



Midwest Bits and Pieces

MIDWEST PROVINCE
Congregation of Holy Cross
OCTOBER 1, 1991

PROFESSION DAY AT HOLY CROSS NOVITIATE, SAKA, UGANDA

Saturday, June 29, 1991

The silence and tranquility of Saka were upset for a few hours on Saturday, June 29, 1991 with throngs of visitors and well wishers who came to the lovely surroundings at this Lakefront Holy Cross Novitiate.

The occasion was the first religious profession of nine young Africans from both East and West, who had completed their novitiate training and were admitted to be members of the Congregation of Holy Cross. The nine belong to three different Provinces of the Congregation within the two Districts in Africa. These are:

Indiana Province of Priests (USA) - District of East Africa; Mr. Francis Bandaganiira, Rukungire Parish, Kabale Diocese, Uganda; Mr. David Rashangaki, Nairobi, Nairobi Archdiocese, Kenya (US Citizen); Mr. Machael Nalumoso, Jordan, Masaka, Masaka Diocese, Uganda Mr. Aristarick Safari, Moshi, Moshi Diocese, Tanzania.

Eastern Province of Brothers (USA) - District of East Africa Brother Joseph Kaganda, Butiiti Parish, Fort Portal Diocese, Uganda.

Midwest Province of Brothers (USA) - District of West Africa; Brother Andrew Arhin, Tarkwa Parish, Sekondi-Takoradi Diocese, Ghana; Brother Matthew Ashun, Cape Coast Parish, Cape Coast Archdiocese, Ghana; Brother Anthony Atsu Norviewu, Lolobi Parish, Keta-Ho Diocese, Ghana; Brother Patrick Quayson, Tarkwa Parish, Sekondi-Takoradi Diocese, Ghana.

This was a great occasion to mark a significant landmark in the history of Holy Cross in Africa, where a collaborative venture was carried out by the novices as well as staff members coming together to share life together in a bid to answer some of the pressing formation needs on the continent. It has been a wonderful way to live and experience the internationality of Holy Cross in close quarters. This novitiate community, as can be seen from the list above, was composed of novices from Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania and Ghana, along with staff made up of Americans and a Ghanaian.

The celebrant for the occasion was Rev. Father George Lucas, CSC, Assistant District Superior for East Africa and Novice Director. Concelebrating with him were Rev. Frs. Robert Hesse, CSC, Thomas Fotusky, CSC, Richard Potthast, CSC, Richard Stout, CSC, Paschal Kabura, and Peter Nema.

The homilist for the day was Brother Joseph Kofi Tsiquaye, CSC, the Ghanaian staff member. Among other things, Brother Joseph pointed out that the occasion was all embracing. The Universal Church, as well as the Local Churches, along with the Congregation of Holy Cross in conjunction with the Districts of East and West Africa, all

share the joy of the day with the families who were offering their children to the Lord. The Church becomes really established when children of the soil embrace the challenges of religious vocation.

Brother also pointed out the significance of religious profession and said it consisted in these young people making a Formal, Solemn and Public declaration of their profound faith convictions and of their desire and intention to embody these convictions in their entire life; that is, by religious profession, these young people were declaring their desire and intention to undertake a new form of life.

In this modern age when people are rushing after power, money and sex as the norm of life, it was pointed out that religious profession rather than being an escape from reality was a way these young people were challenging all to take the words of Jesus Christ seriously and to believe in the Good News. The Good News that Jesus is the answer. That in Jesus we find the true source and fountain of living waters so that when people drink they will never be thirsty again, John 4:13. It was also a challenge to all to walk the narrow road which alone leads to life, (Matt 7:14.)

In addressing the novices directly he proposed for them three symbols for their lives. The first of these was the Bible, the Word of God. "Ignorance of the Scriptures is ignorance of Christ", Brother quoted the Council Fathers as found in Divine Revelation . Followers of Christ must have the Bible as a daily companion. This, along with fidelity to prayer, make for an enjoyable journey of faith.

The second symbol was that of the "Broken Pot", a symbol of the brokenness of life, the brokenness of the person himself, which points to a need for growth, humility and faith. Then also, it is a sign of the brokenness of the people to whom he is being sent. It is the sick who need a physician. And finally it stands for the brokenness of the community he has joined. That the community is made up of human beings and not saints will become apparent too quickly and this will call for patience and prayer for the renewal and conversion of all.

The third symbol was that of the traditional broom. The different strands are easily broken individually, but together, it is impossible to break them. A symbol of the statement, 'in unity is strength'. This should be a reminder of the unity of minds and hearts that should prevail among the members of the community at all times.

On the occasion of the Feast of the Apostles Peter and Paul, Brother encouraged these young people not to be fearful about the journey on which they were about to set out, but to take a cue from these ancestors in faith, with the assurance that others have already made the journey even here in Africa.

THE REPORT ON VOCATIONS IN COMMUNITIES OF TEACHING BROTHERS

The Report on Vocations in Communities of Teaching Brothers has been tabulated and published in its general form, 222 pages. Some of the salient findings from the report are given here.

Our province will receive an individual report by the end of December. Until then, here are a few ideas you may wish to reflect on and discuss with your fellow religious.

- Approximately two-thirds of the Brothers were once invited to consider entering religious life, but more than three-fourths of students have not received an invitation.
 - About three-fourths of the Brothers feel comfortable inviting young men to consider entering their provinces/congregation, only two-fifths have done so in the last year.
 - Students are more apt to have been invited to consider becoming priests than Brothers.
 - Two-thirds of the students have never considered the possibility of becoming Brothers. The possibility of a religious vocation has crossed the minds of a fifth of the students, but most have never looked into the idea.
 - The majority, men currently in initial formation, those in pre-entrance programs, as well as those who left say that their parents and their close friends supported their decision to enter religious life.
 - Should they decide to become Brothers, the majority of students anticipate that their parents will support their decision. However, only about a fourth expect support from their close friends.
 - About a third of the Brothers offer direct service as classroom teachers, and about a fifth report that they interact with young men on a daily basis.
 - The vast majority of men who are currently in initial formation programs and those seriously considering entering religious life are interested in the ministry of teaching.
- Three-fourths of the students say that if they could become Brothers and work in a ministry other than teaching, they would not be interested in entering religious life.
- A fifth of their students say either that they don't know any Brothers personally, or that they're not sure whether or not they have a personal relationship with a Brother.
 - About a third of the Brothers and the men in initial formation feel that the lifestyle of their community witnesses clearly to the option for the poor.
 - Half of the professed Brothers and less than a fifth of those in formation programs think that their personal lives witness clearly to the option for the poor.
 - The vast majority of students say that celibacy is an important obstacle to their entering religious life. However, two-fifths say that even if it were possible for Brothers to be married, they wouldn't be interested. A fourth aren't sure whether or not such a change would entice them to consider entering religious life.
 - Given a list of twelve characteristics, the four qualities most often used to describe the Brothers by their colleagues are caring, hardworking, approachable and generous.
 - Men who left their provinces/congregation before making final vows cite loneliness, an institutional lifestyle, unhappy Brothers and not working with the poor as the chief reasons they left religious life.

ARCHIVES



MIDWEST PROVINCE
 Congregation of Holy Cross
 Notre Dame, Indiana

Copies are available of the complete report. Please let us know if you are interested and we will make a circulation copy available to you.

THE EMPTY HANDS

God never leaves us alone when He asks for something. He bestows grace on us that the giving may be easy.

Who has done as much as our Lord? He said, "If any man wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow Me" (Mark 8:34). He never asks for anything that He has not first done for us.

All that Jesus is asking us to do is to deny ourselves, just empty our hands and He will fill them for us. Can one be able to receive a gift with his hands when the hands are already full? What we have to understand is that God cannot pour out riches into our hands which are already full.

Christ said, "Without Me you can do nothing" (John 15:5). All the riches one may receive, if they are not from that Divine Source, all the riches are nothing. All we have to do is to give our poor empty hands to Him and He will fill them with His riches. I was wondering what it is about these empty hands. As I reflected on this I realized that one by one He took all the things I valued most from me. I found that I am empty-handed. Every glittering toy was lost.

And I walked earth's highways grieving in my poverty, till I heard a voice unknown to me asking, "lift those empty hands to Me". I then held my hands towards heaven and He filled them with a store of His own abundant riches, till they could contain no more.

And at last I contemplated with my stupid mind and soul that God could not pour riches into hands already full. May the God of all riches always fill our hands with His own wisdom.

Brother Anthony Kobina Dadzie, CSC

FRANK ROTSAERT PUBLISHES

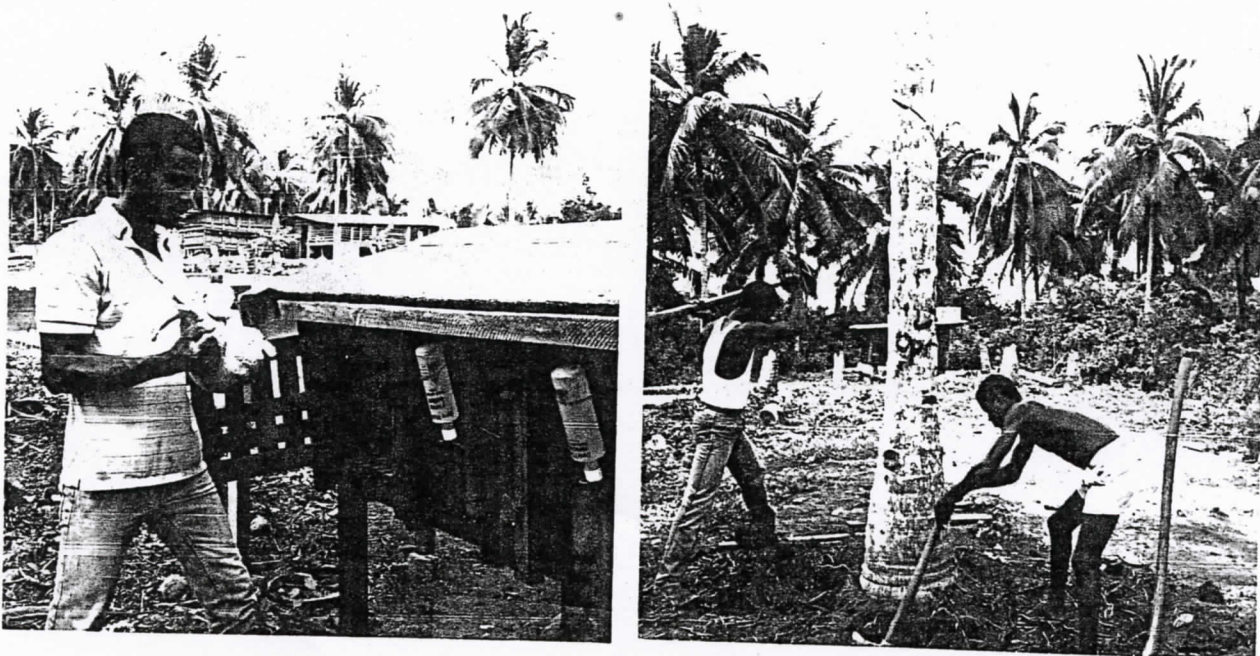
Frank Rotsaert has just had an article published in the *University of Dayton Review*, Spring, 1991, Vol. 21, No. 1. The title is "The Force of an Influence: Augustine and Eliot." Frank's



article argues for a closer link between St. Augustine and T. S. Eliot's poem, **The Four Quartets**, showing that the major ideas, the language, and the "feeling" of Eliot's poem can be seen in Augustine's **Confessions**, especially Books X and XI.

SAINT JOSEPH THE WORKER FARM, TAKORADI, GHANA

The Saint Joseph the Worker Farm is 38.5 acres of land located at Anaji, a suburb of Takoradi. It is a project of the Brothers of Holy Cross and started operating May 1, 1989. The Brothers intend that the farm will produce food for their houses and generate income for the Brothers' Ghana District, helping them to support their numerous ministries in Ghana.



Presently there is under cultivation acres of cassava, maize, palm oil, and a vegetable garden. The farm has a well equipped modern poultry section for up to a thousand birds and presently depends on poultry for its income. There is a piggery with fifteen pigs, and a good number of goats and sheep. There is the hope to expand palm oil production and add plantain, pineapple, oranges, and, possibly, fish farming.

The farm is managed by Anthony Toku Danso who is thirty years old, a native of Foso in the Central Region of Ghana, and a graduate of the Asuansi Farm Institute, Cape Coast. Mr. Danso has been farm supervisor at the Holy Child School Farm, Cape Coast. He first joined the staff of the Holy Child School Farm after completing his middle school leaving certificate in 1977. His energy and industry led Sister Michelle Pluma, the then Headmistress of the



school, to sponsor him to the Asuansi Farm Institute. Mr. Danso is quite an ambitious young man whose aim in life is firstly to attain the highest level of his professional career and secondly to serve his Church in the area he knows best, Agriculture. Brother William Gates was very pleased to recruit him to take up the post of farm manager. (Brother Sylvester Ernest Quaye, CSC)



MONSIGNOR E. J. SEWARD DIES

Rev. Monsignor E. J. Seward, a long time friend of the Brothers of Holy Cross in the Diocese of Cleveland, died recently. Among the positions he held was that of Chancellor of the Cleveland Diocese. Brother Barry Lambour recalls that when he was principal at St. Edward's, the province proposed enlarging the Brothers' Residence. Monsignor Seward told him that when the contractor presented the bill that he should simply give Monsignor a call and the check would be in the mail right away. Brother says that he was a gracious, warm and helpful man. In retirement Monsignor lived at Saint John's (Akron) very close to Hoban. Sometimes he filled in for the Pastor at Annunciation, and so Brother had an opportunity to chat with him from time to time. He suffered a stroke six months ago and remained bedridden until his death. Brother Barry asks the prayers of the Community for this great friend of Holy Cross and the Brothers.