



SVD CHINA PROVINCE NEWSLETTER

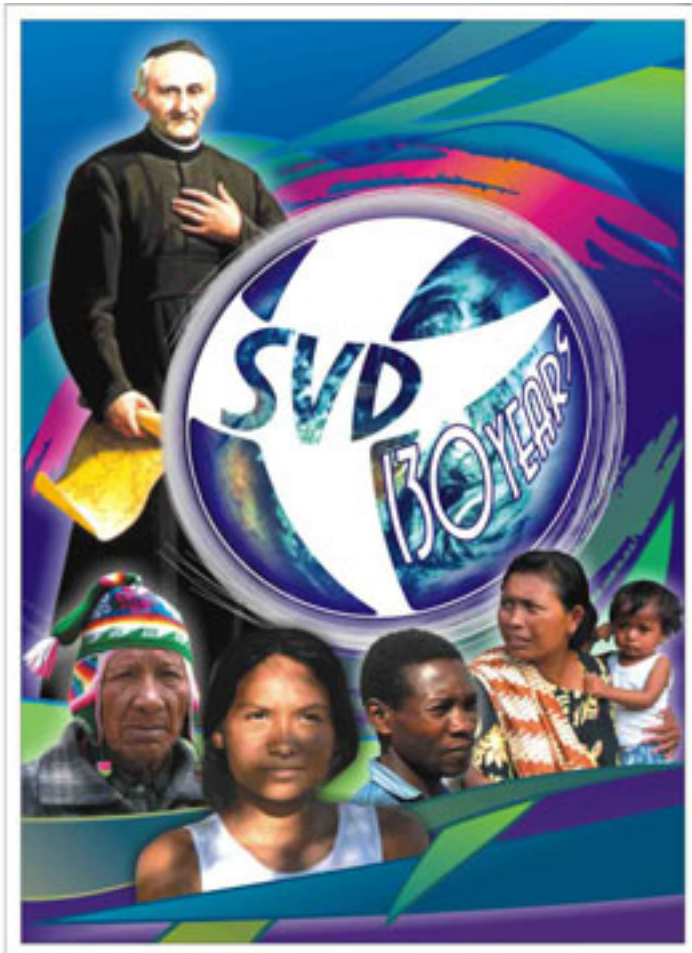
天主教聖言會中華省通訊

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願天主聖三生活在我們和眾人心中

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Poster created by Fr. Tomasz Szyszka SVD

SVD **130**
years

A Word From The Provincial

Today is September 2, 2005. We just finished a meeting of the Major Religious Superiors. The chairwoman of the religious sisters described her scary flight between Taipei and Hong Kong in a Typhoon day, on her way to a pilgrimage in Europe.

Actually this summer we had experienced several typhoons, the last of which left Taiwan only a few hours ago, and is now in the Mainland. We are expecting another one in a few days.

Usually in summer our confreres in the parishes organize summer camps for children. This issue of the Newsletter should present the experiences of our confreres in these activities. In the south the camps last one week, and are held usually in Fenchihu and Chiayi. In our parishes in Taipei we also have summer camps, which last two to four weeks, but they are only half day programs. Fu Jen University also organized a summer camp for aborigine children.

These activities are strong moments of evangelization because many of the children come from non Catholic families. They are a great effort, done by several confreres working as a team, together with many lay volunteers. They require a lot of preparation, but the effort is worthwhile, because the summer camps are the best opportunities for reaching out of the boundaries of the Catholic communities of our parishes.

All these activities were interrupted or postponed by one typhoon or another, but not one of them was cancelled. It is a good sign of perseverance.

In this time of great activity we tend to feel tired and somehow burned out, especially when

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after working hard preparing an activity, it has to be postponed because of the weather. We tend to get disappointed or tired when things go wrong.

Then we have to go back to our roots, to our relationship with God. This summer our spirituality has been marked by two lines: the Bible and the Eucharist.

We SVD missionaries are trying to read the whole Bible in one year. That is a wonderful way to see once again how difficult it was for Israel to be loyal to Yahweh, and also how faithful God was in his love for his people.

The late Pope John Paul II decreed that this is the Year of the Eucharist. Providentially, this year the Lord called him home. His last Encyclical Letter was "Ecclesia de Eucharistia," and his last Apostolic Letter was "Mane Nobiscum Domine." We can say that the emphasis on the Eucharist was his spiritual testament, his last will. The new Pope continues in this line, and in October, the Synod of Bishop will reflect also on the Eucharist.

The Church gets his life and strength from the Eucharist, the preeminent way the Lord answers our invitation to remain with us. We not only strive to celebrate the Eucharist in the best way we can, but we also make an effort to prepare it well. We in the SVD prepare the mass especially by reading, studying and praying with the Bible, particularly the liturgical readings of the Mass.

Our Biblical spirituality of the Eucharist will help us to get strength to continue our effort to reach out to people outside the boundaries of our Catholic communities, trying to engage in dialogue with people around us, especially when we are all shaken by the forces of nature.

Fr. Sergio Edwards SVD

The Church gets his life and strength from the Eucharist, the preeminent way the Lord answers our invitation to remain with us.

Fu-ta "Shen-fu" turns "News English" high school teacher

By: Fr. Dan Bauer SVD

For a long time, I have thanked God for the chance to be a university instructor, partly because I just don't think I have the iron belly necessary to teach high school students. You have to be a warrior to handle those teenagers. Whew, they can be rough and tough.

From July 6-9th, however, I joined six English Department colleagues to take on a group of 99 Taiwan high school students in our first ever "2005 FJCU English Camp." For this my colleague Doris (Chang Li-wen) worked with a team of over 30 of our own students to welcome teenagers from all over the country. Doris designed a helpful 57 page camp handbook, complete with course outlines and handouts. Some of the courses offered were Fun with Literature, Multi-media English, and Performing Arts. For this last, Professor Llyn Scott actually managed to bring on stage a slew of the students in a positively Herculean effort that presented highlights of the American musical "Annie,"

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all in English, mind you, and with piano accompaniment.

My own role in the camp was considerably more modest.

The course I offered was called News English. I met for two hours at a time with four groups of campers, accompanied by their faithful older brother/sister guides from the English Department. We spent about 20 minutes of those periods reviewing how editors assemble newspapers. I tried to show how in theory newspapers attempt to divide "objective" news reporting from "subjective" commentary and opinion writing. I brought bags of sample newspapers in Chinese and English to class, and distributed them to the campers like the apostles once passed out the loaves and the fishes for Jesus.

Over half our class time went into remarks on how to write a newspaper column. Only rarely do I have an opportunity to talk about my writing, and yet, at least for me personally, my weekly column for the China Post has become an important part of my ministry in Taiwan. In the first minutes of class I distributed blank paper to the campers. I asked them not to give me their names, but to only write down questions and comments about anything they saw or heard in our class. Their questions were many and interesting. *How do you find topics for columns? How long does it take to write a column? Do you have an assistant who gathers news information for you and helps you to write? How much money does the China Post pay you?*

Those are perceptive queries. As for answers, well - - I do my work and writing alone, but have benefited greatly from the careful drumming I receive every week by e-mail from my writing coach, minor seminary friend and classmate Joe Greene, an attorney in Louisville, Kentucky. Coach Greene reads my material after it is published, and critiques it the way a skilled butcher attacks a side of beef with a cleaver. I owe him a lot. And, oh yes, about the money? I happily assured my young friends that the few dimes their "news English" camp teacher makes on writing the column go straight into the coffers of the SVD.

All in all, I had a lot of fun with my campers. I found their energy, innocence, and pure youthfulness very life-giving. In my heart of hearts, however, I am still glad I usually teach older students. Two days of teenagers was wonderful but, after all, I begin now my 21st year with university students at Fu Jen. I do believe these older young scholars are the ones our Lord wants me to give myself to the most.

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Fu Jen SVDs join with confreres from San Carlos and Nanzan at ASEACCU Conference

a report by Fr. Dan Bauer SVD

If pronounced like a word, ASEACCU sounds close to "Asia is cool." That idea is actually not too bad a description of the 3 day conference of the Association of Southeast and East Asian Catholic Colleges and Universities (ASEACCU for short) at Fu Jen University August 25 - 28. If "cool" means "lively and enjoyable," then this gathering of Asians of various backgrounds was cool indeed.

The conference brought together 150 educators and students from a range of schools in Asia. I was a bit of an interloper, as I was not an official Fu Jen delegate. The two themes of the conference were "Education for Life" and "Professional Ethics." The director of Fu Jen Ethics curriculum was out of the country, and had asked me as an ethics teacher at Fu Jen to represent him at the meetings. As things turned out, I was very happy to be his stand-in.

One reason I thought the ASEACCU meeting was cool was it gave me a chance to rub shoulders with other SVD confreres working in Asian university ministry. Father Teodoro Gapuz from the University of San Carlos in the Philippines was with us, as were SVD Fathers Mike Calmano and Rich Szimpl from Japan's Nanzan University. The Nanzan delegation included two delightful students, Ayano, a young lady who speaks French as well as English, and Tomoya, a gentleman scholar who carried a Japanese - Mandarin Chinese phrase book with him at all times. I had to be on my best behavior throughout the proceedings because my local superiors Father Michael Kwo and Father James also attended.

Another reason I found the meetings cool was I sensed everyone really took the question of Catholic education seriously. The logo for ASEACCU includes three stars, which the program blurb says are symbols

of "love, reason, and conscience, which come as special graces of God." People at the sessions seemed to be intent on articulating the meaning of those symbols in the context of their work as teachers or students. I am sure many of us attend conferences at which participants appear to only go through the motions. They wear the right clothes, make cameo appearances, and then disappear. Or else they deliver remarks mostly to advance their academic reputations. That was not the case here. Time and again we returned to the question, "what does it mean to study (or teach) at a Catholic university?" "How can we integrate the Gospel values of Jesus more directly into our campus work and lives?"

A final cool aspect of the conference was the mix of academic and personal sharing. I asked permission of conference secretary Janet Lin to attend student discussions after the lectures rather than stay with colleagues. I promised her I would ask for the students' permission too. I wanted mostly to hear their reactions to some of the occasionally highly abstract ideas in the plenary sessions. My young friends accepted my interest and seemed to enjoy my company.

I was touched by the students' efforts to both speak out their true feelings and also respect differences among themselves. A delegate from the Philippines, for example, said, "You in Japan should maybe be more concerned about us in less developed countries. You are a rich country, with nobody worried about food or shelter. In my country, we have millions of people who do not have enough to eat everyday."

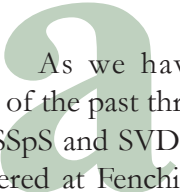
From Nanzan University, a Japanese delegate said, "but we do care about other people in Asia. We know that we are lucky to have advanced technology and comforts. But you know, some of our people suffer too."

Perhaps my role as a "shen-fu" (priest) asserted itself. I found myself reaching out.

"Both of your countries are full of good people," I said. "Our friends in the Philippines may not know that when we had our horrible earthquake in Taiwan a few years ago, Japan quickly sent expert rescue teams with fancy equipment to help save our people."

An afternoon excursion to Taipei's famous Palace Museum was another highlight of the conference. Surely I was not the only one who felt the exhibits there, particularly a collection of maps of Asia from the 16th - 20th century, very cool.





As we have done each of the past three years, the SSpS and SVD recently gathered at Fenchihu for a time of spiritual renewal and relaxation from 25-27 July. Throughout these three days we enjoyed good companionship and prayer together, taking rest from daily duties. We got better acquainted with each other and also gathered for Holy Eucharist and prayers in the presence of the Lord. We pondered the Holy Scriptures, which is one of the main tasks of our religious life. Both provincials were present and Sister Carmen was in charge of the organization.

The former SSpS mother general, Sister Anne-Marie, helped us as the special guest of this year's meeting. Sister was in Taiwan primarily to lead a retreat in Zhanghua but, luckily for us, found some time to join our gathering. She had two sessions: one on covenants between God and man, and the second on the Holy Scriptures. At the first one, we received the question to consider: "What is the relation between Jesus and the covenant?" Subsequent conversation raised difficult controversies over whether the Old Testament is about killing.

For the second, Sister Anne-Marie gave us the booklet "To give God's Word a Warm Welcome," on which we meditated before our group discussion. Trying to understand the Holy Scriptures, we found some useful and meaningful quotes there, like this one: The Scriptures do not exist to be understood, but to be approached like a threshold to mystery.

Fr. Wladek Madeja is the present host of the Activity Center in Fenchihu. His dog Yatomay faithfully kept us company all the time and was always ready to intervene if something went wrong. The lovable canine did not mind startling and biting Fr. Tarsisius Sigho as he dashed across a hall while playing games. His pants were then blessed by a hole and his leg by a wound. Fortunately, the injury was not too serious and received immediate good treatment at the hands of the best medico in the whole mountain area, Sister Edemara. Some speculated that the dog must have sniffed and realized Tarsisius relishes dog meat from time to time. Gossip was that Yatomay was only seeking revenge. So, as they say, "What goes around comes around."

SVD SSPS

Spiritual Renewal

by: Krzysztof Nieszwiec

The last evening we watched a cheerful comedy, "Keeping the Faith." On the last day there was an excursion, but only three of us were up to that task, having still some energy left (there were Sister Eleonora and Father Provincial). We went up a new step way to reach the road to Laiji, and then after a two-kilometer stroll, we got to a viewpoint with magnificent scenery down the valley of Laiji. After a while of admiration we went back for the Mass. After the Mass dedicated to the SVD Polish martyrs we all set off on journeys that took us back to our places and duties, having strengthened good relations in the family of Saint Arnold.

Taiwan SVD Youth attend 2005 World Youth Day in Koln Germany

We set out with 42 "young" people, including a tour guide, to Europe for the World Youth Day (WYD). We got into Amsterdam airport early on August 10. From the Netherlands, we began our journey to the WYD through Belgium, Luxemburg and finally arrived in Germany on August 15.

When we got into Germany, we were accompanied by our SVD confrere, Father Slawomir Rakus, a Polish confrere who was in Beijing for a few years and currently works in Steyl. We celebrated Sunday Mass with the people of Steyl, in German language. We did not understand the meaning, but we did sing along (using the song book). After the Mass, we were led to the tomb of St. Arnold Janssen, SVD. Fr. Rakus gave us a tour of the SVD, SSpS, and SSpSAP houses in Steyl. While we were at the mother house, the SSpS were celebrating a Perpetual Vows Mass for two Sisters. While there we also met one of our own, Sister Marcina Stawasz, SSpS. Sister Marcina was so kind and gracious and she showed our group to the tomb of our Blessed Maria Virgo Helena Stollenwerk.

On the way to Goch to visit our founder's home, we stopped at Kevelaer, a famous pilgrimage site in Germany. The church was beautiful, both inside and outside. Inside, the huge and decorated church was packed with people of all ages praying. It was a marvelous and spiritually filled experience. And from Kevelaer, we journeyed to Goch. We entered our founder's home, and although it was renovated and up to modern day living quarter, we could still feel and imagine the lifestyle that our founder did have more than a hundred years ago.

When we arrived at our host parish to officially begin WYD, we were very surprised to know that our host family was no longer the local parish but rather had been changed to our very own, Sankt Augustin Seminary. Father Martin Welling was there to welcome us. We later found out that just two days before we arrived, the WYD organizers had asked the SVD (Sankt Augustin) to accommodate 200 youth for five days. Surely, Martin Welling was very busy running around clearing up classrooms to become sleeping quarters, turning old and unused washrooms into shower rooms, and preparing everything so that we could be comfortable.

We were indeed VERY comfortable. We even had our laundry dry everyday by a laundry machine. Some of the young men in our group were joking, saying that after seeing St. Augustin and how hospitable the SVDs are, they were having serious thought about joining the SVD, and some young women were asking why the SVD does not accept women. The other youth who stayed at the local parish envied our fortune. Thank God for St. Agustin Seminary, and also Martin Welling for all the preparations he did and his most generous and hospitable help for us.

While we sojourned at Sankt Augustin, for the five days leading up to the World Youth Sunday Mass with the Pope, there were pre-arranged activities in which we were encouraged to participate. For example, for two days all the youth from Taiwan were gathered together and listened to Bishop Lin of Tainan preaching catechism. Taiwanese youth arriving in Germany to listen to Taiwanese catechism, certainly did not sound logical to me. There was one day when all the youth from East and

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South East Asia convened. It was surely a heartfelt experience when one saw youth coming from countries such as Laos, Cambodia, Thailand, Pakistan, Vietnam, Mainland China and other places which are not so well-known as "Catholic friendly countries" come up the stage and give a cross-cultural prayer service. There was also a day on which we participated in walking and praying the Stations of the Cross. For all of these activities, many of the Taiwanese Youth felt for the first time the large gathering of believers together in one place.

When Pope Benedict XVI came for the evening prayer, the crowd was on their feet and happily welcomed him. The prayer service was interrupted many times by loud ovations and voices affectionately calling out "BENEDICTO, BENEDICTO, BENEDICTO" from the youth responding to our Pope's exhortations. We could see from the big TV screens (placed throughout the field) that the Pope was moved by the enthusiastic and joyous crowd. When we did not understand what he was saying (in different languages), we did not feel left out, but rather experienced a unique spiritual oneness through the crowd.

The WYD journey was certainly a very special experience for the Taiwan SVD Youth Group. It was a once in a life-time experience for some of the members of the group who had never imagined or participated in such a large crowd coming together to express their hope and faith in the future of the Church. For a few of us, it was a moment of strengthening our faith. For others, it could have been a moment of grace, of renewal, of rediscovering what is being a Christian. Especially for the ten Protestants and two non-Christian members, it was an opportunity to learn more about the Catholic Church. It is certainly incomplete not to mention the opportunity for some, including myself, to learn more about oneself during this holy journey of the WYD.

Fr. Nick Nguyen SVD

Anniversary
Happy 130 years

Fr. John Hung SVD

New National Director

of Pontifical Societies

of Propagation of Faith

On July 15, 2005, the prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, Cardinal Crescencio Sepe, appointed our confrere Fr. John Hung as the National Director of the Pontifical Mission works for a term of 5 years.

Fr. Hung is the National Director of Prison Ministry in Taiwan, animates more than 600 volunteers, and collects funds for their ministry. He is at the moment the Vice Provincial of the SVD China Province and the Principal of Fu Jen High School in Chia-Yi.

Asked how he feels about the new appointment, Fr. Hung humbly expressed that his volunteers and workers in prison ministry will be his prime mover to coordinate all possible resources. "This is also the best way to be united with Rome," he said. "If you don't offer your kids to do mission, offer money, if you don't pay for your kid's school expenses, help other kids".

Congratulations, Fr. John Hung!

Father Joseph Tran Huunh

Formation Work in Vietnam



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The SVD Vietnam region will soon be a province. It has now many vocations. At this moment several confreres are doing further studies, being prepared for the difficult work of formation. But in these few years the SVDs there feel a grave shortage of qualified personnel for formation work. They are being helped by the SVD in the USA where many of our confreres are ethnically Vietnamese. But that help is not enough. This time they approached us. Our main formator in Taiwan was Fr. Joseph Tran Huynh, an American citizen, but born in Vietnam. Joseph got a Masters Degree in Spirituality in Boston College and then came back to Taiwan and was OTP Director, Prefect of the scholastics, and sometimes also of the Postulants, since 2001. After some time he was also the Coordinator of the Young Confreres in Perpetual Vows.

In our long term planning we were preparing his successor, Fr. Inna Reddy Edara, who studied for an MA in Pastoral Counseling in Loyola University, Maryland. Our plan was that Inna would come back in 2004 and take over the formation community in 2007, after a time of re-inculturation in Taiwan, where he had been for several years, first as a student then as a priest, before he went to the USA for higher studies.

The request of Vietnam made us change the plans. Inna had to take over the formation community two years before we expected, almost right after coming back from his studies. That is also difficult for Huynh, who wanted to be released soon from formation work and dedicate his efforts to social work. But Inna, Huynh and the whole province made this sacrifice for the sake of a neighbor province with a great and urgent need.

Joseph emigrated from Vietnam to USA in the 70s. He entered the SVD and in the middle of his theological studies he came to Taiwan in 1989. After his OTP time, he went back to the USA to finish his theological studies and was ordained priest. His first appointment was Taiwan. He worked his first years in the city of Kaohsiung, in pastoral service. He was assistant pastor at the Cathedral and then acting pastor in Fatima Church. He did a wonderful work. The Bishop wanted the SVD to increase its presence in his diocese after his service there. But our province wanted him to work in formation, so he was sent for further studies in Spirituality.

His studies helped him not only in his work as formator in the SVD, but also for spiritual guidance and retreat preaching to other religious institutes, in and out of Taiwan. We wish Joseph a good time in Vietnam and we welcome him back as soon as his successors finish their training for formation work.