

Divine Word Missionaries  
P.O. Box 6099  
Techny, Illinois 60082-6099

Non-Profit Org  
U.S. Postage

**PAID**  
Divine Word  
Missionaries

May the Lord accept this sacrifice for the praise and the glory of his name...

### Mass Intentions

Please arrange for these Masses to be celebrated by Divine Word Missionaries.

Accept my Mass offering of:

Individual Mass  \$5

Triduum of Masses  \$15

Novena of Masses  \$45

### Mass Intention:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Living  Deceased

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_



Ask about prearranged Masses to be offered at later time.

## Give the precious gift of faith

Divine Word Missionaries gladly celebrate Masses requested by our benefactors.

Your Mass offering directly helps and supports the missionaries in their ministries.

**Call toll free 800-275-0626**  
or visit our website at:  
**www.svdmissions.org**

# Divine Word

**Missionaries Magazine**  
Mission Updates from around the World

Fall 2013



Faith is God's precious gift ...

I would like to encourage everyone to be a bearer of the good news of Christ and I am grateful especially to missionaries, to the *Fidei Donum* priests, men and women religious and lay faithful - more and more numerous - who by accepting the Lord's call, leave their homeland to serve the Gospel in different lands and cultures.

Pope Francis  
Message for World Mission Day 2013

## PLEASE Remember Divine Word Missionaries in your Will

When you are preparing your Will or estate plan, please consider including Divine Word Missionaries.

Through your legacy gift, you will help Divine Word Missionaries continue the Church's missionary work you so generously supported during your life.

Our legal title is:

**Divine Word Missionaries, Inc.**  
**P.O. Box 6099**  
**Techny, IL 60082**

You may plan a specific bequest. For example:

**"I bequeath the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
to Divine Word Missionaries,  
a nonprofit corporation located  
in Techny, Illinois."**

You may designate a more general bequest.

For example:

**"I bequeath \_\_\_\_\_% of my estate  
to Divine Word Missionaries,  
a nonprofit corporation  
located in Techny, Illinois."**

A residual bequest directs that Divine Word Missionaries will receive all (or a specified portion) of your assets remaining after funeral costs, medical expenses, specific bequests, and administrative costs have been paid.

You may also discuss with your legal or tax advisor other options in your estate planning, for example using life insurance, retirement plans, and other financial resources to benefit the charities you have supported during your lifetime.

If you would like to discuss your estate planning with us, please contact us:

**Divine Word Missionaries**  
**P.O. Box 6099 • Techny, IL 60082**  
**800-275-0626**

## Celebrating Milestones

"Success is the sum of small efforts, repeated day in and day out."

(Robert J. Collier)

I had never heard of Robert J. Collier until I ran across his quote about success, which he defines as the sum of small efforts, repeated day in and day out. I thought of this quote as we were preparing this issue of *Divine Word Missionaries Magazine*, which celebrates the seventy-fifth anniversary of the arrival of the first Divine Word Missionaries in Ghana and the fiftieth anniversary of Divine Word Seminary in Tagaytay, Philippines.

I also thought of another anniversary that was observed without much fanfare or hoopla last July at Techny. Brother Cyril Schroeder SVD celebrated the **eightieth** anniversary of his first profession of religious vows. Last January, Bro. Cyril celebrated his one hundredth birthday, a milestone which a few other Divine Word Missionaries have attained, but I know of no one who has celebrated eighty years in vows. Although we do not usually use "success" to describe a member's fidelity to religious vows, the "day in and day out" part of Collier's quote is certainly an appropriate description of Bro. Cyril's faithfulness to his vocation.

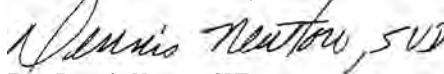
Bro. Cyril came to Techny as a teenager and was trained as a linotype technician in the Mission Press. Day in and day out he sat at a linotype machine typing scripts in English, German, or Latin, depending on the publication. Years of inhaling hot lead fumes resulted in lead poisoning and it was necessary for him to leave the press. Superiors undoubtedly worried that this condition would take years from Bro. Cyril's life. From the press, he moved to the tailor shop and spent many years tailoring. When the tailor shop was gradually downsized, Bro. Cyril worked at the switchboard and front desk. He also took care of the community library. It was only recently that he gave up working at the front desk. In whatever job he had, Bro. Cyril brought a steady and faithful spirit of service. His achievement did not come in one or two glamorous accomplishments, but in the day in and day out dedication to religious life.

Our mission in Ghana had humble beginnings. Two missionaries were assigned to the new mission and within a very short period of time, one of the missionaries had to return to Europe. That left only Father Alphonse Elsbernd SVD, an American, as the single pioneer. From this small beginning has grown a large and vibrant mission, where today 155 Divine Word Missionaries serve.

In this issue, you are also invited to read about the foundation of Divine Word Seminary in Tagaytay, Philippines. Again, the success of this outstanding institution can be attributed to the service of countless Divine Word Missionaries who took on their daily responsibilities with great dedication and perseverance. Our generation of missionaries who celebrate the golden jubilee of the seminary are indebted to prior generations who labored day in and day out.

I would like to thank you, our faithful readers and benefactors, who support our missionary work day in and day out without great fuss or fanfare. You make our missionary work possible and our hearts grateful.

Yours in the Divine Word,



Bro. Dennis Newton SVD  
Mission Director

Contact me any time; my e-mail address is: [director@svdmissions.org](mailto:director@svdmissions.org)

# DIVINE WORD MISSIONARIES

AN INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY OF ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIESTS AND BROTHERS

## The Band of Twelve Pioneers *Charles Schneider SVD*

2

Looking back upon that band of twelve pioneers, we survey the outstanding growth of the Divine Word Missionary mission in Ghana that took place during their time.

## Lessons from Ghana *Stanley Uroda SVD*

6



## A Time for Everything *George Jagodzinski SVD*



This beautiful church reflects the hope, faith, enthusiasm, and growing spiritual vitality of the dedicated Catholics who joyfully worship there once again.

## Hope and New Opportunities Rise from the Ashes *Dennis Newton SVD*



Now, five years later, there is peace in the area. Most of the churches, convents, and schools have been rebuilt. According to the archbishop, "The local non-Christians who participated in the persecution ask forgiveness for all that happened."

## Grace Upon Grace: Divine Word Seminary, Tagaytay *Aris Martin SVD*

14



Tagaytay

## Our Brothers' Contribution: 75 Years in Ghana *Rex Vegby SVD*

16



## Divine Word Farm, Weldon: Feed Body and Soul *Michael Hutchins SVD*

18

**Their eagerness was palpable; their sense of purpose, evident.**

## Kid's Plan-It

20



page 2

page 6

**What we choose to remember shapes us — shapes our attitudes, our perceptions, and our joy in life.**



**Alphonse Elsbernd SVD**

The first Divine Word Missionary to arrive in Ghana was Father Alphonse Elsbernd SVD. Born in Festina, Iowa, in 1899, his life spanned almost the entire twentieth century. After ordination at Techny, Fr. Elsbernd was assigned to Rome for further

studies and then served as a seminary teacher in the United States, Germany, and England.

Fr. Elsbernd came to Ghana (formerly called the Gold Coast) near the end of 1938, along with Father August Gehring SVD, a veteran Togo missionary. Fr. Gehring got sick in his first month in the Gold Coast and had to return to Germany, never to return to Africa.

Fr. Elsbernd personally played a great part in the phenomenal growth of the new mission. It was particularly in the field of education that he excelled. He founded the Catholic Mission Educational Unit and became its first general manager. Through his efforts, primary and middle schools mushroomed throughout the mission, both in the urban and rural areas. He pushed so hard to get new schools started that he became something of an irritation to the officials in the Colonial Government Education Department. But without Fr. Elsbernd's vigorous tactics, our Catholic schools would never have developed in the grand way they did. He pressed too for the establishment of Mount Mary Training College and other secondary schools in the Diocese of Accra. He became the first rector of Pope John Secondary School and Minor Seminary in Effiduase. In addition to all his work in the educational field, he served as pastor in many parishes.

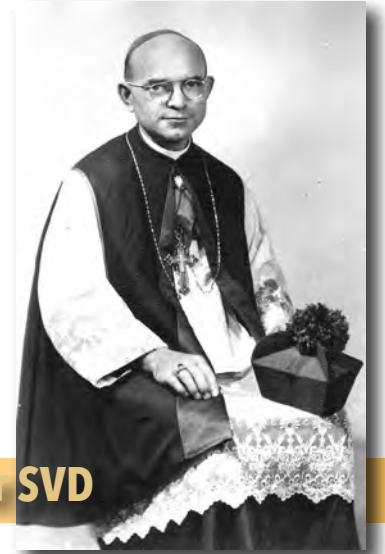
Fr. Elsbernd left Ghana in 1977 after thirty-three years of yeoman service. Returning to the United States, he served as a hospital chaplain in New Hampton, Iowa, until he retired at Techny. He kept busy collecting stamps for the missions and passed away at the age of ninety-eight.



**Charles Schneider SVD**

# THE BAND OF TWELVE PIONEERS

*photos provided by of the Robert M. Myers Archives, Society of the Divine Word*



**Adolph Noser SVD**

Father Adolph Noser SVD was the rector of the Techny community when the superior general selected him to become the first superior of the Gold Coast mission. The appointment hit a snag when the doctor who examined Fr. Noser declared him unfit for life in the tropics. There was little the superior general could do but inform Fr. Noser—that he should find a second doctor. A third doctor finally cleared him for service in Africa. Years later, Fr. Elsbernd wrote, “Fr. Noser became an indefatigable missionary in the Gold Coast, the first bishop of the Diocese of Accra and later the archbishop of the Papua New Guinea mission.” Archbishop Noser died in 1981 at the age of eighty-one.

Fr. Noser was the right man at the right time to be superior of the mission. He was a very spiritual man, who amid all his activities was still able to spend hours in prayer each day. He became the model of the busy missionary, going on treks and opening new mission stations.

Due to the remarkable growth of the mission and its progress, the Accra Mission became a prefecture in 1944, a vicariate in 1947, and a diocese in 1950, with Fr. Noser becoming the first bishop. When he left the Gold Coast in 1953, there were 14 residential stations, 227 outstations, 35,000 Catholics, and 775 teachers in the Catholic schools.



*photos provided by of the Robert M. Myers Archives, Society of the Divine Word*



**Harold Rigney SVD**

Father Harold Rigney SVD, the famous missionary and scientist, came from the United States in 1939 to teach at the prestigious Achimota Government School. During World War II, Fr. Rigney was commissioned in Accra as an officer in the United States Army. After serving as a chaplain in North Africa, he was missioned to the Philippines and then to China, where he became rector of the Catholic University in Peking. While serving as rector, he was imprisoned by the Chinese Communists. In his book *Four Years in a Red Hell*, Fr. Rigney told the story of his suffering in the Chinese prison. After his release, he returned to the United States and became rector of Divine Word College in Epworth, Iowa.



**Cletus Hodapp SVD**

Father Cletus Hodapp SVD arrived in 1941. We must call him one of the foundation stones of the Gold Coast Mission. He worked in pastoral ministry and administration. In fact, he was one of “the big three,” as we jokingly referred to Noser, Elsbernd, and Hodapp. Fr. Hodapp served as the treasurer of the mission and later superior, after Bishop Noser.



**James Doerfler SVD**

Two American Brothers arrived in the mission from its beginning. Brother James Doerfler SVD was the mission accountant. He became famous for running the first religious bookstore and a supply shop for missionaries. Brother Lucian Orians SVD was both a builder and all-around maintenance man. These two Brothers contributed enormously to the growth of the Church in the Gold Coast. They were the forerunners of the large stream of Brothers who would come to Ghana to build up and maintain the mission. It is not possible to imagine how the mission could have grown so solidly and rapidly without the services and ministries of these Brothers.



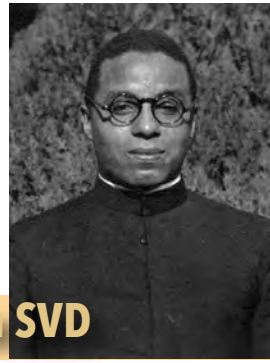
**Lucian Orians SVD**

Father Joseph Bowers SVD, from the West Indies, was ordained in at Saint Augustine’s Seminary in Bay St. Louis, Mississippi, and arrived in the Gold Coast in 1939. He became the first missionary in the Krobo area. This was in essence the most pioneering work in the entire mission. He succeeded Bishop Noser as Ordinary of Accra in 1953. In 1971, he was appointed the first bishop of the Diocese of St. John’s–Basseterre in the West Indies. He returned in retirement to Ghana and died on November 5, 2012, at the age of 102.

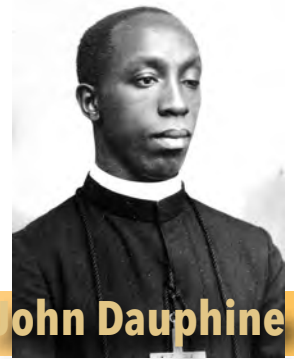


**Joseph Bowers SVD**

*photos provided by of the Robert M. Myers Archives, Society of the Divine Word*



**George Wilson SVD**



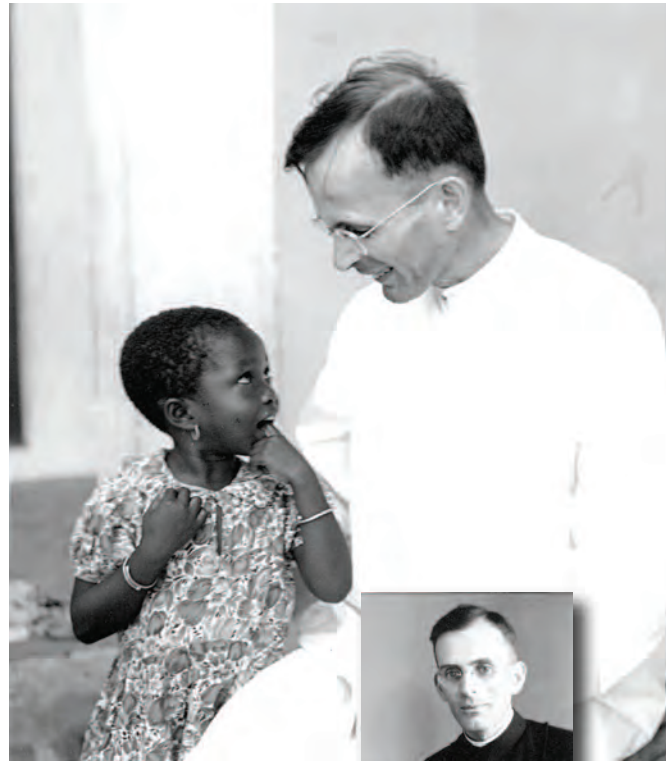
**John Dauphine SVD**

The arrival of Fathers George Wilson SVD and John Dauphine SVD, two African American missionaries, added greatly to the witness of Divine Word Missionaries. They served as pastors and were especially beloved by the Ghanaian people.

Father Joseph Lauck SVD came to the Gold Coast in 1941. His work in the various parishes of Accra was excellent. He also took up the work of chaplaincy in the mammoth Korle-Bu Hospital.

Two more outstanding pastors were Fathers Anthony Bauer SVD and Aloysius Turbek SVD. Pastoral work has always formed the backbone of the mission. At the heart and center of missionary work are proclaiming of the gospel and shepherding the Christian community. Fr. Turbek is especially famous for developing the Nkawkaw mission, while Fr. Bauer started his work in Adoajiri-Nsawam. In the beginning, he traveled around his station using a bicycle.

Looking back upon that band of twelve pioneers, we survey the outstanding growth of the Divine Word Missionary mission in Ghana that took place during their time. The progress was not only on the material side, with the building of churches and schools, but also on the spiritual side, as Christians grew in the faith. It was indeed a time of pioneering and sowing the seed that continues to bear abundant fruits. ♦



**Joseph Lauck SVD**

**Anthony Bauer SVD**



**Aloysius Turbek SVD**



*photos provided by of the Robert M. Myers Archives, Society of the Divine Word*



# Lessons from Ghana

**Stanley Uroda SVD**



When I was ordained in 1974, I was lucky to be assigned to Ghana, my first choice as a mission assignment. It was a time of intensive adjustments and learning at many levels. The story I would like to share is one that has revealed many layers of meaning for me in the years since it happened.

During the time I was chaplain at St. Paul's Technical School in Kukurantumi, Ghana, people sometimes needed a ride to the hospital in the middle of the night. There was no clinic in town and getting a taxi driver out of bed was very expensive.

Once, Master Stephen, the headmaster of our grammar school and the catechist of the parish, woke me at about two o'clock in the morning and asked me to bring a relative of his to the hospital. The young woman was experiencing a very difficult childbirth.

I got up immediately and we drove to a side road where several people, including the woman in labor, walked out of the forest. I do not know how she managed to walk or how they all fit into the back seat, but I hit the gas and headed to the Catholic hospital, trying to avoid any big bumps and praying the baby would wait just a little longer.

We arrived and I waited in the parking lot for some hours until several family members came out. They reported that the birth was successful. We drove back to Kukurantumi, while the mother and baby remained at the hospital.





When my passengers indicated the place to stop and let them out, they all filed out of the car and went straight into the bush without a word of thanks. Nothing! They just walked away.

I sat there fuming about such impolite behavior until I remembered that, in Ghana, people normally come the day after to formally thank people for a special favor. So I cooled down, chastised myself for my hasty judgments, and drove home to sleep.

The next day I expected them to come at any time, so I stayed home because I did not want to miss them. But they did not come in the morning, or in the afternoon, or in the evening. They did not come the next day either.

They did not come. There was no “thank you” for me after getting up in the middle of the night to save the lives of the child and its mother.

This event got under my skin. I began to wonder, if even the head catechist, whom I considered a friend, has no appreciation for the efforts we make here, does anyone care what we do? Are we just taken for granted and used when needed?

Once it was under my skin, it worked its way into my heart, “People here don’t appreciate us.” Life started to look a little different.





*Cultures are different from one another in more*



The days and months went by and I still did my work and did it well, but some of the joy was gone and a bit of cynicism took its place. It changed my outlook and affected my spirit.

Exactly one year later, I was sitting in my office and saw a small group of people coming down the walk toward our mission house. Master Stephen was there, as were a young woman carrying a baby, an elder, and a child carrying a basket with a chicken, eggs, and yams.

They came to thank me for bringing them to the hospital when the woman was having a difficult time delivering her baby.

You see, all Ghanaians do not have the same customs. Master Stephen and his family were Ewe, one of the many ethnic groups in Africa. I was only familiar with the customs of the Akim. When you do something special for a Ewe, they remember your kindness for one full year and prepare over that time to bring you gifts in gratitude for your help.

So, while they spent one year holding gratitude in their hearts, I spent one year holding resentment in my heart for their lack of gratitude.



*ways than we first realize.*

In a very real sense, they decided to dwell in gratitude and be shaped by it. I decided to be resentful and I was shaped by my resentment. It affected how I perceived things, how I interpreted events, and how I felt about my own vocation.

Obviously, they taught me some very valuable lessons that day. Cultures are different from one another in more ways than we first realize. It is all too easy to judge others by what we think we know.

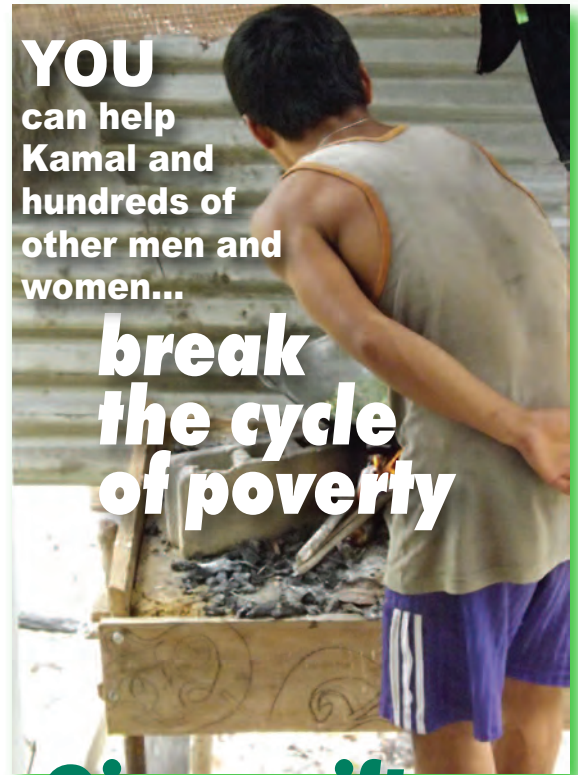
Another important lesson for me was that we choose what to remember about anything from our past experience. There are plenty of occasions that remind us to be grateful for all we have received. And there are plenty of memories that can poison our spirits.

What we choose to remember shapes us—shapes our attitudes, our perceptions, and our joy in life. It is always our choice. It does not make the hurts disappear, but it keeps them from infecting the rest of our lives. Ghana taught me to choose to remember all the graces and blessings.♦

**Kamal is one of the young men assisting Bro. Fransiskus.**

**He came from a nearby village because he wants to learn a trade and better his life.**

**Kamal is willing to work hard, believing that this training program will lead to a new and better life through education.**



**YOU  
can help  
Kamal and  
hundreds of  
other men and  
women...**

**break  
the cycle  
of poverty**

**Give a gift  
today!** *Online*

**DONATE ONLINE AT [WWW.SVDMISSEIONS.ORG](http://WWW.SVDMISSEIONS.ORG)**

**OR CALL toll FREE at  
800 275 0626**



# A TIME FOR EVERYTHING

George Jagodzinski SVD



Everything that happens in this world happens at the time God chooses. He sets the time for birth and the time for death, the time for planting and the time for pulling up, the time for killing and the time for healing, the time for tearing down and the time for building.

(Eccl. 3:1ff)

In the Fall 2009 issue of *Divine Word Missionaries Magazine*, I wrote about the Catholic community at Znamiensk in Kaliningrad Oblast, Russia, and their efforts to have the Church of Our Lady of Sorrows returned to them. During the Soviet years, the church was used as a warehouse and space for electrical and carpentry workshops. Then it fell into ruin and was abandoned. Although they were denied access to the church, the Catholics of the area began to gather outside for prayers in the 1990s. Over the years since then, we continued to celebrate the Liturgy outside its door when the weather was nice.



Where do we get the money and the workers for our renovation project? Who will prepare the plan? Where do we get the strength for this work? On February 24, 2010, these urgent questions began to fill our minds. That day, after a frustrating, three-year struggle, the Catholics of Znamiensk were granted the legal rights to their beloved, but dilapidated, Church of Our Lady of Sorrows and its nearby cemetery for forty-nine years.

We faced the daunting challenges of clearing the grounds of debris, removing years of graffiti, removing clumsy structural additions from Soviet times, rebuilding a long-lost bell tower, reroofing, installing windows, plastering, finding liturgical furnishings . . . the needs seemed endless, and some still remain, such as fencing and improvements to the heating and water systems.



Finally, on November 24, 2012, the eve of the feast of Christ the King, the parish community of Znamiensk welcomed the archbishop of Moscow, Most Rev. Pawel Pezzi, and many visitors for the rededication of the restored Church of Our Lady of Sorrows.

This beautiful church reflects the hope, faith, enthusiasm, and growing spiritual vitality of the dedicated Catholics who joyfully worship there once again. We place all our hope and trust in God and in the Virgin Mary, our loving mother, and we pray that a renewed spiritual life will continue to take root and flourish in Russia.◆



## Hope and New Opportunities Rise from the Ashes

Dennis Newton SVD

**“ . . . learn to do good. Make justice your aim: redress the wrong, hear the orphan’s plea, defend the widow.”** (Isaiah 1:17)

When Archbishop John Barwa SVD, of the Archdiocese of Cuttack-Bhubaneswar in the Indian state of Odisha, spoke to the community at Techny, he preferred to speak of hope and opportunities rather than focusing on the devastating events of Christmastime 2008.

The Divine Word Missionaries at Techny were, however, very aware of what happened in the Kandhamal District of Odisha when Hindu fundamentalists launched a series of violent attacks on the Christian community. Before it was over, ninety-three Christians were murdered, nearly six thousands home of Christians were destroyed, more than 350 churches, medical clinics, convents, and schools were burned to the ground, and 55,000 Christians had fled to the forest to survive the massacre. The persecutions lasted for almost two months.





*Five years later, there is peace in the area.*



Now, five years later, there is peace in the area. Most of the churches, convents, and schools have been rebuilt. According to the archbishop, “The local non-Christians who participated in the persecution ask forgiveness for all that happened. They say that they were instigated, given drugs and drink, and they never realized what they were doing. They are very sorry. And our people tell them that although they cannot forget, they certainly have forgiven them.”

Most importantly, Archbishop Barwa is proud of his people. They tell him, “The persecutors destroyed our houses, burned and looted our property, brutally massacred our loved ones, but nothing could separate us from Christ.”

Archbishop Barwa expressed his deep appreciation and gratitude for the assistance provided through the Mission Center at Techny, which was spearheaded by Father Richie Vaz SVD, a member of the Mission Center staff, and Doctor Rita Larrivee of South Carolina, who took up the cause of the widows and orphans in Kandhamal.



While much progress has been made in Odisha, much more needs to be done. With the support of our benefactors and the guidance of two communities of religious Sisters, the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Annecy and the



Daughters of Charity, the widows of Odisha have formed self-help groups to create a new future for themselves and the children of the community.

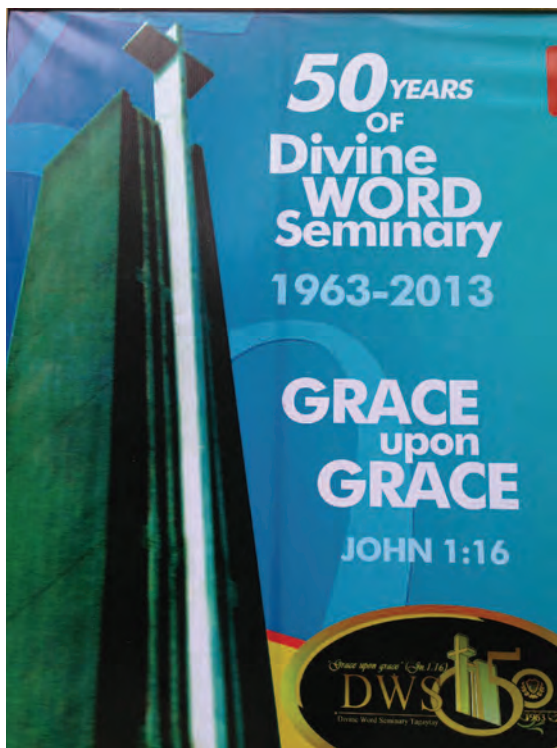
Using clay from the fields, the women manufacture bricks, which are sold in the local market. They collect leaves from the forest to make “leaf plates,” a common product used by the people of the region for dining. The widows are leasing land, where they grow peanuts, mustard, vegetables, and rice. They also raise chickens, pigs, and goats.

The Mission Center, Dr. Larrivee, the Sisters, and the widows are planning to establish a new school in Kandhamal. At present, the nearest school is six hours away and only students who can afford to pay boarding fees can attend. A local school will make a dramatic improvement in the lives of the children and help to prepare them for the future. This initiative will require the purchase of land and building the school.

Just a few years ago, only bad news was coming from Odisha. Now we are heartened by the good news and the promise of even better things in the future. ♦







## Grace Upon Grace: Divine Word Seminary, Tagaytay

**Aris Martin, SVD**



Real estate professionals say that the three key characteristics of desirability are location, location, location. When the superiors at Christ the King Seminary in Quezon City, one of the cities in Metro Manila, determined that the seminary was overcrowded, they began looking for a place to locate some of Christ the King's programs.

In 1963, the final choice came down to Tagaytay. The superior at the time summarized the pros and cons:

It is a dead city, for there are very few people living here and very few houses. Perhaps it is because of banditry and 'hold-ups' which have occurred not too infrequently in the past. However, the place itself is famous for its cool climate—much cooler than Manila, but milder than Baguio. Indeed, it is a place conducive to prayer, study, and meditation . . . Tagaytay City is also noted for its scenic spots, e.g., the panoramic, breath-taking view of Taal Lake with its famous volcano standing majestically in the midst.

Then superior general Father John Schuette SVD confirmed the purchase and the decision to move the novitiate, philosophy, and theology program to Tagaytay. A festive high Mass to invoke the blessing of the Holy Spirit was celebrated on July 20, 1964. The community began the year with 131 members.

Divine Word Seminary in Tagaytay has become a vibrant center of theological study in the Philippines. Today, seventeen religious communities

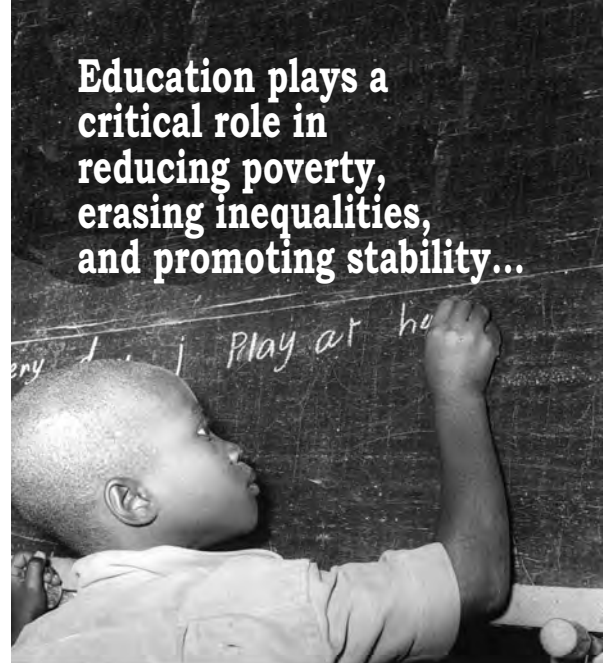


and dioceses have houses of formation in Tagaytay and send their seminarians to the seminary for theological education. The seminary offers ten academic degrees, including a licentiate in mission theology, a baccalaureate in sacred theology, and master's degrees in moral theology, systematic theology, and pastoral ministry. The seminary also offers courses in church management, mission and culture, and intercultural communication.

Twenty-three Divine Word Missionaries serve on Tagaytay's faculty, and they are joined by other priests, religious, and lay persons.

The golden jubilee celebration was launched on June 13, 2013, with a Mass in honor of the Holy Spirit. The theme of the year-long celebration is "Grace upon grace." Each month, the seminary will host a theological symposium covering different theological treatises. A special homecoming weekend is planned for March 2014, at which former superior general Father Antonio Pernia SVD will speak.

For more information about Divine Word Seminary, Tagaytay, and the golden jubilee celebration, you may visit [www.divinewordseminary.com](http://www.divinewordseminary.com) ♦



**Education plays a critical role in reducing poverty, erasing inequalities, and promoting stability...**

**Divine Word Missionaries' commitment to education has changed the lives of young people all over the world.**

For more than 130 years, Divine Word Missionaries have helped poor men, women, and children build a better future. Our work takes us to communities so remote that even basic services do not exist. There is no electricity or drinkable water. Medicine and doctors are in short supply, if available at all. Education as we know it does not exist.

**Breaking the poverty cycle in Kenya...**

In 2009, Divine Word Missionaries established Divine Word High School in Katani, Kenya. Today the school combines an excellent academic curriculum with a modern agricultural technologies agricultural program. The high school teaches modern agricultural technologies, trains students for future employment, and provides fresh food for the school's dining room, making the school less reliant on outside funding.

In poverty-stricken communities, the cost of hot meals, clothing, schoolbooks, and school fees are too expensive for most families.

**Your donation of \$15-\$20-\$25 can provide the path to break the cycle of poverty through education.**

**Any gift you send—large or small—will be a blessing to those in need!**



**Give a gift online:  
[svdmissions.org/educate](http://svdmissions.org/educate)**



# 75

## The Brothers' Contribution: Years in Ghana

Rex Vegby, SVD

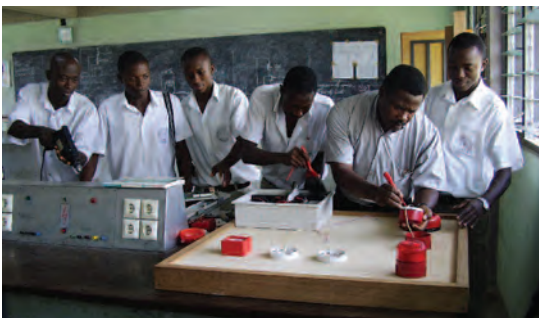
As the Ghana Province celebrates seventy-five years of evangelizing presence in Ghana, it is noteworthy to recognize the missionary presence of the Divine Word Missionary Brothers and their significant contributions to the development of the mission.



Our Brothers formed the foundation for building up the Ghana mission. Father Joseph Jud SVD, a missionary from Switzerland, was the architect of the beautiful Holy Spirit Cathedral and many other churches and buildings. But it was the Brothers who supervised the work and did the construction, sometimes climbing ladders up the tall walls of the cathedral with pans of concrete on their heads.



Our Brothers were active in the educational and pastoral fields as well. Another example of the great contribution of the Brothers is the Orthopedic Training Center at Nsawam, founded by Brother Tarcisius de Ruyter SVD, a missionary from the Netherlands. The story of Brother John Heckel SVD cannot be overemphasized. He established the automotive department at Saint Paul Technical School in Kukurantumi, dug wells and boreholes in the Brong Ahafo District, and helped tremendously the poor and needy in Tamale.





It was the Divine Word Missionary Brothers who started the workshops and St. Martin's Secondary School in Nsawam. Their work and skills developed and promoted Saint Paul Technical School. The carpenter shop at Kukurantumi was completely built, equipped, managed, and directed by our Brothers. Who could ever count the buildings they completed and roofed, or the furniture they provided for churches, schools, convents, hospitals, and residences. They opened and managed the Catholic Book Center and the Catholic Press in Accra. They taught in our schools and served pastorally in our parishes. Brothers have been active in the Biblical apostolate and in creating church music and organizing church choirs and bands. They have been the mainstays in many of our communities. If I continued to reminisce, I could add many more stories of the work of the Brothers in the Ghana mission.

"Knowing, Living, and Sharing the Word of God" is the theme chosen for our seventy-fifth anniversary celebration from October 2013 through November 2014. With a spirit of gratitude, we Divine Word Missionaries recommit ourselves to discerning how we can best fulfill our call to missionary service in Ghana today and in the future. We rely on the help of your prayers and friendship as we share with others what we have seen and heard, the Divine Word of God. ♦



# Divine Word Farm, Weldon: Feed Body and Soul

**Michael Hutchins SVD**

Two days after the close of their school year, with barely a pause to catch their breath, Divine Word College students Hoc Tien Mai, Thanh Quang Pham, and Hoang Minh Vu presented themselves at Divine Word Farm, Weldon. From their overloaded 2005 Chevy Impala, they unpacked work boots, leather gloves, protective eyewear, and Hoc Mai's portable garden, a collection of starter plants and specialty orchids. Their eagerness was palpable; their sense of purpose, evident. Their help was welcome indeed here at Divine Word Farm, Weldon, where springtime activity is intense.

Still dormant in our large refrigerator was an assortment of 200 tree seedlings, a mix of red oak, black cherry, quaking aspen, red pine, and blue spruce. Still on order and expected within the next day or two was another seedling package of river birch and redbud. We had no time to waste. Setting those seedlings was priority number one. With holes dug, soil amended, seedlings set and watered, that priority was realized within the first day and a half.

Still unplanted were two garden plots. One was for summer vegetable favorites, such as lettuce, beans, zucchini, eggplant, peppers, onions, radishes, and thirty-six tomato plants; and the other plot was for several varieties of cantaloupe, honey dew, and watermelon. Despite the early challenge of rainy weather and soggy ground, the students organized their plots and planted seeds. Through local care facilities and food banks, Divine Word Farm vegetables and melons provide a nutritious and tasty supplement to the diet of senior citizens and families in need. The students' combined efforts, under the leadership of gardener Hoc Mai, helped ensure continuation of this Divine Word Farm outreach into its second season.

On the drawing board, but not yet initiated, was an outdoor devotional Stations of the Cross. Hoang Vu, a veritable jack-of-all-trades, took an immediate interest in the project, reimagining it with youthful energy. Conceived originally as fifteen meditation points along a one-hundred-yard path, the Stations of the Cross expanded dramatically to fifteen pilgrimage stops across our 240-acre farm. From weather-resistant hedge posts, Hoang, Thanh, and Hoc fashioned a six-foot, wooden cross for each Station stop. Inset in a concrete marker at the foot of each cross is a metal depiction of the action of that Station. This youth-inspired *Via Crucis* is a meditation form requiring physical and spiritual energy. Positioned dramatically on a high hill at the east end of Divine Word Farm is Station XV celebrating Jesus' triumph over all sin and death. Pausing at Station XV, the devotee can take a short rest and survey the fields and wooded ravines below.





If Hoc Mai was our lead gardener and Hoang our mechanical engineer, Think, our youngest team member, offered generous support in all our undertakings. Eager to learn the “ins and outs” of our equipment, Think took quickly to our large riding mower. He became the principal “weed warrior” and grass mower, each week saving farm manager Dan Paxson several hours of lawn maintenance. Think also earned favored son status among our twenty-four Cochin hens and roosters.

Divine Word Farm, Weldon, tries to do two things: generate material support for Divine Word Missionary ministries overseas and, in so doing, celebrate the wonder and beauty of God’s creation. Our activities are both practical and symbolic, intended to produce a tangible good and always to point beyond to the ultimate source of all good, the God of life.

Hoang, Think, and Hoc were co-workers who came to the task with an already developed understanding of the global ministries of Divine Word Missionaries and an appreciation for the specific mission of Divine Word Farm. Readily they perceived the value of planting and nurturing trees, essential elements of a healthy and beautiful environment, and of developing gardens to produce food for those in need. Intuitively they grasped the symbolic importance of establishing the Stations of the Cross, claiming the ground of this farm for sacred purposes, proclaiming for everyone the compassionate love of Jesus.

Frequently, at the morning Eucharist, biblical images seemed more vivid: a farmer patiently awaiting the growth of newly planted seed; lilies of the field arrayed more beautifully than a king; a fig tree failing to bear fruit in a timely way; a compassionate shepherd searching out a lost sheep; disciples called to nourish the hungry. Illuminated by the scriptures, otherwise mundane chores and challenging tasks yielded to a deeper reflection on the purpose of one’s daily activity. Nourished by the Holy Eucharist, otherwise frail and limited human beings experienced the gentle grace of transformation and gained new insights into the mysteries of God’s providence.

It was a summer of blessings indeed! Many thanks from Divine Word Farm, Weldon, to Divine Word College students Hoang Minh Vu, Think Quang Pham, and Hoc Tien Mai for a summer of inspired and inspiring service. ♦





## Kids for Kids: Meet Bob and Banu

**Dennis Newton SVD**

When Father Michael Hutchins SVD and Mr. Dan Paxson on Divine Word Farm in Weldon, Iowa, learned about the project for the widows and orphans in Odisha, India, they wanted to help. Looking at the photographs that Father Richie Vaz SVD took in Odisha, they saw women tending their goats. That gave them the idea to use the income from their goat herd to assist the widows.

The Mission Center asked Mississippi artist Chris Roy to create two characters, an American goat and an Indian goat, to represent this initiative. Bob and Banu (pronounced Baa-NEW) were born. We are calling the program Kids for Kids, with the kid goats in Iowa supporting the widows and their children in Odisha.

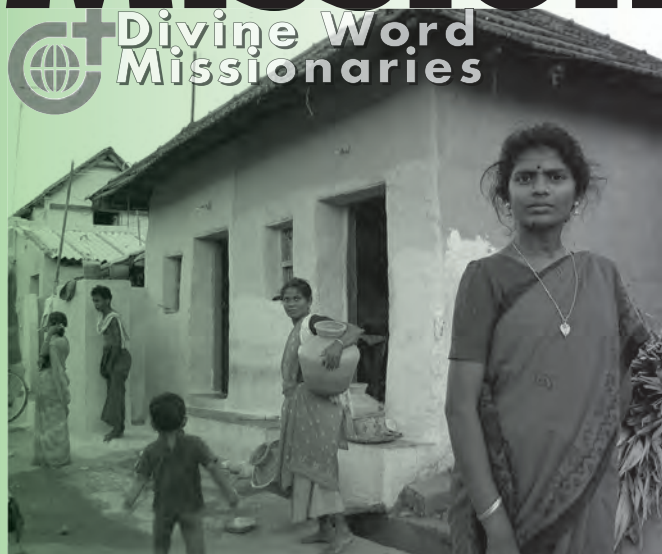
Chris Roy and Brother Dan Holman SVD have produced a coloring and activity book for children in which Bob and Banu tell the story of the women and orphans in Odisha. You can download a PDF version of the booklet from [www.svdmissions.org](http://www.svdmissions.org) or request a printed copy by writing to:



Bob and Banu  
Divine Word Missionaries  
P. O. Box 6099  
Techny, IL 60082

You can also view a short video interview with Fr. Richie Vaz SVD by visiting [www.svdmissions.org/our\\_work/odisha\\_india.aspx](http://www.svdmissions.org/our_work/odisha_india.aspx)

# Celebrate Mission



**Divine Word Missionaries** work in some of the poorest areas of the world. Thousands of Divine Word Missionary priests, Brothers, and seminarians serve in over 800 parishes, and in 41 seminaries, 22 colleges, 6 universities, and hundreds of elementary schools.

As we celebrate World Mission Day, Divine Word Missionaries wants to thank our many friends and benefactors who make our work possible.

In the Holy Father's message for World Mission Day 2013, he recalls the vision of the Second Vatican Council and stresses the need for a new urgency, since the number of those who do not know Christ has grown. Our missionaries embrace this urgency and the work which the Church has assigned to us in over seventy countries around the world.

Pope Francis' entire message can be found on the Vatican website at:

[http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/francesco/messages/missions/documents/papa-francesco\\_20130519\\_giornata-missionaria2013\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/francesco/messages/missions/documents/papa-francesco_20130519_giornata-missionaria2013_en.html)



# MEET THE AUTHORS

**Charles Schneider SVD**, originally from Buffalo, New York, professed first vows as a Divine Word Missionary in 1941 and was ordained to the priesthood in 1946. He served his entire missionary career in Ghana. Father Schneider is currently living in retirement at Divine Word Residence in Techny, where he continues part-time ministry to a weekly prayer group.

**Stanley Uroda SVD**, from Detroit, professed first vows in 1971 and was ordained at Techny in 1974. Father Uroda's first assignment was to Ghana, where he served for a number of years. He returned to the United States to serve in formation and administration, including six years as vice provincial and six years as provincial of the Chicago Province. He is currently rector of Divine Word Theologate in Chicago.

**Rex Vegbey SVD** was born in Suhum, Ghana. He professed first vows as a Divine Word Missionary in 1986 and was ordained a priest in 1991. He is currently the communications coordinator for the Ghana Province and he lives at the Brothers' House of Formation in Accra.

**Aris Martin SVD**, from Solsona, Philippines, professed first vows as a Divine Word Missionary in 2004 and was ordained in 2008. He is currently on the staff of Divine Word Seminary in Tagaytay, Philippines.

**George Jagodzinski SVD** was born in Sieradz, Poland. He professed first vows in 1976 and was ordained a priest in 1981. He is currently assigned to St. Joseph Parish in Gwardeisk, Russia.

**Michael Hutchins SVD**, from Dubuque, Iowa, is assigned to the Divine Word Mission Center and resides in Weldon, Iowa. Father Hutchins professed first vows in 1972 and was ordained at Techny in 1975. For nearly his entire career, Fr. Hutchins has been involved in education, teaching high school in Los Angeles and later serving as president of Divine Word College, Epworth, Iowa. He holds a doctoral degree from the University of Iowa.

Divine Word Missionaries Mission Center

P.O. Box 6099 • Techny, Illinois 60082-6099

The Society of the Divine Word is an international Catholic missionary congregation with over 6,000 members from 70 countries. They work in over 70 different lands on all the continents except Antarctica.

Website: [WWW.SVDMISSIONS.ORG](http://WWW.SVDMISSIONS.ORG)

DIVINE WORD MISSIONARIES MAGAZINE, Vol. LVI No. 4 FALL 2013, issued quarterly

Divine Word Missionaries, Mission Center, Techny, Illinois 60082.

Subscription \$20.00 a year

Editor: Bro. Dennis Newton SVD Assistant Editor: Carolyn Schmit

Creative Directors: Carmelita J. Linden • Bro. Dan Holman SVD

Branch Office: Pittsburgh, PA

Give a Gift  
Get a Gift

Handmade  
Dolls from  
Ecuador



Sample set of handmade dolls—  
no two dolls are alike.  
Dolls measure 13" in height.  
Supplies are limited.

**\$30**

**YOUR  
GIFT  
WILL  
BRING  
FOOD  
TO HER  
TABLE**



*OnLine*

DONATE ONLINE AT [WWW.SVDMISSIONS.ORG](http://WWW.SVDMISSIONS.ORG)

OR CALL toll FREE at  
**800 275 0626**

Your donation of \$30 helps provide...

- A nutritious daily meal
- Basic health care
- School supplies and textbooks
- A loving atmosphere based on Christian values