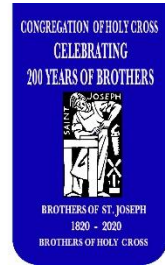


# MIDWEST – MIDWEEK

Brothers of Holy Cross – Midwest Province - P.O. Box 460 – Notre Dame, Indiana 46556-0460



June 10, 2020

*Brother Vincent Gross, CSC*  
*May 18, 1938 - May 12, 2020*



**Bro. Vincent**

*I was a very young professed Brother when Bro Vincent Gross arrived at St. John's School, Sekondi, the summer of 1968. This was Bro Vincent's second coming to West Africa, having spent two years at St. Patrick's High School, Monrovia, Liberia, 1963 - 1965.*

*Bro Vincent had come to take care of the maintenance needs of the School. "Uncle Vince" was young and energetic like his other confreres. He no sooner arrived than he set up his carpentry shop in the basement of the school assembly hall. The shop was a multi-purpose center. Bro Vincent not only repaired broken down desk tops, but also repaired and opened locked up chop boxes for careless students who had misplaced their keys.*

*While I was on the novitiate staff in Uganda in 1990, I overheard the novices talking about the Brothers. A Ghanaian novice said: "Don't joke with the Holy Cross Brothers. They may look simple, but they are all geniuses." Uncle Vince fits that description perfectly. He was tall, slim, with flaming red hair; unassuming, yet very hardworking and committed. What could Bro Vincent not do? He was an avid swimmer and later took up scuba diving, and he had an oxygen tank with a head mask and would go down to the ocean floor to fish. I never went swimming with him, but in my younger days I learned to play card games with him. He knew a thousand and one games, including bridge, and cribbage. Uncle was an*

avid chess player, loved backgammon and was good at whatever he put his mind to.

Uncle was also into car maintenance. Go to St. John's and you will see a pit in the garage at the Brothers' House. This was so that he could easily work underneath the vehicles and change the oil. Come to the District Centre at Brafoyaw, he left his trade mark here. For the years he was in active service, except for serious attention, he did all the servicing of our vehicles at home. Whenever or wherever you saw Uncle, if he was not sitting on the small tractor mowing the lawn, he would be underneath, either scraping the debris or changing a worn out blade or changing a flat tire. Uncle always made sure the campus is well kept. He would be trimming trees as well as removing tree stumps so they would not stop his blades when he went over them.

To say Uncle was a genius would be an understatement. I just have fond memories of Uncle walking around the District Centre. Conspicuous symbols were his straw hat with the strings tied under his chin, along with his ever present mysterious bucket. One never knew where uncle was going - to fetch water or to collect fruits from the orchard. It was left to your imagination as to what he was up to. He could have been going to change a bulb or fix a leaking faucet or check a water meter; he only needed his bucket, which had everything, and served as his tool box. He was ever ready to do what was demanded at the drop of a hat.

Did you know that Uncle Vince was a snake charmer? Whenever you saw students making lots of noise and throwing stones, you can guess they have seen a snake. Bro Vincent would come with his stick and ask: "Where is it?" As soon as he saw the snake he would take his shepherd-like staff with a hook at the end and place it on the neck of the snake. He would then move in to pick up the snake at the base of the neck. Guess what? All the students would scatter. Then he

would bring the creature to the biology lab and cage it as a specimen.

Those of us close to him, called him Uncle Vince. The people whose services he engaged, the Electricians, the plumbers, the Auto Mechanics etc. knew him as "Kweku." Uncle Vince, was born on Wednesday, May 18, 1938. The traders and market women with whom he interacted also had fun with him and were always teasing him for failing to send his wife, but coming to the market himself and bargaining with them. Kweku, Uncle Vince was a man of the people! He cared for and loved people. There was nothing too great for Kweku to do for people.

Uncle Vince as I have known him over the past 50 years was always a man of prayer and never joked with his prayer schedule. Even when communal prayer was in private, Uncle would make sure he was in the chapel praying. He always took joy in his private devotions. He was forever making sure that the Pyx was ready for the Holy Hour of Adoration in the house chapel. It was a joy seeing Uncle take responsibility to ensure that Brother Tom received his daily Eucharistic nourishment. During the days of monthly recollection at the Franciscan Valley of Prayer and Silence, he would never miss an opportunity to be there

It was a privilege for me to have known Uncle for the past 52 years. We traveled together across the continent here in Africa. I have traveled with him in the USA. Just as he came to know my family here in Ghana, on one of my visits to the States, we met at Columba Hall and when he needed a ride to his home town Conklin, Michigan, I offered to drive him home. It was for the wedding of his nephew. I became part of the wedding party. At the reception, Vince and I sat at the same table with the father of the bride. The man was so besides himself to see a black person at the wedding and

wanted to know how I was related to the situation. Uncle just laughed and said: "Oh, he is my Brother!"

It was wonderful to have been present for the celebration of Uncle's fortieth anniversary of profession (1999) and also to witness the celebration of his sixtieth anniversary of profession (2019). Of these sixty-one years as a Holy Cross Brother, Bro Vincent spent almost fifty-five years in West Africa. He served for many years as a superior at St. John's, where he spent more than 20 years. He was also the community superior in his 30 years at the District Centre, Brafoyaw. No wonder Kweku made Ghana his home and chose to be planted here. I am grateful to God for the opportunity of knowing Uncle.

Over the years, I have been Uncle's barber. I cut his hair when it was flaming fire red; and I watched it turn a light tone of red. After I moved to Sunyani I continued to do the same. The last time I was with him at Brafoyaw was the first week of March. A couple of times after that he would call me. "Hey, BJ, how are you? When are you coming down? When you come remember to bring your hair clippers! The hair is getting too long!" Little did I know Uncle was saying good bye! "I miss you come back soon!"  
Fare thee well, Bro Vincent! Uncle, Rest in Peace! Kweku, Ayekoo!

I end with this poem by Bro Bernie Klim, CSC, a Zen Master. He also worked in maintenance.

*No resting place to go!*

*Heavy I am! This way I've been before,  
the flashing of sticks leaping in air,  
Curving left and right not in sight.*

*Oh thousand things this is not  
No nail will hold nor paint will stick.*

*Like building on a lake forever sinking,  
the job I did no trace of it.  
The bee went east left no trail,  
the bug I picked was flat and dry,  
in this was life and still about.*

*Extended arms, I grasp nothing there  
still within I leap.*

*I can neither hold nor let go  
I want to shout, but no one will hear.*

THIS IS PRESENTED ON BEHALF OF THE HOLY CROSS FAMILY IN GHANA IN  
RECOGNITION OF THE GREAT CONTRIBUTION TO THE GROWTH OF HOLY CROSS IN  
WEST AFRICA BY BROTHER VINCENT ANTHONY GROSS, CSC.



**Brother Joseph Tsiquaye**

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**ADDRESS OF BRO. JOHN AFFUM AT UNCLE'S VIGIL SERVICE**

Ordinarily, I am strong or I thought I was strong, until my father died. He was 91 years old. I did not shed tears at the beginning. I was trying to be a man, to follow the rules for men in my culture. Traditionally, "Men do not cry." So, I was doing well, not crying till I went to the mortuary. I could not hold back my tears. I cried....my sisters laughed at me!

Then, Brother Vincent died and I found myself in the same situation ... I was trying to be strong, to have a clean face and look into the details for a befitting burial on one of my visits with Ken Goode to check on Uncle at the mortuary, I was betrayed once again by my tears. I could not keep it when I came to my room. I cried like a child who has lost his parent at a densely populated market.

Such human experience reminds me of one thing: *“the glory of God is man fully alive.”* Our tears are symbolic. They are an efficacious sign of life in us. Tears means life.

I stand before you tonight not to propound the theology on tears, but I realize this is the first time we have gathered since the passing of Brother Vincent Gross. And this is also the first time we have something like this on our hands. You clearly know what has brought us together at this time of the night. As much as you do not need to be reminded, I beg you to permit me to put this spiritual exercise – the Vigil Service, into perspective.

We are burying our first Holy Cross Brother on the soil of Ghana. As much as this is sad, this is also symbolic. In that respect, there is a historical significance to this death. It provides us with a visible, concrete link with our past, with our Holy Cross ancestors, who brought the charism and spirituality of the Congregation of Holy Cross to Ghana to enrich the life of the Church. The mood of any historical significance, normally, should be characterized by joy and excitement. Unfortunately, this particular event evokes feelings of deep sadness and sorrow.

However, as Christians, as people of faith, as men with hope to bring, and the Cross being our only hope, we also feel called to give thanks to God. After all, are we not admonished to in all circumstances give thanks to God? (1 Thess. 5:18).

Many years ago, Brother Vincent made his intention clear to the superiors of the Province and the District, his desire to stay in Ghana until his death. It is now time for us to honor his wish, to be buried in his new, permanent African home of Ghana.

So with the mortal remains of Brother Vincent interred here in Ghana, Holy Cross has now taken deep roots, ever more than before in Ghana. Holy Cross is here to stay and to persevere in its apostolate. Like the grain that falls on the ground, dies and yields a rich harvest, so the demise of Brother Vincent and his interment in the soil of Ghana symbolically testifies to the growth and abundance of life already

manifest in the members of the District and to the growth and abundance of life that is even yet to flourish.

Yes, we mourn the departure of our dear Brother, our dear Uncle, but we also celebrate the life he shared with us. Yes, it is a great loss, but all is not lost, because Uncle is not finished. We express our faith in the resurrected Christ with our Brother Vincent – he is here with us! Uncle, we know you are here with us! You can hear us! We thank you for your life well lived here in Ghana! Your contribution to the establishment of the District and to the growth of the mission is very much appreciated.

Uncle chose to be a Brother; he did not yield to it. He chose to come to Ghana, to be a missionary, he chose us as his family – that is why our senior Brothers recognized him with the family title UNCLE

He was a man of prayerful quietude; it is obvious that there was a spirit of St. Joseph the worker in him. He was a man of community and service. We need such qualities to build our communities. We have so much to learn from Uncle - he did not shirk work. He neither worked for applause nor craved any recognition. His was a quiet life, quiet but forceful in the lives of people.

Uncle, you have passed the mark; your crown awaits you. I wish I had half of your many virtues.

And so, on our part, we keep vigil with Uncle Vince tonight, to pray for him to rest in the bosom of Abraham.

Brothers and Sisters, I wish you my deepest condolence. Let us continue to pray and hope that one day, we will praise the name of the Lord with Uncle.

Uncle, Rest in Peace! Rest in Perfect Peace.



**Brother John Affum**



**Brother Stephen Arthur constructed the beautiful coffin in which Uncle (Vincent) was laided to rest.**

**Because of the virus only a select few were allowed at a time for viewing in Brother André Chapel.**



**The Bishop was present for Brother Vincent's funeral.**

## BRO VINCENT ANTHONY GROSS CSC LAID TO REST

The mortal remains of Bro Vincent were received into St. Brother André Chapel at Brafoyaw on Friday, June 12, 2020, at 7:00 PM by Rev George Bonah and the Holy Cross Family in Ghana. The Vigil Service, due to Protocols for COVID-19, meant only Holy Cross Family in Ghana could attend.



**Portrait at the Entrance  
of Andre Chapel**



**Chapel ready to receive the  
Casket**



**Bro. Tom waiting for the  
Vigil Service**

The Service consisted of the recitation of the Holy Rosary; and a time of sharing of memories of Uncle Vince by Brothers. This was followed by the Office of the Dead. It was concluded with an address of Bro John Badu Affum, the District Superior, on this special occasion.



**Fr George receiving the  
Casket into the Chapel**



**The Beginning of the Vigil Service**



**Bro. John, District  
Superior, giving his  
Address**

**The Vigil continued with groups of religious assigned to wake with Uncle till morning.**

*Saturday, June 13, 2020*

The burial Mass, due to COVID-19 protocols, was a strictly private ceremony, with no more than 30 persons in the chapel. However, the doors of the chapel were opened to allow members of the public for viewing, especially, the Alumni of St. John's School, "the Old Saints," who are forever indebted to Bro Vincent for his years of service while they were students. The filing past period lasted from 07:00 AM till 09:00 AM.

At 08:30 AM, the Global Executives of the Old Saints, along with the Headmaster of St. John's, met with the District Council in front of the St. Brother André Chapel to make a presentation to the Congregation on behalf of Bro. Vincent. They wanted to cover the cost of the casket, the grave, the headstone as well as a lasting memorial at St. John's School in honor of Bro. Vincent.

Shortly after 09:00 AM, the Holy Cross Family gathered for Morning Prayer: Office of the Dead. The non-invited members had to move out of the chapel after the Office. They would later join in the procession to Our Lady of Sorrows' Cemetery. The Archbishop and his team did their filing past after which the casket was closed for the beginning of the Mass.

The concelebrants were: Most Rev. Charles Palmer Buckle, Metropolitan Archbishop of Cape Coast; Most Rev. Matthias Nketsiah, Emeritus Archbishop of Cape Coast; Rev. Fr. Bonaventure Annan, VG of the Archdiocese of Cape Coast; Rev. Fr. Donald Hinfey, SJ; Msgr. Hilary Senoo, Ho Diocese; Rev. Fr. Sammy Asantey and Rev. Fr. George Bonah.

Bro. Nicholas Arthur, a General Assistant, the District Superior and his Council along with three Holy Cross Sisters, Bro. Tom Dillman, Bro. Francis Boylan and local house directors were all present in the chapel. Our next door neighbors, the Sisters of Our Lady of Apostles, were represented by their Vicar Provincial, Sr. Theresa Quansah, OLA. The Old Saints were represented by two senior members.

The presider for the Mass was His Grace, Archbishop Charles Palmer Buckle; and the homily was delivered by His Grace, Most Rev Matthias Nketsiah, Archbishop Emeritus. At the conclusion of the liturgy, Bro Joseph Tsiquaye delivered the eulogy prior to the final commendation.



**Bros. Francis Boylan and Francisco for 1st Reading**



**Fr. Don to the Left and Fr. George reading the Gospel**



**Archbishop Nketsiah's Homily**

After the final commendation, a number of the Brothers hoisted the casket onto their shoulders as a sign of their final respect for our dear Brother, Uncle Vince. The rest of the community and some well-wishers joined in the final procession to the cemetery.



**Final Commendation**



**Uncle Vince's final trip**

### *Final Committal:*

Archbishop Charles Palmer Buckle presided, once again, over the final committal ritual. After the laying of wreaths, Bro. Joseph Annan offered words of thanks and appreciation to all those who joined us in saying a fitting farewell to our beloved Bro. Vincent.

On Sunday, June 14, 2020, in the St. Bro. André Chapel, Rev. Edmund Agorhom, SJ, presided over a Thanksgiving Mass for Brother Vincent. This marked the end of the Celebration of Life for our Beloved Brother.

**Brother Joseph Tsiquaye**

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## This Week

Information on individual early Brothers of St. Joseph for posting week by week in 2020.

**June 6 – 13** In this week Brother Louis Galmard was born in 1817. He was one of the first missionaries to Algeria in 1840.

**June 14 – 20** On June 20, 1832, Brother Andre Mottais reported details of the police raid on the Grand St. Joseph, the Brothers' motherhouse in Ruille, France.

## Mass at Columba Hall

The liturgy begins again at Columba Hall. It might be called the Corvid-19 Rite.



**Bottle of hand sanitizer on  
table**

**Celebrant wearing a mask**

## Email from Brother John Benesh

There are only two of us in this residence: Father Elmer Caro, CSC and I.

Since the middle of March we have had morning Mass in this fourth floor chapel four times a week: Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday.

On Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays we walk over to nearby Casa San José. There are three CSC priests there and we all participate in a Mass at 4:00 p.m. The men there take videos of each of these Masses and each day these are put on the parish Facebook site for people who are in their homes for most of the day.

Our stay-at-home time in Peru is scheduled to end on June 30. More and more businesses are opening up in restricted ways and after June 30 there is supposed to be a slow return back to normal.



## Jubilarians for Anniversary Year 2020

Keep all our jubilarians in your prayers throughout the year. They will be looking forward to a celebration in 2021 with the jubilarians of that year after Covid-19 is under control.

### Eighty Years



Br. Wilbert  
Leveling

### Seventy Years



Br. John James  
Benesh



Br. Ronald Louis  
Christenson

### Sixty Years



Br. George Albert  
Klawitter



Br. Donald Emil  
Kuchenmeister



Br. James Peter  
Newberry



Br. Thomas  
Frederick Moser



Br. Charles  
Terrence Smith



Br. Larry Joseph  
Unfried

Midwest Holy Cross Associates

## ***Holy CrossRoads***

### **Writings for the Journey**

**#11**

#### **Praying our Experiences**

Dear Associates and Friends,

When we wake up from our sleep each morning, it's like a new beginning. Somehow in our dreams the situations from yesterday have been dealt with. We rise with a clean slate or receive a new perspective on old problems. We rise today to new possibilities. This is a time to begin our day with prayer and not succumb to the temptation to want to hear immediately the latest news with the latest catastrophes. In our morning prayer we have the opportunity to connect with the Christ who wants His love to be the motivating factor for everything that the day could be for us.

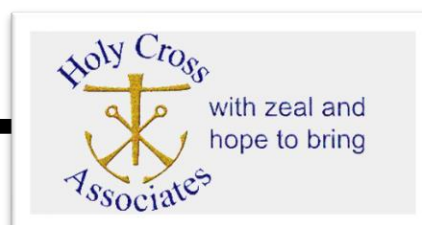
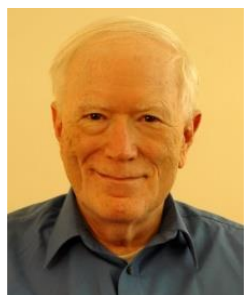
When we are backed up by His love, we are given the freedom to be our true selves. We CAN be free from our compulsions, prejudices and all of those things that we might be dreading. Instead we have the option to pray about our past and future experiences in THIS present moment. We can do this if maybe the only thing that comes to mind is the word, "help!" In our prayer we can begin to see with God's eyes. We move from trying to control every outcome to put our response this day gradually into God's hands. Praying our experiences means being open to God's promptings and our willingness to being led in the words we say and actions we take.

**O loving God, help me put my daily experiences into your hands.**

Brother Carl Sternberg, CSC

May 29, 2020

<http://holycrossassociates.org/>





## Reflection

Reflection(s) sent in by  
Brother Thomas Maddix, C.S.C.:



*Let us be grateful to people who make us happy,  
They are the charming gardeners who make our souls blossom.*  
- Marcel Proust



This reflection is courtesy of Mission, Ethics and Spirituality Office, [www.emmanuelcare.ca](http://www.emmanuelcare.ca)

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