

MIDWEST PROVINCE NEWS ITEMS

January 1997

The District of West Africa held its triennial chapter December 17-25 at the District Center, Brafu Yaw, Ghana. Representing the provincial administration were **Br. Donald Gibbs**, assistant provincial, and **Br. Richard Gilman**, provincial councilor. **Br. Raymond Papenfuss**, mission promoter for Ghana, was also in attendance. He focused on videotaping material useful for promotion and development purposes.

At the chapter **Br. Michael Amakyi** was elected to a first term as district superior. He replaces **Br. Joseph Annan**, who had completed three three-year terms. Elected to the council and appointed assistant district superior is **Br. Daniel Dardoe**. Appointed council members are **Fr. Bob Gilmour**, secretary, and **Br. Paul Mensah**, steward.

Among decisions taken at the chapter:

- a reaffirmation of recruitment as the top priority of the district;
- a recommendation to continue and to build upon present collaboration with East Africa;
- a recommendation to put on hold further discussions on Holy Cross seminarians in Ghana;
- a nine-year plan for the Skills Project that will include moving its site from Ketan to St. Joseph the Worker farm in Takoradi, the construction of three small buildings to house the Project, the possibility of charging minimal fees, and perhaps introducing a computer training program;
- a recommendation that because the Skills Project has such potential for a variety of apostolic involvements, there be a regular assessment of the Project's progress, and both short- and long-term plans be developed for the optimum use of the center.
- a board of advisors should be formed to assist the development of the farm;
- and a board should be formed relative to development on the local level in Ghana to help development efforts within the country.

Province members are asked to remember in their prayers the following recently deceased relatives: **Daniel LaLonde**, brother of **Br. Ronald LaLonde** of Gabriel Richard High School in Detroit; the father of **Br. Robert Berthiaume** of St. Edward High School, Lakewood; and the mother of **Br. James Kumba** of the Holy Cross Brothers Center.

An article appeared on December 26 in the *Sarasota Herald Tribune* headed "Mercy House Fills Big Need for Displaced." It recounted the origin and operation of the program sponsored by the Diocese of Venice in Florida and administered and operated by **Br. Peter Nault**, parish administrator at the Cathedral of the Epiphany, and **Br. Raymond Kelly**, resident manager of Mercy House.

Since opening in June of 1996, Mercy House has provided temporary housing for twelve families as a work of Epiphany Cathedral Outreach Ministries. The interdenominational facility offers emergency housing for individuals and families while other arrangements are being made. Br. Peter explained, "We try to emphasize that this place is not primarily intended for transients. It's intended for residents of the greater Venice area who are experiencing difficulty." There is no charge to the residents while at Mercy House. Br. Raymond adds, "Residents know when they

come in they can't live here permanently. They know they have to go out and find work." Those served thus far have been grateful for having had the opportunity while resident at Mercy House to devote full time to searching for a job and alternate housing.

The 1997 Provincial Chapter Steering Committee met at the provincial house early in December and will meet there again on Saturday, January 11. Under the co-chairmanship of **Br. Philip Smith** and **Br. Raymond Papenfuss**, the group continues to refine proposals for the conduct of *regional meetings* in preparation for the chapter, the structure of *committees*, and the *personnel* to be invited to assist the chapter, such as the keynote speaker and music coordinator.

A letter from **Br. William Geenen** formally convoking the chapter was issued in December, and responses from province members regarding their intent to participate in the chapter are due by *January 15* at the office of **Br. John May**.

Following the January 11 meeting of the Steering Committee the province members will be contacted regarding regional meetings.

At the Montreal council of the congregation in early November **Br. William Geenen** proposed to the American provincials the establishment of a *Health Care and Retirement Resource Council*. The purpose of such a council would be "to promote the congregational goal of collaboration between societies and among provinces, to seek the greatest possible economy in our implementation of health care and retirement policies, and to exhibit an openness to the concept of restructuring and its potential consequences within the congregation."

The *Council* is intended to supersede the former *Dujarie House Board*. Through advising provincials "on matters related to health care and retirement of the membership," and by suggesting "guidelines applicable to all skilled and assisted care and retirement programs in our provinces in the United States," the Council's objective would be "to continue to provide quality, affordable faith-centered health care and retirement for Holy Cross religious...."

The proposal was approved by the provincials and will be implemented over the next several months. **Br. Thomas Shaughnessy**, director of Dujarie House, will serve as convener and organizer of the initial Council, which will consist of one appointed member from each province in the U.S.

Construction of the Assisted Living Center continues. Severe winter weather has held back the contractors only slightly, and the concrete block walls are approximately halfway up. It is hoped that the building can be roofed before the heaviest cold spells and snow arrive.

Attached to this issue of *Midwest Province News Items* are two other documents. First, a *Statement of Revenue and Expenses 1995-1996* accompanied by an explanatory memo from **Br. William Geenen**; and secondly, the outstanding *homily* given by **Br. Joseph McTaggart** at the funeral of **Br. Richard Kearney**.

You are reminded to send along information you wish shared about your life and ministry to **Br. Philip Armstrong** or **Br. Donald Gibbs** at P.O. Box 460 for inclusion in future issues of the *News Items*.

HOLY CROSS TODAY - GHANA

“Communicating the life and mission of men and women of Holy Cross
in the District of West Africa.”

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In this issue

Bro. Michael Amakyi, CSC --
New District SuperiorP 1

New District CouncilP 1

1996 District Chapter P 1

District's Mission StatementP 1

Chapter Decision on Formation and RecruitmentP 2

Dedication of St. Joseph Chapel..P 2

Institute for Continuing FormationP 3

Holy Cross SistersP 3

Bits and PiecesP 4

Ghana Made HistoryP 4

Editor's Note..P 4

Brother Michael Amakyi, C.S.C. Elected New District Superior

During the 1996 District Chapter, Brother Michael Amakyi, CSC, was elected for first term as the new District Superior for the District of West Africa of the Congregation of Holy Cross. He is the sixth District Superior since the District's establishment in 1967. Brother Michael succeeds Brother Joseph Annan, CSC, who had been District Superior for nine years.

Brother Michael Amakyi joined Holy Cross in September of 1981. He entered the novitiate in 1983 and professed his first vows in July 1984. After his novitiate he did his undergraduate work at the University of Cape Coast in Ghana, graduating in 1989. After his graduation, he has been teaching at St. Augustine's College in Cape Coast.

He did a nine month renewal program at Tiberias, Israel, in preparation for his final vows. In December of 1990, he made his final vows in Holy Cross.

He was elected to the District Council in December 1993 and was assigned to vocation and recruitment work, and a council member in charge of formation.

NEW DISTRICT COUNCIL

Brother Michael Amakyi has his team: Brother Daniel Dardoe, CSC, Assistant District Superior, and Council member in charge of personnel, Reverend Father Robert Gilmour, CSC, District Council Secretary, and Council member in charge of formation, and Brother Paul Mensah, CSC, District Steward, and Council member in charge of finances.

1996 DISTRICT CHAPTER

The 1996 District Chapter was held from December 17th to December 24th, 1996, at Holy Cross District Center at Brafoyaw, Cape Coast. The theme for the Chapter was *“A Time To Let Go; A Time To Embrace New Life.”* All the fourteen members of the District were present. Brother Patrick Sopher, CSC, Assistant Superior General and Vicar, was the Moderator. Also present were Brother Donald Gibbs, CSC, Assistant Provincial and Brother Richard Gilman, CSC, Provincial Councilor. Brother Raymond Papenfuss, CSC, Ghana Mission Promoter attended the Chapter. Holy Cross Sisters in Ghana were represented by Sr. Madeline Therese and Sr. Esther Entsiwah. Also present was Brother Joseph Kaganda, CSC, a member of the East Africa District Council, and Brother Thomas Dillman, CSC, who has been in Ghana since August 1996 from Liberia.

© Brother Daniel Dardoe was elected to attend the Provincial Chapter in the States in June 1997.

In its deliberations, the members of the District adopted as their Mission Statement:

“We the Religious of Holy Cross in the District of West Africa, accept the challenge to continue to make God known, to help make West Africa a more humane place to live.

“Our mission, expressed in a variety of ways, is Christ's. We pray and work as community. We live simply to counter the materialism so prevalent in our society, and we accept new ministries after careful consideration of the needs of the Church and our own human and material resources.

Holy Cross Today - Ghana

"The establishment of the three societies of Holy Cross in West Africa, and full collaboration with Holy Cross religious in East Africa and elsewhere are goals for which we strive. In doing so, we realize the charism of our founder, Father Moreau, and make the heritage of our Congregation an integral part of our lives.

"Recruitment, formation, and the development of our members remain our top priorities. We strive ever more diligently for self sufficiency both in personnel and financial resources.

"We applaud the work of Holy Cross, past and present, and with the help of the Spirit, hope to continue our mission, which is Christ. We are a small community; nevertheless, we are convinced we have gifts that are needed, one of which is lives that gives evidence of the virtue of hope."

1996 Chapter decision on **RECRUITMENT AND FORMATION**

Recruitment: - Statement

1. We wish to affirm the commitment of the District in putting recruitment at the top of our priority list. This means for us that whatever manpower and financial resources are needed to ensure recruitment, receive our utmost attention and be made available by the District.

Candidacy Program

Postulancy

1. We recommend that we assume responsibility for those young men interested in Holy Cross who do not have all their basic academic requirements by bringing them into a single house and setting up the necessary study environment and classes for them to complete their basic requirements.

Pre-Novitiate

1. This is a program designed for young men who have satisfied their basic requirements. The program is to prepare these young men for the next phase in formation, the novitiate.
2. We recommend that the duration of this program be eighteen (18) months.

Novitiate Program

1. The District is satisfied with the present Novitiate arrangement.
2. We recommend that the District Superior delegate visit our novices and upon return District give a report on the novices and the no program to the District and to the Provincial Council.
3. We recommend that the Joint Novitiate Comm re-activated as soon as possible.

Post-Novitiate Program

1. We recommend that the newly professed bro brought together in a single location u specified director to follow a well prepared p lasting not less than a year.
2. We recommend that the program followed temporary professed be to sent to the Provin his Council by the end of March 1997.
3. We wish to state that the District is ready and to collaborate with the District of East Africa Novitiate formation. We recommend that the Superior and his Council, together w Formation Team, begin to explore the possi such collaboration within the next six months.

Holy Cross Seminararians

1. We recommend that the District put on hol discussion on Holy Cross Seminararians in Gha

DEDICATION OF ST. JOSEPH CH

As part of the Chapter plan, Archbishop Tur Metropolitan Archbishop of Cape Coast, dedic St. Joseph Chapel at the Holy Cross Center at B Cape Coast, on December 19th, 1996. In his Archbishop Turkson advised the members a theme of the Chapter and prayed for the succ Chapter.

The construction of the Chapel was made through the generosity of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Ellen M Canizaro of Florida, U.S.A. Our since and appreciation go to them. Our thanks al Brother Rex Hennel, CSC, for his connection

efactors. We also thank Brother Raymond Papenfuss, C, for his untiring effort to get us the funds to build edifice for the spiritual needs of the Holy Cross community and for those who come to the Institute for Continuing Formation program for their formation.

**INSTITUTE FOR CONTINUING FORMATION -
A SACRED SPACE FOR GROWING**
(By Bro. Nee Wayoe, CSC)

For years religious formation personnel and superiors have been contemplating ways to create a conducive atmosphere to enhance the spiritual and human growth of members of their religious institutes. Holy Cross was the first to think along similar lines and had taken the lead in building the Holy Cross Continuing Formation Center. It therefore came as no surprise when in January, 1992, Holy Cross offered the Major Superiors' Conferences of Ghana a place at the Holy Cross Continuing Formation Center. At this Center, the Institute for Continuing Formation was created to provide the needed space and time for religious interested in a) deepening their commitment to the Lord and His Kingdom; b) growing in understanding and appreciation of themselves and of others; and c) discerning their call to a fruitful ministry.

This Institute operates under the auspices of the Conferences of Major Superiors of Religious Men and Women in Ghana and offer a variety of programs for religious. Its primary aim is to provide continuing spiritual and human formation to enrich temporary professed religious in their growth.

The program, which spans a period of nine months is international in nature and has drawn participants from Ghana, Nigeria, Holland, South Africa, Cameroon, Sierra Leone and Uganda. The international makeup of the group offers each person the opportunity to learn to understand and appreciate one's own culture and values as well as that of others. This makes it possible to share our lives and embrace the challenge to live in harmony with one another as the gospel teaches. The truth that the Church exists among and for all peoples becomes evident.

Participants and staff come from different religious congregations. The inter-congregational aspect adds a special dimension to the programs. Participants, through interaction and dialogue, share with one another the charisms of their congregations. They learn through lived experiences the reality that the church is endowed with many gifts, but no one person or group possesses it all.

Each person, then is called to share his or her gifts in order that we may truly experience the joy of being Church.

Participants follow a nine-month intensive program designed to a) foster a profound faith experience through prayer and study; b) grow in a deeper understanding and love of oneself and others; and c) become more deeply rooted in the Gospel values. These objectives are achieved through academic input, lived experiences and guided reflection within a community setting.

Participating religious and staff are constantly challenged by the program to go through a process of self-reflection that could lead to one's spiritual and human growth.

Besides the nine-month program, the Institute also organizes summer programs for Senior Religious, Young Religious and Religious in their mid years.

The Holy Cross Continuing Formation Center on its own sponsors Lay Leadership Programs for people in various parishes and accounting workshops for priests and religious in Ghana, also during the summer.

**SISTERS OF THE HOLY CROSS
NEWS BRIEFS**
(By Sr. Madeline Therese, CSC)

Sister Madeline Therese continues to prepare for the first "Catechists' School" in the Diocese of Sekondi-Takoradi. Hoping to open in 1997, progress is being made to set up the Administrative Office, a Library for the Catechists, and to design an adequate spiritual and theological program. Thirty Catechists will be accepted for the first 8-month program, representing all the Parishes. The location will be at St. Kizito's Retreat and Pastoral Center in Apowa, in the Western Region of Ghana. A good group of Diocesan priests and Catechists form the "Planning Committee," and a strong commitment to this program is evident. A dream is coming to realization and a response is being made to the mandate of the recent African Synod to prepare adequately our catechists for their service in the Church. They are the "backbone" of the Church in Africa!

In January, Sister Madeline Therese, CSC, will travel to Brazil to participate in the Congregational International Assembly to be held in Sao Paulo. At this time our mission there will be celebrating its Golden Jubilee of foundation.

Sister Esther Entsiwah, CSC, left Ghana for Tiberias, Israel, on December 31, 1996, to take part in the final three-month program at Mater Ecclesiae Center. From there she will go to St. Mary's, Notre Dame, Indiana to participate in the Congregational Justice Commission meeting. She will return to Ghana at the end of April, 1997.

BITS AND PIECES

BLOOD DONATION AT ST. JOHN'S

October 29, 1996, was blood Donation Day at St. John's Secondary, School, Sekondi. Twice a year, the Blood Clinic from Effia Nkwanta Hospital comes to St. John's for blood donations from the students. This was organized by Brother Richard Johnson, CSC.

This was the fourth year Bro. Richard Johnson has taken charge of the blood donation program. For him, it involves going to each classroom to solicit names for the donation program, as well as answer any questions students may have concerning the program. He sees to it that the operation runs smoothly on that day.

75 donors down from 89 from last time, were able to donate. Each student this time, received 2 bic pens, 2 exercise booklets, and 2 cans of milk and a large container bag for the items as well as bread and a glass of cocoa drink. (By Bro. Richard Johnson, CSC)

VOCATION WEEKEND

Seventeen students from all three forms at St. John's gathered at St. Joseph Hall on the 26th of October for more insight concerning the Brother of Holy Cross. Bro. Daniel Dardoe, CSC, gave a talk about the Brothers vocation. This was followed by a prayer session led by Bro. William Gates, CSC.

The entire Holy Cross Community at St. John's gathered in the recreation area to meet the participants -- answering their questions, giving them words of encouragement, and simple moment of socializing. They enjoyed a good meal prepared by Mr. Nyame, the cook. (Reports Br. William Gates, CSC)

ACCOUNTING WORKSHOP FOR PRIESTS AND RELIGIOUS

Brother Paul Mensah, CSC, organized and facilitated accounting and financial management workshop for priests and religious in Ghana from November 18 - 21,

1996, at the Pastoral Center, Sunyani. Thirty attended.

Another national workshop on accounting and management is scheduled for August 1997.

GHANA MADE HISTORY

Ghanaians made history on December 7, 1996. Presidential and Parliamentary elections were held through out the country. The incumbent president Jerry Rawlings of the New Patriotic Party party as well as the opposition parties marked the end of the Rawlings era with their respective campaigns. President Rawlings was re-elected to a second and last four year term to the office of the President of the National Democratic Congress party, gaining majority in Parliament.

The whole election and its aftermath were a triumph for Ghana. The opposition Presidential candidates conceded defeat and congratulated the president elect.

An illustrious son of Ghana, Mr. Kofi Annan, elected Secretary General of the United Nations, completes another five year term for the Committee on Africa's leadership role at the United Nations.

Editor's Note:

Brother Joseph Annan, C.S.C, our recent past District Superior and his Council express their grateful appreciation to the entire membership of the Holy Cross Province, for their support during their tenure.

We welcome Brother Michael Amakyi, C.S.C. as our new District Superior and his Council as they serve the Holy Cross in the District of West Africa. We praise their support and commitment. We continue to ask for their support which the Province had been giving. The District and continues to give. Please pray for the members of the new administration as they journey with the Lord through this service in Holy Cross.

Holy Cross Today - Ghana is published by the District of the Midwest Province, to provide information on the activities of women of Holy Cross working in West Africa to our members, friends and benefactors who prayerfully support our ministries. Holy Cross Today - Ghana is published quarterly during the year.

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