledging at the closing of the program of the great benefit received.

● Four members of our West Africa District: **Brothers Paul Mensah, John Affum, David Kpobi, and Fr. Bob Gilmour**, will attend the District of East Africa in late December, as well as to remain to celebrate with them their 50th Golden Jubilee of Holy Cross in East Africa in early January.

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