



SVD CHINA PROVINCE NEWSLETTER

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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 PROVINCIAL – ECOLOGICAL CONVERSION

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Reflection of the Encyclical Letter ‘Laudato Si’ of the Holy Father Francis on Care for our Common Home (Pentecost, May 24, 2015)

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Toward the end of this long encyclical, Pope Francis calls all Christians to “ecological conversion.” What all Christians need “is an ‘ecological conversion’ whereby the effects of their encounter with Jesus Christ become evident in their relationship with the world around them. Living our vocation to be protectors of God’s handiwork is essential to a life of virtue; it is not an optional or secondary aspect of our Christian experience” (¶ 217).

It would seem that we as Divine Word Missionaries have special resources to live out this ecological conversion. We have pronounced the three vows: poverty, chastity and obedience.

Poverty: we vow a simple life, living together with those whom we serve. The great enemy of Pope Francis is rampant consumerism. As missionaries, we make use of the things of things of this world – cars, the latest IT gadgets, air conditioning, a comfortable place to sleep, air travel – not as ends in themselves but in moderation to



allow us to pray and to do our work.

Chastity: our vow of chastity allows us to go beyond a focus on spouse and family and to have a special relationship with the broader human community. This encyclical suggests that our vow of chastity should bring us into a special relationship with all God's creation.

Obedience: our purpose in life is not the attainment more things or even to succeed in the normal sense of the word. Obedience is our promise to work as a team for the goals of the SVD and of the Church. The encyclical reminds us that one of our common goals must be to care for the environment.

I also suggest that we as SVDs have resources beyond those of other religious congregations. Arnold Janssen took science very seriously. So does Pope Francis in this encyclical. Global warming, the ozone hole, species extinction and loss of biodiversity, limits of growth, these are all the results of careful science. We have to take the science seriously, and not be persuaded by various ideologies, whether on the right or left.

SVDs are part of an international network allowing each SVD through our shared experience to have a close, almost personal, experience of the world as a unified eco-system under threat. This can involve dealing with threats to aboriginal cultures whether in Brazil, the United



States or Taiwan; dealing with the threat of large-scale mining whether in Indonesia, Papua New Guinea or Africa; dealing with the threat of rising sea waters whether in the islands of the Pacific or the Netherlands; dealing with the scourge pollution whether air pollution in the cities of China or dead zones in the coral reefs and in the oceans; dealing with the threat of desertification, whether in the Sahel of northern Africa or the deserts of China. A most useful tool to deal with these global issues is VIVAT, the SVD/SSpS NGO at the United Nations in New York.

The encyclical also stresses each individual's "ecological citizenship" (¶ 211). Are we doing our part to lessen the burden to the environment – using manufactured goods and energy in a responsible way? Are we sharing the ecological message with those whom we serve whether in schools, parishes or in the media? Our characteristic dimension was long ago changed to Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation (JPIC). The encyclical stresses that justice, peace and an equitable social order can

*Triune God,
wondrous community of infinite love,
Teach us to contemplate you
In the beauty of the universe,
For all things speak of you.
“Awaken our praise and thankfulness
For every being that you have made,
Give us the grace to feel profoundly joined
To everything that is” (¶ 246).*

never be separated from environmental concerns. However, my feeling is that in our JPIC work, we often ignore the integrity of creation (IC).

I encourage you to read the encyclical (it's a long haul). I encourage all of us to change our personal lives and our ministry to take seriously Pope Francis' concerns. There is also much that the encyclical does not say. As perhaps is appropriate for a church document, there are pages and pages of ethical maxims, but little guidance on dealing

with the difficult scientific, economic and sociological questions that must be dealt with if human kind is to face the threats to the environment. Even less are there concrete political strategies to allow nations and groups to come together and work for environmental integrity. This is the mission of the Christian laity, together with global citizens of all religious persuasions. But as SVDs we must stand behind and encourage our lay colleagues to meet the challenge. Each of us, according to our particular vocation, has a responsibility to “care for our common home.”

Frank Budenholzer, SVD



A Journey of Dedication: Diamond Jubilee of Priesthood



On the beautiful morning of 19 April 2015, in the Immaculate Sacred Heart Chapel at Fu Jen Catholic University, Rev. Paulin Suo SVD presided at the thanksgiving Eucharist on the 60th anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood. The concelebrants were Archbishop John Hung SVD, the Provincial of China Province, SVD conferrers, the University Chaplain and clergy from other congregations. In the

homily Rev. Lai, the chaplain of Fu Jen Catholic University, read out Fr. Suo's written appreciation of the journey of his religious life in SVD.

Fr. Suo was born in 1923 in China. In 1947 he joined SVD and in 1955 was ordained to the priesthood. He left China during the Chinese civil war in 1949 and spent nearly two decades as a missionary in the Philippines. He was assigned to Taiwan and worked at Fu Jen Catholic University. In 1978 he was appointed to be the director of the evening division at the university. During his service, the tutor system for the classes in the evening school was established to offer holistic care for the pupils. It is still successfully operating at the university and has been valued both by the university administration and the pupils. This action reflected the university mission statement as promoting a holistic education from the Catholic perspective.

During this period, Fr. Suo was asked to tackle the issue of a piece of land which was bought by SVD and then continually occupied by farmers who refused to vacate. After the litigation process, the land was given back to become the property of the university instead of the SVD due to government regulations. In 1980 the revenue from the evening school helped in the construction of the university administration building and the student union building. It also was used to subsidize the opening of the division of professional and continuing education.

In 1980 Fr. Suo was elected both as rector of the SVD community at the university and as district superior in northern Taiwan. In order to encourage and invite more international SVD conferrers to join the Chinese mission, he launched the Overseas Training programs (OTP), both in Taipei for Chinese language learning and in Hong Kong for learning Cantonese. This process built a solid foundation for the province to grow progressively and to be nurtured in an intercultural and international environment for all the later



generations of the SVDs in the province.

In 1983, he went back to his home town in Shandong, China. During his visits in these years, more than 300 people were baptized. With the growing number of Catholics there, the need to find a place for all the faithful became an urgent matter to him. In 1991 he raised a fund to build a chapel in his hometown and named it Bl. Joseph Freinademetz Chapel.

In 1987 he was elected and appointed by the SVD Generalate Office in Rome as the Provincial of SVD China Province. During his term as provincial, the China Province financial foundation was developed to be self-sufficient due to a piece of land in Taipei County being sold, and a huge building project that was planned and implemented. Moreover, the profit generated from this project helped to build the Cardinal Tien Memorial Chapel, located next to the mission house in Chiayi in southern Taiwan. In addition, as part of the Taipei County building project, a cooperative project between SVD and a housing management company was initiated to build a high rise in which rooms could be rented out. This project has provided funding for annually supporting the mission expenses in the province and financially contributing to the Generalate Office in Rome.

In 1997 he was appointed to be the pastor of Linkou Parish in Taipei area. The old chapel belonged to the Benedictine Congregation and became too small for the Catholics there, because the number of parishioners had increased from about 100 to 300. In the years of parish work, Fr Suo successfully raised funds to build a new chapel for the local parishioners. This newly built chapel was named after one of the SVD saints, St. Joseph Freinademetz. The number of Catholics was still growing when he resigned from the position of parish priest.

In 2009 he retired and left parish work to live in the SVD Fu Jen community, where he lives today. In his retirement, he is still quite energetic in the mission venture. Hence, in 2014 he managed to organize and build an adult volunteer group to financially and physically support the local church at Taipei. He currently still produces articles for the various church newsletters and magazines.

His contribution to SVD China Province and the church in Taiwan is quite inspirational and encouraging for SVD conferrers from different generations. At the age of 93, his dedication to the religious missionary life can be identified as a role model as well. His devoted prayer life keeps accompanying and helping the mission of all of the congregation members here. May the precious Lord continue to guide and bless him and all SVDs working in China Province for the glorifying of the Kingdom of God.

Anthony Chiu Hung-Jen, SVD

Father Liu's Diamond Jubilee of Priesthood



Congratulations to Father Joseph *Liu Wei-Huo* on the occasion of his 60th anniversary of ordination! Amazing! He was full of energy on April 18 2015 as he celebrated 60 years of service as a priest. This year he is already 93 years of age, but with a clear mind. I cannot imagine how and when I will reach this event, even though my age is just a half of his at this time of his diamond jubilee.

In my life time I never have seen this kind of event. It is the first time in my life I saw it. Actually in our *Chia Yi* Community house there are two other senior retired priests; their ages are more than 95 years old: Father Paul Chen Hsi-Hsuin and Father Bartley Schmitz. Both of them had their diamond jubilees last year, but we didn't celebrate them because of health concerns. Father Liu was the main celebrant of his diamond jubilee Mass; created his own songs for the Mass and gave the sermon in his own unique style. He Praised God for such abundant grace that he never before imagined.

Fr. Liu was born in a small mountain village in *Shan Dong* Province, in his grandparents' house. Based on their family story, it is said that our Saint Joseph Freinademetz sometimes would stay overnight in his grandparents' house after catechism classes in the mountainous area. When he was around two years old, his parents left their grandparents' house and moved down hill to another settled area. He left his parents' house when he was fourteen to joined SVD in *Pu Li* (where the first SVD mission house was built by Fr. Freinademetz and Bishop Anzer). When he was 25 years old, because of the Mainland China internal difficulties, he left China for further study in the Philippines and was ordained in Manila by a Dominican Bishop.

He spent 8 years in the Philippines mission, speaking Tagalog fluently, even until now. And then he moved to Taiwan. For more than 50 years he worked in many parishes and missions station around Taiwan.

He left his parents' house for almost 80 years. Last year he just went back to Mainland China and saw again his parents' house which is now being taken care of by his 85 years old nephew.

Father Liu, Congratulations! You are our best example missionary!

Rudy Us'Abatan, SVD

Sharing

When Pope Francis declared 2015 the Year of Consecrated Life, I was reminded that 68 years ago, I had been touched by the Word of God and decided to enter the Minor Seminary of the Society of the Divine Word in my neighborhood. 1953 I entered the Major Seminary at St. Augustin near Bonn, which was then the capital of West Germany to continue my studies. Then came May 1, 1955!



Together with about 40 other young men, who like me had been admitted to pronounce their vows, I promised – for one year!-Poverty, Chastity and Obedience as a member of the Society of the Divine Word. Five years later, on August 4, 1960, together with my batch mates we were ordained SVD priests and prepared to be sent to the Missions. I arrived in the Philippines in 1962, stayed there for 22 years and was sent to Hong Kong in 1984, to continue my priestly work here.

Sixty years have passed, since that 1 May, 1955 in Germany and seven of us forty, who had pronounced their first vows then, are still alive. I thank the Good Lord in Heaven every day that He has chosen me and kept me alive until today. I know that it is not my work that I can renew my vows after sixty years. The Lord has done it and Him be the thanks and eternal Glory.



I am most grateful to the Lord that I can renew my vows here in Hong Kong, the place where our first SVD missionary, Saint Joseph Freinademetz, started his apostolate almost 140 years ago. He was my ideal, to him I prayed many times for help and protection and I am sure that without his intercession could not have reached this goal. Thank you, St. Joseph Freinademetz. I pray in the Year of Consecrated Life that St. Joseph may inspire others

to follow his footsteps.

Final Vows



On 5th May, 2015, Frt. Peter Hein professed his final vows at the Divine Word Chapel at Sing Secondary School, Kowloon, Hong Kong. Together in the same ceremony was Frt. Arjay Venus, who renewed his temporary vows. Fr. Frank Budenholzer, the Provincial Superior of the China Province led the liturgy together with Hong Kong -Macau district confreres.

The Profession of Vows was also witnessed by some friends among who were Vietnamese Priests and Nuns. The ceremony was followed by a simple Dinner held in the SVD residence. To Frt. Peter Hein and Frt. Arjay, our warm Congratulations and prayers for your perseverance.

Jay Flandez SVD

HKM District Annual Retreat 2015

The annual retreat of HKM district was held from 17th to 21st August. It was held at the Diocesan Retreat House at Chung Hum Kok, close to Stanley. The theme of the retreat was “Joyful witnesses and Vibrant Missionaries”. It was guided by Fr. Ittoop Panikulam SVD, the former Nemi Rector. In the introductory talk he told us that silence, solitude, stillness and space are important for a good retreat. For the opening mass provincial Frank was the main celebrant. Fr. Ittoop began the retreat by inviting us to re-visit our own story of life. The purpose of it is to come home, to come back to the real me.



This retreat was a time to re-discover one-self. He also led meditations for those who were interested in the morning. The retreat concluded on 21st with closing mass presided by Fr. Ittoop.

James Areechira SVD

Celebration of 140th Anniversary of the Founding of the SVD

On September 8, 2015, the Divine Word Missionaries of Taiwan, along with members of our sister congregations the Missionary Sisters Servants of the Holy Spirit and the Oblates of the Holy Family, gathered with other friends of the SVD at the Parish of St. Joseph Freinademetz in New Taipei City, Linkou District. The celebration included four components: celebration of the feast of the nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the commemoration of the 140th anniversary of the founding of the SVD, the renewal of vows of four SVD confreres and the celebration of jubilees of vows and priesthood. Thanks to Father Lito and the parishioners of St. Freinademetz Parish for hosting the event.



SVD formation community of Taiwan, including the four who renewed vows Martin, Patrik, Joseph and Anthony.

Fr. Steven Budianto (vows 25 years), Fr. Roland Klose (priesthood 25 years), and Fr. Paulino Suo (priesthood 60 years).



The Arnoldus family gathered for the celebration.



SVD Taiwan Southern District Open Day

On the afternoon of Saturday, September 12, 2015, the China Province, Taiwan South District held an open day for parishioners of SVD administered parishes in the Chiayi Diocese as well as administrators and students from Fu Jen High School. At 2:00 PM over 100 persons gathered at the Chiayi central house. They divided into two groups one first to join a prayer service led by Fr. Wlad Madeja and the second to hear a briefing on the history and work of the SVD, led by Fr. Anthony Pham. At the half hour, the two groups switched places. A little after 3:00 PM, all gathered together to celebrate the 140 anniversary of the foundation of the SVD and, a special addition, to offer Fr. Liu Wei-Ho a special memento of the 60th anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood.

