



**SOCIETY OF THE DIVINE
WORD (SVD) - ZAMBIA**

**DIVINE WORD NOVITIATE,
KABWE**

NEWSLINK 

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**PENTECOST: GOD'S DIVINE
GIFT OF LOVE**

*"And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another
advocate to help you and be with you forever."*

— John 14:16



NOVITIATE

NEWSLINK

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EDITORIAL

The feast of Pentecost celebrates the birth of the Church. It is a day we gather as a community to experience the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, as it was in the early days of the disciples, in the upper room. Our upper room (as Christians) is our common places of living with one another in a fraternal manner.

Our theme, *“Pentecost: God’s Divine Gift of Love”* helps us to reflect on the magnificence of God’s Love, which is Divine – a Love that is pure and eternal. We are people called out of darkness into the wonderful light of God – in whose invincible image we share as believers. God possessed us from the beginning of creation and has bestowed upon us the grace of His Spirit to possess one another and drawing them into deep intimate union with Him.

Pentecost gives hope to the hearts that are frightened, in doubts and fears. Like the disciples on that first Pentecost, we too gather in the upper room, and trusting in Jesus’ promise *‘not to leave us as orphans; but will come to us’* [Cfr. John 14:18], let us patiently await the Holy Spirit to renew the face of the earth and our lives wholly. Jesus’ life-giving breath mirrors the breath of God given to human beings at the beginning of creation when God breathes life into the clay and made humans a living creation. This is the divine indwelling that enables us to live fraternally and witness to Jesus’ saving mission. Pentecost gives us a new identity to become the incarnation of the risen Lord in our world today – to be God’s reconciling presence

in the world – uniting the rich and the poor, the high-classed and the marginalized.

Our mandate continues with Jesus’ commission to His disciples: *“Peace be to you; as the Father has sent me, so I send you”* [Cfr. John 20:21], *“Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have instructed you”* [Cfr. Matthew 28:19].

May we continue to be signs of reunion in our world, in the Church, in our institutions, localities, families and among people of faith everywhere.

Fr. NUTSUGAH DEREK Kwasi Senam

Fr. KUNAKKEY Larios



FROM THE DESK

OF THE DIRECTOR OF NOVICES

It is another fine opportunity to get in touch with you through this output of our young men or novices here. This issue covers especially, the experiences of our community, planned to “come out of the publishing house,” coinciding with the great feast of Pentecost. Just as the Pentecost event, among other things, reached out the gracious Christ-event to the world beyond the boundaries of Jerusalem, so also, we are reaching you with news about us across the globe!

Indeed, time passes fast! A little over two years ago, I was assigned to come over here from my home Ghana Province, to help out as the Director of Novices in our young and newly established novitiate here in Kabwe, in our ZAM Mission in the Republic of Zambia. That appointment was for two canonical years and it is soon ending. I therefore take this opportunity to thank Father General Budi Kleden, SVD, and his council, as well as Fr. Martin Kawana, SVD, the Mission Superior and his council, who invited me and gave me the opportunity for my mission experience here. It has been much of a learning experience for me as it also was/is for my sharing in the lives of the batches of novices who have, or, are passing through

here within this period I am here. The same gratitude goes also for the confreres, especially, Bro. Ferdi Selan, SVD, with whom, as the treasurer of the community, present before my arrival, have worked cordially together in the accompaniment of our young men. The same thanks goes also to our larger Arnoldus Family here of the SSpS and the SVD Lay Partners; workers, novices and all others!

I happened to be part of the group of AFRAM Executive Committee (Execom) who a few years ago, seeing that our English novitiate, the Divine Word Novitiate in Nkwatia-Kwahu of Ghana, was frequently overloaded in terms of the number of novices received, we needed to have another English novitiate in the zone, at which, with the agreement of Father General, Zambia was zeroed upon. Therefore, when called upon to help out here, although not so easy within the short time of the need arising, I am happy to have been here. I can say, I seized the opportunity in whatever little way was

possible, to contribute my little part in adding value in the novitiate, the mission and the worldwide SVD mission as a whole – in the ongoing reflections towards our upcoming 19th General Chapter, to be a transforming missionary disciple in our wounded world here.

In particular, I am pleased that with the novitiate community, we have been able to, over the past year, seen to the firm establishment of the SVD Lay Partners in Kabwe (the second in Zambia after the Linda group in Lusaka), and they are already expanding and enthusiastically committed to collaborate with the SVD in our mission animation here in this part of the world.

As we celebrate Pentecost shortly, may the good Lord bless each one of us, wherever we are, to go forth with the light of the Risen Christ to disperse the darkness of sin with the Pentecost fire.



Happy feast day!

Fr. GEORGE CLEMENT ANGMOR, SVD



When the Lord Jesus was about to ascend to heaven, He said to His disciples: *"I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, so that He may be with you forever, namely the Spirit of truth. He is with you and will be in you"* (John 14:16-17).

Today that promise is fulfilled, as we hear in the Acts of the Apostle: *"When the day of Pentecost came, all the believers gathered in one place. Suddenly there came from Heaven the sound like the rushing of a violent wind which filled the whole house where they were sitting and they saw tongues like flames of fire scattering and alighting on each of them. They were filled with the Holy Spirit and they began to speak in other language, just as the Spirit gave them to say"* (Acts 2:1-5).

The outpouring of the Holy Spirit that the apostles experienced is the fulfillment of the prophecy of the Prophet Joel 2:28-29: *"I will pour out My Spirit and on all mankind. Even on male and female servants I will pour out My Spirit in those days."*

This is the right moment for God to show the strength of His power through the roar of strong winds and divided tongues, as of fire appeared among them. The Holy Spirit was

poured out on the disciples. The howling of a strong wind is a symbol of God's power which is invisible by anyone, and fire is a symbol of Divine power (Kings 18:38). The tongues of fire is actually a fulfillment of Deuteronomy 4:36. *"From Heaven He let you hear His voice to teach you, on earth He let you see His great fire, and all His words you heard coming out from the fire"*.

The Almighty power was able to crush the anxiety and fear of Jesus' disciples who were still hiding in the attic with the door locked. That power is capable of transforming fear into courage, from enclosed space to the outer world. So, in front of thousands of people, Peter said: *'All of you who live in Jerusalem and Jews, please hear me. These people are not drunk as you might think. Thus says God that I will pour out My spirit upon all mankind; also on my brothers and sisters, servants I will pour out My spirit in those days and they will prophesy. And I will show wonders in the heaven above,*

and sign on earth below.'

The sermon of the Genuine Fisherman turned out to bring the Great Pentecost Miracle. About 3,000 people asked to be baptized. The baptism of 3,000 people by the Holy Spirit was the beginning of the birth of the prime church. The church becomes a worldwide church in the spirit of unity, so that they all become one, like us, *'I am in the father and father in me.'* The element of unity is highlighted in St. Paul's letter to emphasize that the Holy Spirit is the unifying Spirit, therefore everyone who is filled with the Holy Spirit will always uphold the value of togetherness (unity), as Jesus himself prayed: *"So that they may become one"* (John 17:21).

To end my reflection, it is key to know that Pentecost is a transformation from anxiety and fear to admirable courage, from discipleship to apostolate, from those who listen to the word to become proclaimers of the word.



Br. SELAN Ferdi, SVD



REUSING, RECYCLING, REPAIRING AND REDUCING: AN INTERACTION WITH THE ZAM JPIC COORDINATOR

In recent years, different parts of the world have experienced signs of the displeasure of nature due to mankind's irresponsible attitude and actions towards nature. Many institutions and organizations are trying harder to help preserve nature, of which the Catholic Church is part. Pope Francis, after assuming his papacy, began reflecting on the life of his patron saint, St. Francis of Assisi, who is viewed by the church as the patron saint of nature. His love for nature is worth emulating, hence motivating Pope Francis to come out with the encyclical, *Laudato Si*, to create awareness to care for the earth, our common home. This awareness is to be done by all institutions in the church and the Divine Word Missionaries are not left out.

The SVD Congregation, through the *Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation* dimension, is trying its best to make this aim of the church come to light. In line with this, the JPIC coordinator of the Zambia Mission, *Fr. Likulano, Lawrence Mbapolo, SVD*, gave us input on what the congregation is doing in the Zambia Mission. These include helping the less privileged in society and raising awareness of justice-related issues. On *Laudato Si*, he touched on various areas such as the cry of the earth and the poor, ecological economics, education, spirituality, community and participation, and simple life. For humanity to live harmoniously with nature, there is a need for a change of mind, heart, and attitude. We need to know that nature is a common good for all.

In ecological economics, we are encouraged to adopt and develop the attitude of **Reusing, Recycling, Repairing, and Reducing** the consumption of things. Reuse has to do with using the resource more effectively; e.g., rubber bags can be used several times and for different

purposes; hence, they should not just be used once and thrown away. Recycling has to do with converting used resources into something else useful, e.g., paper and other organic (degradable) materials can be converted into compost. Repair, when our machines, tools, equipment, or facility develops a fault, we should try to give it life by repairing rather than buying new; e.g., a broken chair or table can be repaired rather than buying a new one. Reduce has to do with only taking the most needed and essentials for a time, e.g., buying what is really needed, taking the right quantity of things, and not taking extra. We also need to adopt a simple lifestyle and avoid the consumer mentality to reduce the various wastes of our natural resources.



As a congregation and at the individual level, we are all encouraged to create awareness and get everybody involved in achieving the goals of *Laudato Si* and protecting our common home. JPIC ZAM also draws people's attention to the planting of trees and the importance of taking care of our environment.

In conclusion, the most important thing to do is to have a change of mind and attitude toward how we exploit nature. It is our mandate to care for God's creation. Cf. Gen. 1:27-30.

Fr. BANGFO Felix

AN EXCURSION TO LIVINGSTONE

As the Canonical Year gradually comes to a close, the community made a trip to Livingstone in the south of Zambia.

Livingstone is considered as the tourist capital of Zambia, and has a population of over 1.3 million. Established in 1904, it was the capital of Northern Rhodesia (present Zambia) until 1935. The town was named after David Livingstone, the Victorian explorer and missionary, who visited the site in 1855.

Our trip began on Monday, April 20, 2023 around 04:30 Hours from the novitiate and we arrived in Livingstone around 14:45 Hours. It was a tiresome yet fantastic journey. Upon our arrival at the SVD District House we were warmly welcomed by Fr. Peter Madden, SVD – who showed us to our rooms. After supper, there was an interaction session with Fr. Peter solely for proper self-introduction. Fr. Peter is an old missionary to Ghana and later in the pioneer team to Botswana Province. He is now the oldest confrere in Zambia.

The next day (Friday, April 21, 2023), we visited the Victoria Falls. Upon reaching the venue we made a trek to see the Zimbabwean boarder. It was a fun experience for most of us to see Zimbabwe from a short distant. After our return from the border, we proceeded to see the Falls. The Victoria Falls (locally known as ‘*Mosi-oa-tunya*’ - the Smoke that Thunders) lies only about 10 km from the city. It presents a great sight of awe-inspiring beauty and splendour on the Zambezi River, forming a natural border between Zambia and Zimbabwe. It is the largest fall based on its width of over 1.7 km with a fall height of 108 m, ensuing in the world’s largest sheet of falling water. We walked on the bridge across the Zambezi River giving us a breathtaking experience of the Falls. We were at the point through which the Zambezi River flows making the great falls. Later on, we went to the Boiling Pot, which is the lowest viewing point at the Victoria Falls. This view from the boiling pot gave us a great view of the valley and the Victoria Falls Bridge. We made a steep hike downhill; however, the experience is gratifying and worth the time and effort. We took pictures lots of pictures to mark the day making it a memorable one. This ended the first day of our trip.

The next day (Saturday, April 22, 2023), we made a trip westward to Kazungula – to visit the



Missionary Sisters Servants of the Holy Spirit (SSpS). Upon our arrival we were heartily received by their community leader, Sr. Petroneldis, SSpS who after some snacks, took us round to see the Kazungula Bridge. Kazungula is a small border town in Zambia, lying on the

north bank of the Zambezi River about 70 kilometres west of Livingstone on the M10 Road.



This is the point where the four countries (Zambia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, and Namibia) meet. We also visited the vocational institute run by the sisters for training young boys/girls in the town. We set

off back to Livingstone, and later had a sumptuous supper with the SSpS at their Regional House.

The next day (Sunday, April 23, 2023), we attended Mass at the St. Francis Catholic Church (Dambwa). We were given the chance to briefly introduce ourselves at the end of both Masses. We met many people who seem interested in knowing more about the religious life. We stayed for lunch and later returned to the district house. In the evening, we had supper with the confreres: Fr. Natun, Wendefredus (District Superior) and Fr. D’Souza, Rajesh Praveen (Vice Mission Superior and also the parish priest). Since it was the last time together, prior to our departure back to Kabwe, we made the night an enjoyable one.

The next day (Monday, April 24, 2023), we set off from Livingstone back to the novitiate at 4:45 Hours, having made a stopover at the mission and philosophy houses in Lusaka. We got to Kabwe around 16:25 Hours.

In sum, our experience was wonderful – one worth sharing. We are grateful to God for His presence with us and the travelling mercy granted. This trip has refreshed us on our canonical year and given us the opportunity to experience the awe of God’s splendor and beauty in creation. We desired we had such a great moment again together as a community.



CLIMBING THE MOUNTAIN WITH THE LORD: THE 30 DAYS RETREAT JOURNEY

Our spiritual journey started on 4th March, 2023, after some few days of preparation with our novice master Fr. George Clement Angmor, SVD and Fr. Theodore Atsu Afanyedey, SVD who was the retreat spiritual guide during our spiritual exercises.

On that day, our journey started at 18h30 with an opening ceremony which started by the official welcoming into the journey by our retreat guide. After that, we had a time of adoration to enter fully into the journey.

Based on the Trinitarian spirituality of our Arnoldus Family, our focus during the four phases were on the three persons of the Holy Trinity.

PHASE I: God the Father, creator of heaven and earth.

During this first phase from the 5th to the 12th, March 2023, we looked at the Father Almighty who, out of his love for humankind created the heaven and earth, as well as all that dwells on them. During our sessions of spiritual guidance as well as the Eucharistic celebration, the readings used were emphasizing on first, the creation of everything in the image of God. God created everything out of his love and was pleased with them. Still out

of his love, he entrusted all that he had made to humankind but we were not able to take good care. God in his anger punished us for our evil deeds but his anger did not last long. In his kindness and love, he forgave us and brought us back to him-self making a new covenant with us. During the first phase of looking at God the Father and his unconditional love for us despite our sins, we had a day of the celebration of the sacrament of reconciliation. It was a time for us to go back to our Father after having sinned against him to ask for pardon and his mercy. The first phase ended on 12th March with a break.

PHASE II: Following Jesus through the vows.

During this phase, our focus was on the first part of the life of the second person of the Holy Trinity: Jesus-Christ our Saviour, who, out of his love and the love for his father accepted to come down from heaven to redeem us once for all. The early life of the incarnate Word and his mission were at the center of the readings of our reflections and Eucharistic celebrations. We tried to identify our lives with his own in

order to strengthen us and truly live the vows we are willing to take as he did during his life. Being obedient to the Father by accepting to come down from heaven, and by obedience to his earthly parents, he grew in strength, maturity and wisdom, and was well prepared for his mission. Although rich, he became poor for our sake. We also analyzed and compared his mission with ours today; he whom we have decided to follow, was not exempt from difficulties, challenges and trials in his mission. By being obedient to the Father and by always seeking his help through prayer, he was, always comforted and strengthened for a very fruitful mission. In the same way, if we also remain faithful to the will of the Father, never shall we perish; he will always be with us when we need his assistance and help. This second phase of our journey ended on the 20th of March and led us into the third phase the following day.

CONT...

PHASE III: Jesus' self-giving in love

During this third phase of our journey, our focus was on the paschal mysteries of, Jesus' suffering, death on the cross and his triumph over death which is the resurrection. Our readings during the Holy masses, meditations and prayer moments for spiritual direction with our retreat guide were talking again about the obedience of our saviour. This obedience led him to suffer for the sake of humanity. He was humiliated, persecuted and killed because of our sins. He was put to death as a criminal for us but death did not stop his plan of salvation for us. He had power over death, and rose from it and with his resurrection brought new life for us who believe and trust in him. On the 26th of March, we ended the third phase of our journey with the celebration of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus-Christ.

PHASE IV: Sent by the Risen Lord, Empowered by His Spirit

In this last phase of our journey, we looked first at the life of the disciples of Jesus-Christ troubled, full of fear scattered and disappointed because their hope was gone. The one in whom they had put their hope was killed. However, the saviour did not leave them alone; in several occasions, he appeared to them in order to renew their faith, to remove their fears and doubt by bringing them his peace and empowering them to be ready for their mission that was waiting for them. With these events, we remembered in our prayer times, and sharing with our guide, that, as new

followers of Jesus, we will also face times of disappointments, doubts, fears and challenges that would put confusion in us, but the one who called us, will always be around to assure and strengthen us to continue his mission.

After that, we reached the time of mission when the disciples received the comforter, the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Holy Trinity, which was promised to them by Jesus himself before departing from them to his Father in heaven. With his presence in all of them, they started proclaiming the good news, the experiences they had. With the help of the Holy Spirit working in them, their number increased, they made believers everywhere and their great work reached us today, so that empowered by the Spirit of the living God, we also can be able to continue spreading the good news to the next generations to come.

With this phase, we ended our spiritual journey with the Lord on 4th April by a thanksgiving mass in which, we had the opportunity to share with everyone our journey experience and the graces we received from God our Father.

Fr. KUNAKY Larios

SYMBOLS OF OUR 30 DAYS RETREAT JOURNEY

Our 30-days journey was marked by remarkable experiences symbolized in the form of 'a lighted Candle wrapped in a paper,' 'a Flower,' 'a Boat' and 'a Heart' as explained below in each session of this article.

I. A LIGHTED CANDLE WRAPPED IN A PAPER



After a long time of reflection and according to the experience I had in doing this spiritual exercise, I decided to choose a lighted candle wrapped in a paper as my symbol, of the retreat journey.

Why have I chosen that symbol and not any other?

It is because it speaks and describes more deeply my experience. The lighted candle represents the newness in my life, something that I felt during the journey; it reminds me

about the candle that I received from my parents on the day of my baptism. The role of that light was to lead me as a new-born in Christ. In the same way, this new light is to lead me to always use the right path to which God is leading me, as I am preparing to make an important decision for my life, and so, to commit, with the grace of God, myself to him as his servant. This light is to give me hope and assurance as I walk with my God.

As long as it shines in front of me, I will be sure that I am taking the right way and doing what is expected of me, and if it is not there, I have to stop what I am doing and seek God's presence to come back to the right path. In short, this light is to be my guide in my daily life as Jesus' follower. It also symbolizes the fire of the Holy Spirit burning in me, and giving me the strength to continue my journey of preparation to surrender my whole life into God's hand. My candle is wrapped in a paper because God who called me and has given me the great opportunity to serve him, will always be with me and protect me. He will strengthen me and rescue me in times of difficulties on my journey with him. In accord with the way my light is wrapped, so also will I be wrapped by God's hand; never will he abandon me, always, he will be with me. The light, wrapped in a paper is representing also myself in the hands of God my Father and protector.

Fr. KUNAKY Larios

II. A FLOWER

The symbol to represent my entire 30-day retreat journey was a white rose flower.



Flowers are the actual reproduction systems of plants; when your plant starts to flower, that is a sure sign of production. Some characteristics of a flower include: hope, birth or life, love, unity, growth, inspiration, and elegance.

The color composition:

White, the actual flower representing the light of Christ and the gifts of

the Holy Spirit I received at baptism, and confirmation, which has been renewed in this retreat exercise and which I am to live out in my life, like a flower, I am to be a witness of Christ in an elegant way wherever I am, to draw people to him.

Green, the color of the plant, represents the vegetation, God's creation, which I am responsible for taking care of, and also the unconditional love and care of the Triune God for mankind for giving the vegetation for our sustenance. The green also represents growth, hope, and assurance that God is still shaping me in his image and likeness.

The presence of the Holy Spirit in me leads me to growth and hope in the Triune God. Just as a flower can sprout on its own but is dependent on the plant, so too am I dependent on God, and I am to remain in him in order to be a good religious missionary.

Fr. BANGFO Felix

III. A BOAT



According to the pages of history, on March 4, 2023, I began my thirty day retreat and finished on April, 2023. Customarily, I had written my expectations on a green paper cut-out designed for my right foot. Among the expectations I desired, was to have a fruitful retreat journey. My expectations were on the green paper to represent the green pasture. Just as the disciples in the boat with Jesus and they felt he was not with them, because he was asleep when hit by storm. That was also the way in which

in my spiritual exercises over the thirty days, I felt threatened and troubled; I doubted the presence of Jesus in my boat of life. I groped in my own frustrations, but Jesus was telling me: Peace! Be still.

As I attentively listened to Jesus, peace was restored. It was at this encounter with Jesus that I experienced my fears dispelled in my shaken faith. I came to realize how much God loves me, and so I felt that my vocation is love. At the close of the retreat, I designed a boat made of yellow sheet, to represent the fruitfulness of my thirty day retreat, and how my spiritual life is blooming.

Fr. SAIMON Oscar

IV. A HEART



The symbol that best explains my experience during the 30-day retreat journey is a flamed-heart surrounded by a crown of thorns, and a cross at the top-centre with the Holy Spirit (flames of fire).

The flamed-heart represents God's unreserved love for me. I have identified a personal experience of the unconditional and merciful love of God in His "Love Letter" to me: "Fear not, I am with you; be not dismayed I am your God..."

.... *I will strengthen you, and help you, and uphold you with my strong right hand*" [Isaiah 41:10].

The Crown of Thorns around the flamed-heart represents the pains, worry and wounds that God's Divine Love demands of me to totally renounce all earthly allurements and lose my life for His sake and the Kingdom [Mark 8:34-38]. My experience has been enriched as I begin to know Jesus (personally) in order to be in love with Him and to follow Him totally.

The Cross at the top-centre of the flamed-heart represents Christ's mission in my life to go and make disciples of all nations, and instruct them in all His commands [Matthew 28:19-20]. The Cross, during this journey, reminds me to be one with Jesus in His total self-giving. During this

time, my conviction about the religious, missionary life was strengthened – denying myself, taking up my cross and follow Jesus [Mark 9:34].

The Flames of Fire around the Cross represents the power of the Holy Spirit – that empowers me with His presence to fulfil the prophetic mission of the Kingdom among all peoples [Joel 3:1-5]. I experienced the deep serenity and joy that Christ re-empowered me with through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. I feel Christ has called me for the prophetic mission of the Kingdom among peoples of different cultures, races and tongues, to be an authentic witness [Acts 3:15].

Fr. NUTSUGAH Derek Kwasi Senam



As stated in the Formation Manual for SVD Lay Partners (2020), "Everyone who is baptized is called to be a missionary; some are called to be priests, some others as religious professing vows in a Society/Congregation, but some persons are called to live this missionary vocation as 'lay' persons either married or single." In the Church, the role of Laypeople is valued as it adds to the Church's missionary vocation in various forms. Just as the ordained ministers, they too live an exemplary, prayer-centered and mission-oriented life. They are the voice of the Church in our wounded world; creative disciples responding to God's call, striving to live

their lives in accordance with Christ's mandate to serve the people in the light of the mission of the Society of the Divine Word.

It is almost a year since the SVD Lay Partners was founded in Kabwe (the second group in Zambia), the capital town of the central Province of Zambia. It was at the initiative of the novitiate community, led by Fr. George Clement Angmor, SVD, the Novice Master. From the initial dozen people, the group now numbers 31. The novitiate community continues to animate them.

On Saturday, May 06, 2023, the novitiate community had an interaction with them. This took place in the Novitiate Community at exactly 09:00 Hours. Present were 18 participants from 4 parishes namely, St. Charles Lwanga Parish (Chindwin), St. Monica Parish (Lukanga), Holy Rosary Parish (Mukobeko) and St. Joseph Parish (Ngungu) as well as the Novitiate Community.

The interaction took two (2) forms: Presentations (via PowerPoint and Videos) and an open forum involving questions and answers/clarifications. The topics covered comprised: “**The Society of the Divine Word**” by novice Larios, “**The SVD Lay Partners**” by novices Felix and Oscar, and finally, “**Life in the Divine Word Novitiate**” by novice Derek. The YouTube video Presentations comprised “*It Began on the River Maas*”, “*We are Soverdia – Indonesia*”, and “*Group/Team Building by Fr. Gregory Pinto, SVD.*”

The interaction served the purpose of educating one another as members of the Arnoldus Family; especially for the SVD Lay Partners to be rooted in the rich traditions and spirituality of our founder, St. Arnold Janssen. The questions/answers session was so educative and practical as it aided to grasp the content of the materials presented and an in-depth knowledge of the religious life and sharing of our vocation stories. In

His apostolic Exhortation, “*Evangelii Gaudium*,” Pope Francis writes, “In virtue of their baptism, all the members of the People of God have become missionary disciples (cf. Mt 28:19)” (No. 120). This was evident in the keen interest shown by the participants during the interaction by asking relevant questions that demanded more practical responses. Their contributions during the discussion made the session lively. Everyone was so excited to have participated in this well-informed interaction – and wished that this encounter continues. Our Lay people portray a unique charisma that reveals their zeal for an active missionary life; hence, the call to take an active role either within the Zambia mission and beyond to build the Kingdom of God together with the SVD missionaries in the future.

The interaction ended around 12:30 Hours followed by snacks. Many pictures were taken to mark the day making it a joyous, gleeful and cherished one.

Fr. NUTSUGAH Derek Kwasi Senam

KNOW YOURSELF AND BE CONSCIOUS OF YOUR SEXUALITY

One of the ancient philosophers, Socrates, had said, “Know thyself”. Reflecting on Socrates’ words of wisdom, I have come to realize how essential it is to know oneself. Knowing where you come from, how you were brought up, what were the influences present in childhood that molded you to where you are. And this was profoundly emphasized by Sr. Mercy Ani, MSHR, in her seminar

with us as novices. She reiterated the importance of self-knowledge, self-awareness, and self-image.

One of the important points was about human development, how the way we were brought up, the environment we grew up in, and the people we socialized with affect us, be it positively or negatively. I came to recognize that even the way I resolve conflicts and interact with others is

also grounded in how I was raised. Knowing thyself alone is not enough, it is also intrinsic to knowing and being conscious of your human sexuality and how you deal with sexuality problems that are in the world as someone striving to be a religious missionary priest.

And so, from another angle, the session we had with Dr. Cyrille Balonda, a medical officer at Kabwe Central Hospital, and also a member of the SVD Lay Partners helped me to become aware of my sexuality. He made a presentation on some topics relevant to human sexuality that would help us work on our weaknesses and strengths. Among the topics that he gave us to research and present in class were on masochism, voyeurism, and masturbation, just to mention the few.

In his advice related to some of these topics, he stressed that whenever one has a problem with his or her sexuality, one does not have to try to cover it up or hide it. He gave the analogy that, “when the water

is flowing from the tap and messing up the room, you do not go mopping the water but close the tap”. He mentioned that when having challenges in your sexuality, there is the need of seeking some guidance or therapy if need be.



Fr. SAIMON Oscar



Easter, (Latin/Greek: Pascha), is a principal festival of the Christian Church, which celebrates the Resurrection of Jesus Christ on the third day after His Crucifixion. It is the most important and oldest festival of the Christian Church. This most solemn and preeminent festivity symbolizes the fulfillment of our faith as Christians, which creates a great joy, love and hope in the hearts of all. It is in its light that the Formation Board of the Religious

Formation Houses in Kabwe-Zambia, planned an Easter Picnic to gleefully celebrate the day.

The programme for this thrilling socialization began with celebration of the Holy Eucharist at the novitiate of the Salesians of Don Bosco with five (5) formators and thirty-five novices from three (3) formation houses namely: Society of the Divine Word (SVD) Novitiate, Salesians of Don Bosco Novitiate and Society of Missionaries of

Africa (SMA) community and some other visitors.

After the Eucharist, everyone quickly changed into a sports-wear, ready for the first part of the program for the day – **games** (football and volleyball) among the novices.

The SVDs with the SMAs played against the Salesians since the Salesians had great numbers. After a 70-minutes play between both sides the score was 3-3. It was a wonderful time interacting among one another through this game that won the heart of all.

After this game, there was a quick rest and the volleyball court was prepared for the other game of the day. This time the formandi from the three houses mixed up and played among themselves. It was a very competitive match among the players from all sides. It was fun seeing brothers display their giftedness on the field of play. This lasted for about an hour and half. After this, everyone went in to prepare for the second part of the program for the day – **socialization**.

This second part began preceded by a prayer. There were varieties of food and drinks prepared by each community as well as some candies, biscuits, chocolates and many more to make the socialization more enjoyable. This was accompanied by a background melody from some selected few artists. After some time, when everyone was tired, the programme was finally brought to a close. There were lots of pictures taken at vital points during the whole program and these will serve as a memory in the future. The full support and participation from everyone made the program a memorable one.

Fr. NUTSUGAH Derek Kwasi Senam

AN INTERVIEW WITH BR. FERDI SELAN, SVD

The Editorial Committee had an interview with Br. Ferdi Selan, SVD, 41, a religious missionary Brother from Indonesia (Timor Province). He joined the religious life in 2007. He had his First and Final Vows in 2010 and 2017 respectively. He has a Degree in Accounting and serves as the community Treasurer. His first mission assignment was to Zambia, arriving on September 5, 2018. Since 2020, he has been living in the novitiate community, first, to learn English at the Kwame Nkrumah University, and then later, assigned as the treasurer of the novitiate community.

In this interview, Br. Ferdi shares his experience so far (as a religious Brother); especially in Africa (Zambia) - responding to some questions asked by the committee.

C: *Br Ferdi, could you please share with us why you became a 'Brother' and not a 'Priest'?*

R: "I knew of both vocations (clerical and brother) in the Society of the Divine Word (SVD). But I willingly chose to be a Brother. I was greatly influenced by my classmate named, Br Anton Kaba, SVD, who after completing high school enrolled into the Seminary while I started working. At the time, there was no unique motivation why I desired to become a Brother instead of the Priesthood."

C: *Can you tell us how and why you chose to work in Africa?*

R: "I had a great experience with some early missionaries from Indonesia who had worked in Africa (precisely Ghana). These experiences gave me a new dimension into what mission entails. Ever since I had a great zeal to be missioned to Africa. Prior to my final profession, I was asked to make three choices of my mission countries. I chose Ghana, Zimbabwe and Zambia. And when my appointment came it was stated that I was assigned to Zambia — for my first mission experience. I was happy since this will expose me to a new environment, culture and people."

CONT...

C: *What did you think of Africa and Zambia before your arrival?*

R: “During my initial stages of formation, because I had a good exposure from old confreres who had worked for many years in Africa, it was quite easy for me to tell that Africa was a nice place to be. I noticed that Indonesia shares some common things with some parts of Africa like food, climate, culture among others. Due to this I had a positive mindset to build a beautiful missionary life in Africa (Zambia).”

C: *What was your first cultural shock?*

R: “Prior to my departure from Indonesia to Zambia, the Indonesia Provinces organized a mission orientation course which exposed the newly assigned confreres to different realities of the missionary life and how we can cope in the mission. This was so helpful to me. So far I have had no cultural shock while living in Zambia.”

C: *What then was most surprising to you?*

R: “Upon my arrival here in Zambia, one thing that took my breath away was the manner in which ‘Offertory Gifts’ are presented during the Mass. Unlike in some cultures where the gifts are separated before presentation, it is the opposite here in Zambia — the Gifts are put together (in a basket). After the gifts are accompanied by the Bemba Traditional Dancers (“Buomba”), in procession, the one with the gifts bends down on his/her knees in front of the Altar, and presents them to the priest.

C: *What do you think of the Brother Vocation in the SVD and AFRAM?*

R: “Reflecting on the Brother Vocation in the SVD I see that it is an essential dimension through which the congregation derives its strength in mission. Over the years, I see a positive collaboration among confreres who are either clerics or brothers. And for me, it is a good spirit to encourage the young ones who feel called.

Another thought on the Brother Vocation (especially in Indonesia) is the increasingly decline in

the number of finally professed brothers. After First profession confreres are sent to study in specialized areas to acquire a degree for their apostolate. But after acquiring the certificate many leave the congregation. To avoid this I think before Final profession confreres should be given their first assignments — in order to gather some experiences in the mission before their study. This will help maintain the good number of brothers in the congregation. And for AFRAM, I see an improvement in the number of confreres who are brothers.”

C: *What is your opinion: can we do more for young men to follow you in the Br. Vocation?*

R: “Yes we can. But first, the increase in clericalization (in the Church) has to be attended to. Here in Zambia, with my interaction with some youth, it is very evident that they value the clerical state compared to the Brother vocation. They seem to have lost interest at the mention of the name: ‘Bother.’ Nevertheless, with my engagement in parish apostolate, I believe some young people may develop the interest to become brothers. Through education (seminars, workshops, etc.) I believe many youth will be more enlightened in the uniqueness in each of the vocations in the Church. And through regular vocation rallies in the parishes or at the diocesan level, the brother vocation will have a beautiful future; especially here in Zambia.”

C: *What is your expectation of the forthcoming AFRAM Brothers Assembly in Ghana?*

R: “During this interaction I would first want to know more about the structure of Formation in AFRAM; and secondly, to find some possible ways of addressing the issue of low Brother vocation in AFRAM.”

Br. SELAN Ferdi, SVD

SOME HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR:

⇒ **INPUTS/WORKSHOPS**

- Enneagram and Personality
- First Aid/Health Orientations
- Genogram, Journaling, Life Project—Mission/Vision Statement
- Self-Awareness and Human Development
- Prayer—Types/Forms of Prayer
- Foundations of the Consecrated Life
- JPIC Characteristic Dimension
- SVD Constitutions and Spirituality

⇒ **VISITORS**

JULY 2022:

- Fr. Vincent Mwiya (Regional Superior, Zimbabwe)
- Mr. Joseph Mutale (Ex SVD)
- Mrs. Susana Pell (Lay Missionary, Austria)
- Fr. Darius, SVD (Treasurer General, Rome)
- Friends of the SVD (Kabwe-Zambia)

AUGUST 2022:

- Missionary Sisters Servants of the Holy Spirit (SSpS) from the Regional House in Livingstone, and Masansa-Kabwe.
- Sr. Felistas Nkhoma, LSMI (Kabwe-Zambia)

SEPTEMBER 2022:

- Fr. Hugo Calis, SVD (Prefect of CFC, Nairobi-Kenya and AFRAM Coordinator for Formation)
- Sr. Viera Klabnikova, SSpS, Kasia Tamaszewska and Magdalena Mika (Lay Missionaries)

OCTOBER 2022:

- Sr. Jane Tothova, SSpS (General Councilor, Rome)

NOVEMBER 2022:

- Fr. Oluyemi Emma Taiwo, OP

- Evangelical Counsels—Poverty, Chastity and Obedience
- African World Review
- Human Sexuality
- SVD Brother Vocation
- SSpS and SSpSAP
- SVD Provinces, Regions and Missions
- Safeguarding Children and Sexual Abuse Policies
- Some Documents of the Church's Magisterium [*PC, EC, EV, RC ...*] and SVD Documents
- The Married/Family Life
- *And Others ...*

DECEMBER 2022:

- Philosophy House (Lusaka, Zambia)

FEBRUARY 2023:

- Sr. Mercy Ani, MSHR (Missionary Sister of the Holy Rosary working in Monze, Zambia)
- Fr. Bryan Mbulubaya, SVD (Zambian missionary working in Paraguay)

MARCH 2023:

- Fr. Clement Kebeji Panubule, SVD (Congolese missionary assigned to South Africa)

APRIL 2023:

- Fr. Benoit Mungi, SMA (Formator of the SMA, Zambia)
- Archbishop Frank Nubuasah, SVD (Archbishop of Gaborone, Botswana)

MAY 2023:

- Fr. Benny Chunda (A Diocesan Priest working in Solwezi Diocese)

THE NOVITIATE YEAR IN REVIEW:

The Novitiate program for the 2022/2023 Canonical Year in the Divine Word Novitiate, Kabwe-Zambia, has helped to nurture and shape our lives spiritually, intellectually, physically and specially to live a sound community life. The novitiate has provided an atmosphere which fostered our missionary vocations in the light of the Divine Word. The Formation over these months fuelled our openness to cultural, social and religious values as well as interest in the problems of other nations.

The novitiate year began on July 14th, 2023 when six (6) novices: - BANGFO Felix and NUTSUGAH Derek (Ghana), SAIMON Oscar (Zimbabwe), KUNAKY Larios (Togo), MAKIADI Enoch and SAWANA Hirlain (Congo) were officially accepted into the community in a private ceremony (Investiture). But after few months MAKIADI Enoch left to reflect on his call. And early this year (2023), SAWANA Hirlain also left to reflect on his vocation. The current novices are four (4) preparing for their First Vows in July.

As the year gradually draws to a close, we wish to highlight some ideals learned

over the several weeks. This include: learning and appreciating other cultures, understanding the inclusive life of the Society of the Divine Word, bonding/building a healthy community life, celebrating some aspects of the Church's liturgy, identifying our enneagram and personality types, how to prepare a vision/mission statement, doing genogram and journaling, self-awareness programs, knowing the foundations of the consecrated life, what the SVD Constitutions entails and the evangelical counsels (Poverty, Chastity and Obedience), among others.

The year has also inculcated in us a sense of being eco-conscious – appreciating God's initiative in creation. The “extra-curricular” activities such as interaction with lay missionaries, talks on First Aid and food hygiene among others have exposed us to diverse fields outside the religious circles; hence, educative. Pastorally, our visits to the parishes have exposed us to the realities of the religious, missionary and priestly life. It was a faith-sharing experience with these people. Our outing programs

(Easter picnic, excursion) have also made us to be more social-oriented, giving us a new direction of creating a unified life with people. Some routine programmes such as Mass, Lauds, Meditation, office works, spiritual reading, New Testament way to community living, singing practice, sports, personal initiatives, farm work, community meetings, end-of-month socials, among others have fostered a great sense of oneness among us, with God and the world. Despite the challenges we faced as a group we are happy that the novitiate year has greatly impacted our lives to become good religious missionaries. We remain grateful to God for all the graces granted us on this journey. One major challenge experienced during the year was the saddened exit of our two brothers (Enoch and Hirlain) from the group. But we hope God will aid them in their respective vocation discernment.

In conclusion, the year has been a life changing journey — as it led us into maturing and clarifying our vocation. It has been a memorable time in the Divine Word Novitiate in Kabwe-Zambia.

NOVITIATE PICTURE GALLERY



Novices (middle) with Fr. George Clement Angmor, SVD (right) and Br. Ferdi Selan, SVD (left)



Novitiate Community visits Kazungula Bridge, led by Sr. Petroneldis, SSpS



Novitiate Community visits the SSpS Regional House in Livingstone



A visit of Archbishop Frank Nubuasah, SVD (3rd, from left)



Novitiate Community with Fr. Peter Madden, SVD at the District House in Livingstone



Novices at the Farm

UPCOMING EVENTS

SENDOFF MASS & LUNCHEON

18TH JUNE, 2023

THE SVD LAY PARTNERS - KABWE, ZAMBIA HAVE PLANNED A SENDOFF MASS & LUNCHEON IN HONOUR OF FR. GEORGE CLEMENT ANGMOR, SVD & BR. FERDI SELAN, SVD.

◆ PROFESSION OF FIRST VOWS

◆ SENDOFF

9TH JULY, 2023

⇒ THE 2022/23 BATCH OF NOVICES AT THE DIVINE WORD NOVITIATE IN DALLAS-KABWE, ZAMBIA, WILL MAKE THEIR PROFESSION OF FIRST VOWS AT THE HOLY ROSARY PARISH, MUKOBEKO IN KABWE.

⇒ IN THE EVENING OF THE SAME DAY, THE ZAMBIA MISSION HAS PLANNED A SENDOFF FOR FR. GEORGE CLEMENT ANGMOR, SVD & BR FERDI SELAN, SVD.

INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENTS

JULY

INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENTS WILL COMMENCE IN THE NOVITIATE FROM JULY, TO MAKE ROOM FOR MORE CANDIDATES TO BE ADMITTED HERE UPON COMPLETION (FROM 7 TO ABOUT 20). CONSEQUENTLY, THIS NOVITIATE WILL BE CLOSED DOWN AT THE END OF THIS CANONICAL YEAR AND WILL REOPEN IN JULY 2024.

Gratitude

"Not to us, O LORD, not to us, but to your name give glory, for the sake of your steadfast love and your faithfulness."

- PSALM 115:1

The Divine Word Novitiate Community expresses a profound gratitude to the Almighty God for His enormous blessings, graces and favours granted us throughout our discernment journey.

Our sincere appreciation to Fr. Paulus Budi Kleden, SVD (General Superior), Fr. Martin Kawana, SVD (Mission Superior) and His Council, all confreres, SSpS, SSpSAP, SVDLP, our families and friends, collaborators, benefactors, facilitators who have contributed to our formation.

To our Provincial and Regional Superiors and their administrative bodies - may the Lord grant you grace and strength in carrying out diligently your missionary assignments.

Our thanks to the Director of Novices, Fr. George Clement Angmor, SVD, and Treasurer, Br. Ferdi Selan, SVD, for your fatherly care, guidance and support.

May God bless you and increase in you His loving presence.



2022/23 BATCH OF NOVICES
SVD ZAMBIA MISSION



DO YOU FEEL CALLED

TO BECOME A MEMBER OF THE ARNOLDUS FAMILY AS:

SVD (RELIGIOUS MISSIONARY PRIEST OR BROTHER)

SSpS (RELIGIOUS MISSIONARY SISTER)

SSpSAP (CONTEMPLATIVE NUN)

FRIEND OF THE SVD (LAY PARTNER)



Contact the Vocation Office

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GLOBAL SVD Website: <https://www.svdcuria.org>

GLOBAL SSpS Website: <https://www.worldssps.org>

GLOBAL SSpSAP Website: <https://www.sspsap-motherhouse.nl>

*“May the Darkness of sin and the night of unbelief
vanish before the Light of the Word and the Spirit of grace.
And may the heart of Jesus live in the hearts of all people.
Amen.”*

-ST. ARNOLD JANSSEN