

# HOLY CROSS TODAY - GHANA

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

VOLUME 14 – ISSUE 4

Oct-Dec 2011

## CHRISTMAS – 2011

*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

The mystery of God and His love for humankind is manifested in Jesus, His beloved Son, in the Incarnation. This surely was not fully understood by those favored to view the so very human Infant in the manger. Mary undoubtedly wondered, Joseph no less, as to the full meaning of this Child's relationship to God, the Son conceived in Mary's womb by the power of the Holy Spirit.

It will only be after Jesus has fulfilled the Father's Will in perfect obedience through His life's mission, death and resurrection that Jesus can be fully recognized as the Son of God. He is God's final revelation, His absolute Word, One with the Father, in bringing forth all of creation. This Word is made flesh, becoming one with us in our humanity to make possible our sharing in his divinity.

The Incarnation conditions all of creation and every unfolding event in our lives as a grace-filled opportunity. Through Christ we become sons and daughters of the Father, and with the love of his Spirit brothers and sisters in Christ.

*Christmas Blessings and a  
New Year Rich in Hope, Peace, Joy!*

--Members of the District of West Africa

## RECEPTION OF NOVICES



On Monday 17<sup>th</sup> October at early evening time, conveniently scheduled to allow for arrivals of District members and Holy Cross Sisters to come after respective weekday ministries had been attended to the District celebrated the reception of four of its pre-novices into the St. Brother Andre Novitiate. The new novices are: **Brothers Maxwell Kyeremeh, Henry Entsiwah, Philip Jackson and Paul Asenso Mensah.** The reception was a relatively simple ceremony; only a few non-Holy Cross persons were present for the occasion. The presiding celebrant was the District Superior **Bro. Daniel Dardoe.** He was assisted by Brothers John Affum and Paul Bukari in the matter of giving to each novice the **Religious Habit, Bible, Christian Liturgical Prayer Book and Constitutions of the Congregation of Holy Cross.** After each one had first received his habit, the four recipients exited to change into them before returning to receive these latter items.

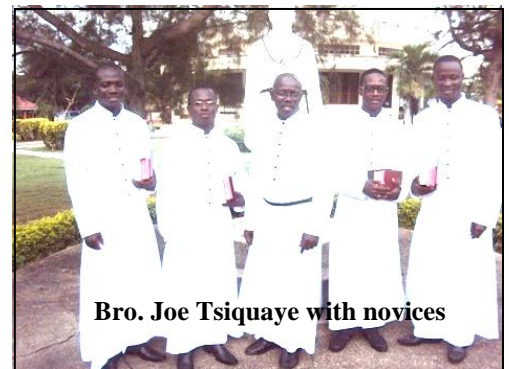


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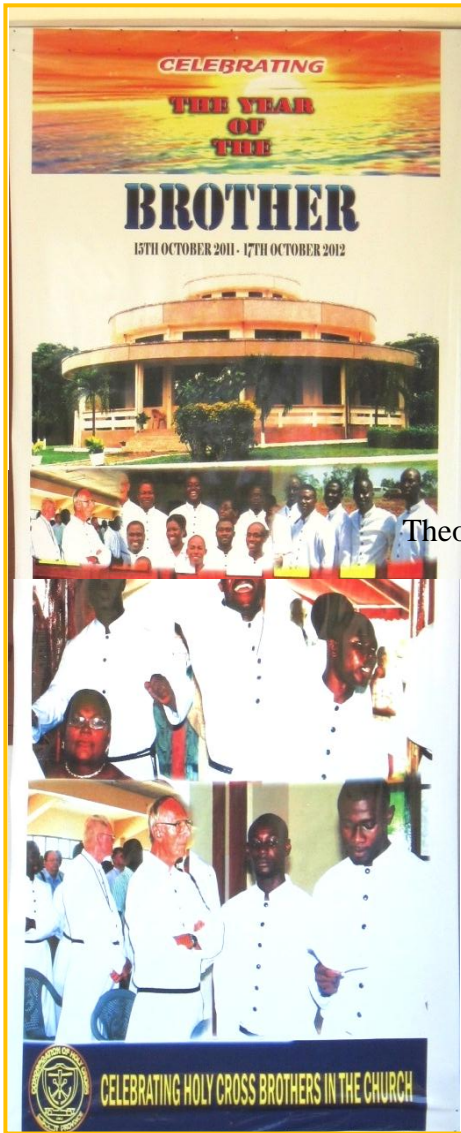
The novices now well-equipped with the “tools of the trade” for the novitiate year were to make rewarding use of these for essential spiritual growth necessary in becoming fully dedicated Brothers of Holy Cross, motivated in their future ministries sustained by an ever increasing love of God.

Bro. Daniel then handed over the novices to **Bro. Joseph Tsiquaye**, who is the Director of the novices. In receiving the group, Joseph made a strong appeal to all present to graciously accept any invitation to them for help in the program, e.g. spiritual conferences, counseling, etc. This was a simple but solemn, grace-filled occasion, not only for the novices but for all present, as we thanked God, who has so blessed us with these four seemingly very gifted novices.



All present convened again for the evening social and dinner on the District rooftop patio to complete this special occasion of the reception of our new novices and fellow Brothers in Holy Cross.

## CELEBRATING THE YEAR OF THE BROTHER



The 3ft X 9 ft. posters by **Bro. David Kpobi** are being posted in schools and churches in Ghana.

On Saturday morning 15<sup>th</sup> October, the District of West Africa began its celebration of the Year of the Holy Cross Brothers at the District Center in Brafoyaw. There was an open



Front row relinquished to the sun!

invitation to all religious communities and organizations in the archdiocese, and some 380 persons responded. It was a very fine day with some, however, moving from shade under the canopies to a more open and cooler space with shade from trees.

The opening prayer was given by **Bro. John Affum**, after which **Bro. Daniel Dardoe**, District Superior extended a welcome to all. Then a Scripture Reading, a hymn of Praise and Thanksgiving, all preceded the comprehensive reflection: "Holy Cross Brothers in the Church", given by **Bro. Joseph Tsiquaye**. Then after a hymn by the Holy Cross pre-novice and Brothers, a second reflection of worthy note was given by **Mr. Edward Arthur**, parent of **Bro. Nicholas Arthur**, Director of the Brothers of Holy Cross Candidates. Ironically, Mr. Arthur in his early years had entered into St. John's Secondary School with the intention of becoming a Holy Cross Brother, but his father so strongly opposed this that he withdrew him from St. John's! Whatever assistance and encouragement **Nicholas** needed to



**Bro. Joe Tsiquaye**

become a Brother of Holy Cross, was given by his father who had been denied that opportunity. Not surprisingly, Mr. Edward Arthur strongly advised the parents to encourage, but not discourage their sons in their decision to be a Brother.

After a hymn to St. Brother Andre, **Bro. Daniel Dardoe** formally launched the Year of the Holy Cross Brother, which was followed by all Holy Cross



District members and the Sisters of the Holy Cross joining together to sing the Holy Cross Anthem.

There was a most appropriate celebration of Benediction with invocation prayers relating to the occasion. Deviating from the usual single blessing with the Blessed Sacrament over the



The Pre-novice Quartet

whole congregation, the celebrant, **Fr. Albert Amakyi**, senior brother of **Bro. Michael Amakyi**,

processed from the altar moving before those assembled, pausing some half-dozen times to bless respective groups individually.



After the Vote of Thanks by **Bro. Paul Bukari**, visitors were encouraged to visit the display in the large convocation room of the Holy Cross Continuing Formation Center to see the mostly photo



Exhibition of Brothers in various activities and ministries over the years. Finally the program was concluded with all receiving beverages and box lunches, distributed by both Brothers' and Sisters' of Holy Cross candidates before gradually departing from the Center.

The annual celebration of Family Day, usually a separate occasion around this time of the year was combined subtly into the format of the program above. Thus there were many family members of respective individual members of the District and of the Sisters of the Holy Cross gathered here on this day. So it was another great day to thank God that he has so blessed all of us with the gift of each to the other, this being included as part of the invocations at the time of the Benediction mentioned above.

### TREE-PLANTING DAY AT HOLY CROSS EDUCATIONAL CENTER IN KASOA

On Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> September some 10 Brothers made an early morning journey to the new Holy Cross Educational Center in Opeikuma (suburb of Kasoa) to participate in a tree-seedlings planting event. This was part of a continuing project of trying to reap some benefit from the vast acreage of land remaining at the Center after allowing for space that has been generally designated for all facilities relating to the planned St. Bro. Andre High School. (See green-slashed area on map).



The ground seems quite arable for



supporting a wide variety of crops in this tropical climate. However, it had not been tilled for ages, and there was the need for clearing the area of undesirable vegetation, "bush", that is, as the first stage of the day's work. The Brothers were assisted by 8 outside farm workers.



All was done without the aid of any tractor to plow the planting

area, nor powered hand cultivators. All was done by manual labor using pickaxes and shovels to dig the holes for 100 orange seedlings, and 45 coconut seedlings. The fill-in dirt was blended with chicken manure, available in abundance from **Bro. Stephen Arthur's** chicken farm at the District Center.



It can be noted from one of the pictures that there is a rather conveniently available water supply from one or more water ponds owing to the high water table at lower ground levels, yet not such as to create any kind of swampland to deal with,



except some small flooding following very heavy rainfalls during the rainy season.

It proved to be a long day's work, but satisfying in the knowledge that in a few years the oranges, at least would begin to bear fruits, perhaps double that time for the coconuts. This day was just the start, and in late October time was taken to plant 70 mango seedlings. Other crops, such as cassava and corn, or whatever will be added to provide marketable produce that can be grown with relative minimal attention and good chance of having a successful harvest as a source of income toward the aim of becoming a self-supporting *autonomous entity in the congregation*..

## HOLY CROSS FAMILY MINISTRY IN GHANA

— October Mini Rosary Rally 2011 —



For the Family Rosary Ministry activities each year in the month of October focus on a special outreach programs to Parishes, Schools and Outstations to promote the Rosary in the life of the faithful. Normally, depending on the arrangement and the location, Brothers are asked to assist in leading a Holy Hour or praying the Rosary with the people participating in the program, accompanied by a reflection and distribution of Rosaries to anyone

in need. The Family Rosary Ministry in Ghana is under the direction of **Bro. Patrick Baah**

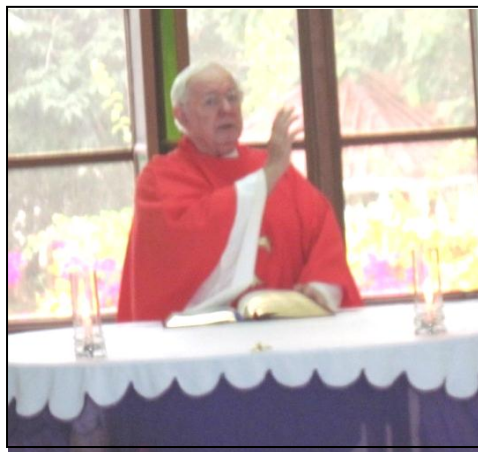
In past years, the focus was on parishes and schools within Takoradi, Axim, Tarkwa and Cape Coast. This past October was exceptional, when **Brothers Stephen, George, Pious, Francisco** and **Aristide** of Sunyani, organized a remarkably large, historic Rosary Rally with the Catholic University students and the Catholic students of Kwame Nkrumah University (University Campus at Sunyani), including some surrounding outstations at the Fiapre main Parish. It was historic in the sense of being the first time such a rally had taken place within the month of October in the Catholic University. All the brothers took active part in the University rally, while Bro. Aristide accepted the request to conduct a similar rally at the Polytechnic campus

The program began at 6:30pm at Kwame Nkrumah University campus with a candle light procession and brass band to St. Joseph's Parish – Fiapre. There was recitation of the Rosary, Marian melodies and dancing, followed by a talk by **Bro. Patrick Baah** explaining what true devotion to Mary and the Rosary entailed. At the conclusion of the program all made an Act of Consecration to Mary.

—Reported by Bro. Patrick Baah

## MAN FOR ALL SEASONS: REV. FR. BOB GILMOUR, CSC

In view of the significant number of gifted and competent members in our District of West Africa, one man surely does stand out for his noteworthy contributions to the needs of our Holy Cross community in Ghana and for our international Congregation, as well. **Fr. Bob Gilmour** is the only Holy Cross priest here in Ghana, our District chaplain. He serves, as well, as the District Steward, a Councilor, and Secretary to the District Council.



He also alternates with one of the Jesuit priests for the Eucharist Celebration in St. Andre Chapel for which many outsiders attend, especially on Sundays and Holy Days.

His expertise in all aspects of computer software, makes him most capable in his secretarial role for all our meetings, and assuming a gargantuan role in daily updating of all that unfolds at the lengthy District Chapter. For every event in which we celebrate, receptions, professions, annual retreats, he always provides an appropriate liturgical brochure for the occasion. And he also, with rare exception, always sends out to our International Holy Cross community a photo album covering the event. Most probably all of you on one occasion or other have had the pleasure of sharing with us the respective event forwarded on our CSC website.

Not surprisingly, Fr. Bob's expertise has been utilized by the Province and Generalate for major meetings to serve as the recording secretary, many of us may be aware of this in that he sends out a daily report to all in Holy Cross of the proceedings of the meetings, Chapter, what have you. Being aware of the important role he has recently played in community affairs he was asked specifically the nature of these involvements. The following is his response:

“In the last couple of months I served as recording Secretary for the following Congregational meetings at the request of the Superior General, Fr. Richard Warner CSC.

- 1) The Congregational Planning Task Force held from the 10th to the 12th October 2011 at the La Porte Center, Indiana.
- 2) The Congregational Financial Restructuring Task Force held from the 16th to 17th October 2011 also at the La Porte Center, Indiana.
- 3) The Council of the Congregation held from 14th to 17th November 2011 (4 full days) at the Christian Brothers Generalate - La Salle House - in Rome.”
- 4) And Fr. Bob also had prevailed as a major secretary for the Holy Cross General Chapter of 2010 from 4th July to 24th July 2010 held at the Generalate of the Selesians in Rome.”



Fr. Bob has also been greatly involved as secretary at recent meetings relating to District preparations for our Chapter here in Ghana 16<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> December, the latter of course for which he will once again contribute of his expertise as our District Secretary.

## DISTRICT CHAPTER 2011

The District held its 15<sup>th</sup> Chapter at the Center in Brafoyaw from Dec. 16-23, 2011. All arrived on Friday evening followed by a Day of recollection on Saturday. **Bro. Ken Haders**, of the Midwest Province, who has moderated the previous two District Chapters again accepted the invitation given for this year's Chapter. There were 35 professed religious within the District present, along with **Fr. Leopold Temba**, of the District of East Africa. Those having active voice for election of members to necessary offices were restricted to those professed at least 4 years. **Fr. Bob Gilmour** again was our secretary "*par excellence*."



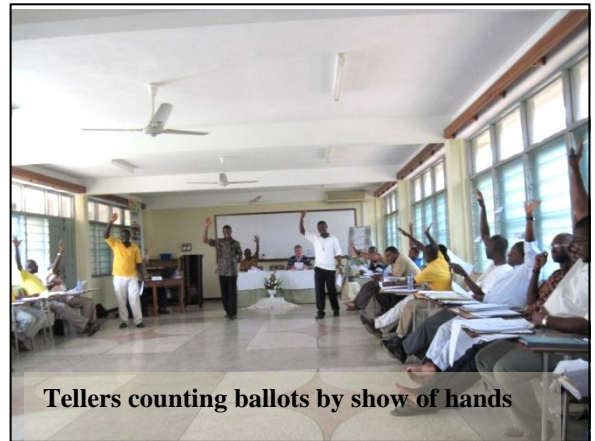
Fr. Bob, Brothers Daniel and Ken Hader

The following were approved at the outset in setting the proper perspective for this 2011 District Chapter.

MISSION STATEMENT: *We are apostolic religious who manifest the vision and heritage of the Congregation of Holy Cross in West Africa. We live, pray and work together as hopeful signs of the kingdom. Continuing the mission of Christ, we as educators in the faith, work to create a more just and humane society.*

VISION STATEMENT: *Holy Cross in West Africa will strive to become her best to participate in Congregational Restructuring. GOAL: To function effectively as a group by putting in place structures that support our common life and mission.*

There were four Task Forces for the 2011 Chapter covering respective areas to enable the District to attain the above: MISSION, MINISTRY AND APOSTOLIC PLANNING; RELIGIOUS AND COMMUNITY LIFE; VOCATION AND FORMATION; and FINANCE.



Tellers counting ballots by show of hands

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The respective Task Force members worked diligently, especially the weeks proximate to the Chapter to make them viable working documents for group discussion following the presentation of them to the Chapter members. While significant views differed in some instances toward revision of the documents, the Chapter unfolded in smooth fashion under



Bro. Daniel receiving congratulations

the capable direction of the moderator. In the first stage Task Force reports were presented followed by group discussions group reports which were reviewed by all at plenary or general sessions. Task Forces then revised their reports or documents for Stages two and three. The final form of the respective documents were approved



at the morning session on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> December by all members present.

**Bro Daniel Dardoe** was re-elected as District Superior, and **Bro. Paul Mensah** was chosen as one of the councilors. The Provincial, **Bro. Chester Freel**, who unfortunately had to make a sudden return to the States owing to the apparently proximate terminal illness of his father, caused a delay in the approval of the appointment of **Bro. Nicholas Arthur** as **Assistant District Superior** and **Fr. Bob Gilmour** as **Secretary and District Steward. Approval was later** received from Bro. Chester back at the Province Center after the Chapter had adjourned Friday morning.

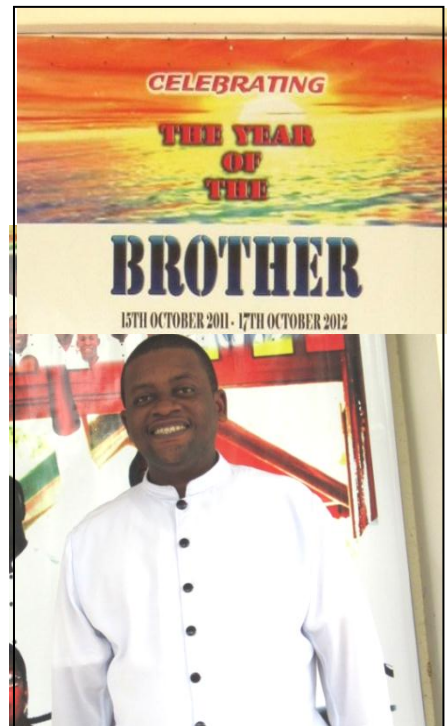
It seems safe to judge that all members present rated this 2011 Chapter, at least as a “9+ on a scale of 10”!, which hopefully will be the starting point for all in the District to apply the same continuing effort to bring to reality all that was approved by this Chapter.

### **BRO. STEPHEN ARTHUR – FINAL PROFESSION OF VOWS**

On Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> December, 2011 **Bro. Stephen Arthur** made his final profession of religious vows at the District Centre St. Andre Chapel. Many friends in addition to those of his family were present, along with the District members and Sisters of the Holy Cross. Preparation for the profession ceremony conjoined with the Eucharistic celebration was held outside owing to the large number who (would be coming) came for the occasion.

The celebration of the Eucharist, which (is) was obviously enhanced by the younger Ghanaian Brothers with their rhythmic instruments was only slightly marred by the absence of Bro. Stephen, who usually offers his art of drumming for the various hymns and songs. (and all superbly well). Fortunately there are a few among our younger Ghanaian Brothers who are (quite) equally versatile on the drums, as well.

So the profession ceremonies, including a very relevant and commendable homily by **Fr. Bob Gilmour**, celebrant for the occasion unfolded in a beautiful and meaningful way for both Stephen and those in attendance.



### **GHANA ASSEMBLY FOR THE SISTERS OF THE HOLY CROSS**

The sisters of the Holy Cross held their Area Assembly at Brafuyaw Nov. 10-12. Following the theme: **HAVE GIFTS BEAR FRUITS: THE DYNAMICS AND MANAGEMENT OF INTER PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS IN A RELIGIOUS CONGREGATION**, **Rev. Fr. Alfons Amanor, SVD**, used the Constitution of the sisters as a basis for the days of input and discussion. He began with the opening words from Constitution One “Our life together” and incorporated the two calls from the 2009 General



Chapter, Transformation, and Right Relationships, that have been the topics for Theological Reflection.

Following the presentations the Sisters considered the Congregational matters at hand.

Sisters Angelica Birungi and Lillian Sullivan, the two Area Councilors from Uganda were present for the Assembly. All enjoyed the days and were grateful to Fr. Amanor for his insights, and to our Holy Cross Brothers for the wonderful hospitality extended to each of us. May God richly bless each one.

—Sr. Helene Sharp

### **NEWS BRIEFS**

- In October the Ghana Education Service released the Computerized School Selection and Placement System (CSSPS) lists and made them available to the various Senior High/Technical Institutions in the country. The CSSPS is the system by which qualified Junior High School students who had formally completed the junior high school and are seeking admission into the various Senior High/Technical Institutions are placed. All Junior High School students take national examinations called the Basic Education Certificate Examinations (BECE) conducted by the West African Examinations Council (WAEC). The BECE, conducted by WAEC on behalf of the Ghana Education Service are pre – requisites for entry into any public Senior High/Technical School in the country.
- Results of the West Africa Senior Secondary Certificate Examinations (WASSCE) also conducted by the West African Examinations Council (WAEC) were also released in October 2011. There were 4 Core and 17 Elective subject areas of which St. Augustine's seniors would have had a 100% Passing score, except for a single failure in Integrated Science. This is a remarkable achievement indicating once again the status of St. Augustine's College as being one of the top schools in the country. Two Ghanaian Brothers of Holy Cross were on the staff last year and 3 are on the staff this year. St. John High School with **Bro. Sylvester Quaye** as new Headmaster continues to improve in its ranking among the top 10% of the schools in Ghana.
- **Bro. Vincent Ntsiful**, Director of the Brothers' House at St. Augustine's, has been appointed to participate in the Generalate's Forum, which is comprised of a member of each Province, Vicariate and District. He will be journeying to Rome On Jan. 4<sup>th</sup> for the first meeting of the Forum.
- Bro. Paul Bukari is participating as an observer at the District of East Africa Chapter during Christmas week.
- The next issue of HOLY CROSS TODAY-GHANA will be that of April-June, as the editor, **Bro. Tom Dillman** will be in the US for his vacation including plans to once again make appeals to local parishes in his hometown of Evansville, IN for funds to distribute to the marginalized and poor through his special ministry to them in Ghana.

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Critique/suggestions: Bro. Joe Annan