



# 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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## A Word from the Provincial

**S**ince the last Issue of the Province Newsletter, the main event in the SVD has been the XVI General Chapter, held in Rome from June 4 to July 8, 2006. The theme of the community retreats this summer was also the Chapter. In this issue of the Newsletter we will focus on the chapter experience as well, from the point of view of the delegates of the China Province. We are hoping that the General Chapter becomes an experience not only of the confreres who participated in it, but of all the confreres in the Society.

The General Chapter had four main tasks: i) to elect the Superior General and His Council; ii) to review the situation of the whole SVD; iii) to discuss and vote on several resolutions and recommendations; iv) to write the final version of the Chapter Statement. In this page I will comment on the first task: the election.

Fr. Superior General was easily re-elected. Afterwards Fr. Vice Superior and the Councilors representing the Brothers and the AFRAM Zone were re-elected as well. That is a clear sign that the capitulars were happy with the current General Administration. The other three councilors were not re-elected, not because the capitulars were unhappy with their job, but because all felt that they did very well too. Many felt the Council needed at least a couple of new faces, especially thinking of the General Administration of 2012. If then all members of the Council had been in office for 12 to 18 years - and so more difficult to be re-elected - that would create a General Administration of 2012-2018 with too many new names.

Of the three new General Councilors two are well known to our China Province. Fr. Gregory Pinto gave us a workshop for the Formation Committee and a Retreat in 2002 in Taiwan. In 2004 he gave the retreat to the confreres in Hong Kong and also visited China. When he came in 2002, he told us that he had been assigned to our province in his youth but could not come because he was asked to help in formation in India.



Fr. Bob Kisala was the Superior of our neighbor Japan Province, where four of our seminarians

are studying. He has been in Taiwan several times, since he is a well known scholar in the area of religious studies and formerly the coordinator of Mission Education and Research of the ASPAC Zone. Not long ago, he visited China and in July 2005 he facilitated the workshop of the Formation Committee of the China Province held in Hong Kong. He came to Taiwan in September 2005 for the Assembly of the ASPAC Zone when he was elected President of the Executive Committee of the Zone.

We thank the three councilors who finished their mission in the General Administration. We especially thank Fr. Bubi Scholz, who did the General Visitation in 2004. It was a great moment for all of us. He himself shared during a homily at the end of the Chapter that during his time in the General Council the most memorable time was his visit to China.

We wish all the best to Fr. General and his Council for the coming six years. We are happy to see how much has supported the General Administration, from the whole Society. It is a clear sign that the SVD is strongly united.

We remember with gratitude Fr. Pernia's visit to our Province a few months ago, when he presided at the final vows of our confreres and participated in the Episcopal Ordination of his classmate, Bishop John Hung SVD. We hope that newly re-elected Fr. General will come again to our province very soon to visit and encourage us. Welcome to him and his councilors.

Fr. Sergio Edwards SVD

# Father King Belamide FOR THE FREINADEMETZ CENTER IN ROME

On 21-APR-2006 Fr. Superior General established the Freinademetz Center in Rome and appointed Fr. Paulino Belamide from the China Province as its first director.

Fr. Belamide is Filipino priest who has been in Taiwan since he was a student in the OTP in 1983. He has a PhD in Religious Studies, specifically in Taoism.

The Center starts by being a modest library of Chinese books and books on China meant primarily to assist Chinese ecclesiastical students in Rome (priests, seminarians, religious) in their studies as a preparation for their future work in China. The library is also open to other ecclesiastical students in Rome, as well as other persons interested in China.

In March 2002 a meeting on China was organized by the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples (CEP), at which the participants expressed the need for some kind of a China Study or Research Center in Rome. The SVD Generalate decided to set up a small center named after St. Joseph Freinademetz as an initial step towards serving the China concerns of the Church in Rome. The Center is located at the Collegio del Verbo Divino on the ground floor of the Casa San Raffaele.

**T**he Center intends to fulfil its aims through the following activities for the benefit of the Chinese ecclesiastical students in Rome: A library concerning works in Chinese and about China, including classical Chinese sources, with particular focus on religion, Christianity and Catholic Church in China, as meeting place, with a simple space for meetings of small groups.

Other services or activities envisioned and/or to be developed in the future are providing other academic and non-academic assistance to ecclesiastical personnel from China studying in Rome; establishing contact and net working with other entities concerned with Christianity in China; making available to ecclesiastical students and other interested groups (generalates of religious congregations, etc.) information and/or documentation on China and Christianity in China; finding ways and means "in collaboration with ecclesiastical institutions of higher learning or other entities" to present China, in particular Christianity in China, to ecclesiastical officials and the public, e.g., through exhibits, conferences, symposia and other academic programs; helping to arrange exchanges on China among Church entities in Rome; keeping contact with and hosting Chinese scholars and other scholars on China.

## The **SVD** takes over Epiphany Parish in Lantau Island, Hong Kong where Saint Joseph Freinademetz made an exploratory visit in 1880.

**On August 27, 2006 in a Mass presided by Cardinal Joseph Zen SDB, the Divine Word Missionaries took over Epiphany Parish of the Diocese of Hong Kong. The Parish area includes the whole island of "Lantau" called in Chinese "Da Yu Shan," and some small nearby. Lantau is actually an island much bigger than Hong Kong, located a few kilometers to the west.**

For many years Lantau had only few a few islets fishing villages. A few decades ago one of them developed as an 'ecological village', without cars, in Discovery Bay. The island has also been famous for the giant statue of Buddha, and - among Catholics - a Trappist Monastery.

On July 1, 1998 - exactly one year after the handover of Hong Kong to China - the new airport was inaugurated. It is located in a small island a few meters away from Lantau. A highway and a railway were built across Lantau Island connecting the airport with Hong Kong through a series of impressive bridges and tunnels. The village of Tung Chung in Lantau, only five kilometers away from the airport, was also linked to Hong Kong with a highway and a railway. The newly opened Disneyland is also located in Lantau Island. Thus, the population of the island has jumped to almost 300,000, with a great majority of immigrants from Mainland China.

The OMI did not have enough people to serve this area adequately. In January 2006 the Bishop of Hong Kong - Cardinal Joseph Zen SDB - asked the SVD to take over the parish. The SVD community in Hong Kong had a special assembly to discuss the invitation and decided to accept it. The Provincial Council accepted the parish within a few weeks.

# NEW PRINCIPAL AT FUJEN HIGH SCHOOL

This is a great challenge, very different than other parishes in Hong Kong, because in Lantau distances are long, and many of the areas lack public transportation. We have four confreres assigned to this parish: Fr. Osvaldo Metz SVD is the parish priest and Fr. Herman Ramli Tabut SVD, Fr Henry Cabral SVD and Fr Jay Francis Flandez SVD are the assistants.

There is much pastoral and missionary work now in Epiphany Parish, which consists of 4 Mass Centers: Epiphany Chapel at Mui Wo, Our Lady Queen of Peace Chapel at Peng Chau Island, Trinity Chapel at Discovery Bay, and Tung Chung Visitation Chapel at Tung Chung, plus other places where there are Masses and are still developing, as well as the Airport Chapel. In total, there are 12 Sunday Masses. It is a very international Island, as there are people from Mainland China, the local people from Hong Kong, many from Europe and North America, and many Filipinos as well. There are also seven prisons in the parish area, both on Lantau Island and on different small islands nearby.

In the seventh issue of the Little Messenger of the Heart of Jesus of 1880 part of a letter of June 2, 1880 by Saint Joseph Freinademetz sharing his missionary experiences after a year in Hong Kong appeared. He says that Bishop Raimondi sent him to the island of Thai-yuhan for one week to explore the possibility of beginning a mission station.

He writes: "I traveled the length and breadth of the island in little less than a week, marking all the settlements on a map." He estimated the population of the island at 10 to 12 thousand people. Moving around the island, he had many interesting experiences, among them seeing people eating snake meat, sleeping in a pagoda, and being surrounded by a curious crowd who wanted to see this "Foreign devil" who "worships the Lord of the Heavens." The visit was very successful because, as he writes, "The people seem well disposed, and a 71 year old man is ready to put his house at the service of the missionaries." A short time after that, a catechist was sent to Lantau and a missionary priest went there for regular visits.

126 years after Saint Joseph Freinademetz's visit to Lantau island, the SVD missionaries can continue what he began.

On August 1, 2006 a ceremony of installation for Mr. Chen Xian-Yi as the third Principal of Fu Jen High School occurred. Mr. Chen is the first lay person in this position. It may be very difficult to be principal of a school after the former principal has been appointed Bishop. We needed someone with experience. After our confrere John Hung was appointed Bishop my first thought was inviting Mr. Chen Xian-Yi, who has long experience as principal of the biggest Catholic School of Chiayi Diocese: Sacred Heart High School in Douliu.

I have met him several times and was always impressed by the kind of "calm leadership" he irradiates. You could see an unassuming man, but clearly self confident. I saw him leading meetings and could see that he would let others speak. He listened with respect, without feeling threatened by opinions different than his.

When we first approached him to be the next Principal of Fu Jen High School, he told us of his plans to retire this year in order to have more time with his family. When the time to propose candidates was coming to an end, I personally met with him and asked him to accept. After talking this issue over with his family he decided to accept our invitation.

Probably this was not an easy decision for him. Humanly speaking, the only advantage compared with his former school is the place: it is located in Chiayi, where he lives, so he would not need to drive 40 km every day to work. But he is moving to a smaller school, not as prestigious as his former one. I see in him a sense of mission. He feels that God asked him for this additional effort at the age of 63, when others retire.

Let us pray for Mr. Chen Xian-Yi and his family, for their health, and also for the whole school community of Fu Jen High School.



# The Mission of Fu Jen High School

**F**or the inauguration of the new Principal of Fu Jen High School on August 1, 2006 I shared some reflections with the teachers present at the ceremony. Here I would like to share ideas that I presented that day.

Why does the SVD have a school in Chiayi? When Fu Jen High School was founded in 1962, Taiwan was still a poor country, without enough schools. Our school fulfilled a social service; it aided the social development of this area of Taiwan. Now the situation has reversed. Taiwan is a rich country, there are many schools in the Chiayi area, and the population of this area has decreased for two reasons: families have fewer children and many have moved to bigger cities.

If that is the situation, why don't we close Fu Jen High School? Why do we keep it? What is the reason to have this school? What is our school mission today? Some pious Catholics would say that the school is a means to do mission, to recruit people for the Catholic Church. But students don't ask for baptism at this age. Also non-Catholic parents would not send their children where the primary goal is to convert them to Catholicism. In my opinion Church institutions like schools and hospitals are for providing service. Jesus came to serve. He cured the sick and taught the people. Catholic schools continue Jesus' ministry of teaching and hospitals his ministry of healing. In my opinion, the main purpose of having a school is to give witness to Jesus Christ by providing education services.

If many other schools today in Taiwan do the same, what is our specific contribution? Catholic Schools should provide what we call "an Integral Education," or what we say in other terms: "to promote Christian values" which are really "human values" because most of them are shared by almost everyone.

We want our students to learn the matters taught in school, and to enter good universities and be successful in their professions. But that is not enough. We want them also to develop other areas of their personality, not only the academic side. Our students should enjoy physical activities in sports, and have sensibility for artistic manifestations. A young person able to appreciate the music of Mozart or a painting of Rembrandt is probably more able to achieve a deeper spiritual view of life.

Our schools should be "communities," not a simple crowd of nameless young children. We want to build up a community with the teachers, employees and workers, with the students and their parents; a community where people know each other, where all of us work for the same purpose, where people respect others and feel respected. We expect that our students learn and also make friends, to work as a team and to be able to share their hopes and sorrows with others. We want our students to learn how to relate with the other sex in mature ways so that in the future they can nurture a stable relationship

with a spouse. If one of our students in the future gets a PhD in Harvard but is not able to communicate with his wife or husband, this can not be considered a successful person. We want our students to learn the value of a stable family, and be open to have children. These are Chinese traditional values and also Christian values.

We also want our students to get the value of a meaningful life, where the purpose is not just earning money, enjoying life and receiving honors, but to serve others. If someone wants to be a doctor it should be not because of an opportunity get rich, but because he or she will be able to cure sickness.

We finally hope that our students will be open to the mystery of transcendence. We hope that they discover that beyond our human experience there is a God who created us and cares about us even more than parents care for their children; that they can trust in Him and feel confident in the future because He is both almighty and caring for everyone. Although we hope that many, or at least some of our students will discover that this is the God of Jesus Christ, we are happy if they can relate to God in their own terms according to the traditions of their families.

One last question is how an SVD school is different from another Church school. There are two aspects that the SVD is especially concerned about. One is an openness to diversity and another, closely related to the first, is internationality. The SVD is an international community, so we try to be open to the richness of different cultures. We know we can be brothers and sisters of people who come from different countries, whose mother language is absolutely different than ours. We experience that in the SVD. We want to share this experience in our schools and parishes. Taiwan has different ethnic groups: we have a great majority of Taiwanese, whose ancestors came from Fujian a few hundred years ago, but also Mainlanders, whose parents or grandparents came from China only in 1950. We have Hakka people and also the aborigines. In Taiwan these groups are slowly coming together, but there are still some prejudices and lack of trust. From our international communities, we want to share the richness of accepting others as they are. Our internationality is also a great asset to our school in the sense that our students are living now in a global world which in the future will be even more a global village. Through the SVD foreign confreres working in the school, the students begin to grow and get used to foreigners, to know how they think and feel. Through Taiwanese confreres with experience abroad, our students will learn how to adapt to an international community. This is a good preparation for their future in the global world where they have to live when they become adults.

# Proposal on the Migrant and Refugee Apostolate

*To respond to the sign of the times concerning the pastoral need of the migrants, the church sees the image of Christ who once said, "I was a stranger and you made me welcome." (Mt. 25:35). Their critical condition is a challenge to the faith and love of those who believe in his words. The faithful are called to heal the evil caused by migration and discover the plan God pursues through it even when caused by injustices. Migration brings together the manifold components of the human family and thus leads to the construction and building up of an ever vast and more varied society. It is a post Pentecost reality and a continuing occasion of meeting of peoples and ethnic groups that, through the gift of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, became a dwelling place of ecclesial fraternity.*

Erga Migrante, Caritas Christi



**T**he origin of this recommendation is a proposal approved at the Provincial Chapter of the China Province to forward to the General Chapter, a resolution to make the Chinese Apostolate one of the priorities of the SVD in the coming six years. This idea was similar to the special concern for Africa that has been a priority of the SVD for the last 12 years. Because many Chinese live outside the geographical limits of the China Province and much academic work on Sinology and Chinese Studies is also being done outside China, Hong Kong and Taiwan, the proposal talked about the Chinese Apostolate, a term that includes all these fields of work. Although this proposal was approved in the Provincial Chapter it did not reach the upper level because of secretariat problems.

During the first week of the Chapter there were reports and discussion at the Zonal Level. At the end of the week, we tried to identify some common problems in the Asia Pacific zone. One of the key missionary problems that came up was the growing importance of the migrant apostolate.

*Jesus Christ the "foreigner" is also the living symbol of the migrant. For the faith of the Christian migrants is seen not simply as a neighbor who passed over their life, but the face of Christ Himself, born in a manger and found rescued in the land of Egypt, where he was a foreigner, experiencing and repeating the experience of his own people in his own life (Mt. 3:13 ff.). Born away from home and coming from another land (Lk. 2:4-7), He came to dwell among us (Jn.1:11-14) and spent his public life on the move, going through towns and villages (Lk. 13:22; Mt. 9:35). After His resurrection, he was still an unknown foreigner who appeared on the way to Emmaus only recognized after the breaking of the bread (Lk. 24:35). Hence, Christians are followers of a man on the move, and a born migrant "who has nowhere to lay his head" (Mt. 8:20; Lk. 9:58).*

**F**rom our point of view, we are sending and receiving migrants. There are thousands of Chinese living in the Philippines, Indonesia, Australia, New Zealand and other countries of the ASPAC Zone, as well as hundred of thousands living in other zones, especially North America and Europe. In the same way the China Province receives thousand of migrants. There are tens of thousands of Filipinos, Vietnamese, Indonesians, Thais, Malaysians and others from other countries around the world who come to work in Hong Kong and Taiwan. This situation is similar in Japan and Korea.

This globalized world is interconnected not only by fast communication technologies, but also by the flow of people from one country to another. This is an era of migrants.

In this context an international missionary society like the Divine Word is especially suitable for this apostolate. It is also part of our tradition since the time of our Founder. Saint Arnold Janssen sent his missionaries not only to so called mission countries like China, Papua New Guinea, Togo and Japan, but also to Christian countries such as Argentina, Brazil, USA and Chile in order to take care of the pastoral needs of the German Migrants.

The capitulars of the ASPAC Zone agree that this issue deserves a proposal for recommendation. I was given the task to prepare and submitted to the Proposals Committee.

The text of the proposal is very simple. It just asks the Generalate to prepare Guidelines for this Apostolate. I was thinking actually of the Plan for the pastoral care of Migrants prepared by the Diocese of Hong Kong, which was actually a work of our confrere Fr. Emilio Lim, who later on was appointed Diocesan Chaplain of the Filipino Migrants. The experience in Hong Kong is that chaplains of migrants work better when they know the local language and are already part of the structure of the Local Church. Hong Kong is a kind of model of good cooperation with the Diocese in regard to the Migrant Apostolate.

The proposal also asks the Generalate to encourage the provinces and regions to appoint more confreres for this apostolate. My main point is to say that although in every province we are committed especially to the local people, we should not neglect the migrants because that is part of our tradition and something that the local clergy usually can't do.

The Chairman of the Proposals Committee, Fr. Antonio Jaca, Provincial Superior of Angola, presented this proposal to the plenum. There was a friendly amendment to add service for the refugees, and Fr. Jaca accepted it. This proposal was approved by more than 90% of the capitulars.

*That the generalate, in consultation with the provinces and regions, prepare guidelines for the migrant and refugee apostolate and encourage the provinces and regions to appoint more confreres for this apostolate.*

# One in Peace

**E**stablished by the United Nations resolution in 1981, the International Day of Peace was first inaugurated on the third Tuesday of September, 1982. On its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2002, the UN General Assembly permanently set September 21<sup>st</sup> as International Day of Peace. This day serves as a reminder of being an instrument of peace, and provides individuals, organizations and nations opportunity on a shared date to create practical acts of peace.

September 21, 2006, to heighten awareness and concern for peace the Association of Major Religious Superiors - Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation group (AMRS-JPIC), held an activity **"Reject Violence, Pray for Peace."** An inter-religious activity with about 120 Buddhists, Catholics, Muslims and Christians of different denominations gathered together at One World Community Services Center in Dapinglin, and with one dream, one hope and one voice prayed for peace. Among the participants praying for peace were a good number of our SVD priests and seminarians.

At 7:30PM the Coordinator for the AMRS-JPIC group Fr. Willy Ollevier CICM welcomed everyone as he acknowledged the presence of the representatives of the different religious communities. The prayer activity began with a short power point presentation depicting the painful image of war, violence and oppression while the song "one day in peace" was played. Afterwards, with a back draft of the Paschal Candle and seven colors of the rainbow with the Chinese character for peace, Msgr. Ambrose Madtha the representative of the Holy Father in Taiwan, delivered his message and prayer for peace. Then with the song "O God of Love, O King of Peace," our Christian sisters and brothers

by Dennis Manzana SVD

from the National Council of Churches of Taiwan (NCCT) Methodist, Presbyterian, Episcopalian and other churchcommunities led everybody in prayer with the reading from the book of Isaiah 11:1-10, and prayed for all humanity for the graces of peace, and social justice. In a prayerful tone Abbot of Dharma Drum Mountain shared his message on "Crisis and Peace," emphasizing our practice of prayer, the concepts in our minds, as well as the concrete application of these concepts through our behavior, must be in direct accordance with the aim of our prayer. He ended his message with a solemn note, joined by his four companions, chanting a prayer. Beseeching "True God Allah," representing our Islam sisters and brothers, Imam Ma Xiao-Qi delivered his message and prayer for peace. Likewise Master Ming-Kuang representing the Buddhist Association of the ROC, shared his message and prayer for peace.

Gathering all the prayers into one, the "Prayer for Peace" of St. Francis was sung, as the light of Christ from the Paschal candle was shared, a lit vigil candle small but bright in everyone's hand. In prayerful silence the candles were placed on top of the seven color cloths. Then the gong rang seven times, and in silence everybody prayed for peace. At 9:21 PM humming the "song of blessings," slowly the participants, wearing the wristband with the word peace on it as a reminder to continue praying for peace, quietly left the hall. One God, one world, one people, one hope, and one prayer: **PEACE.**