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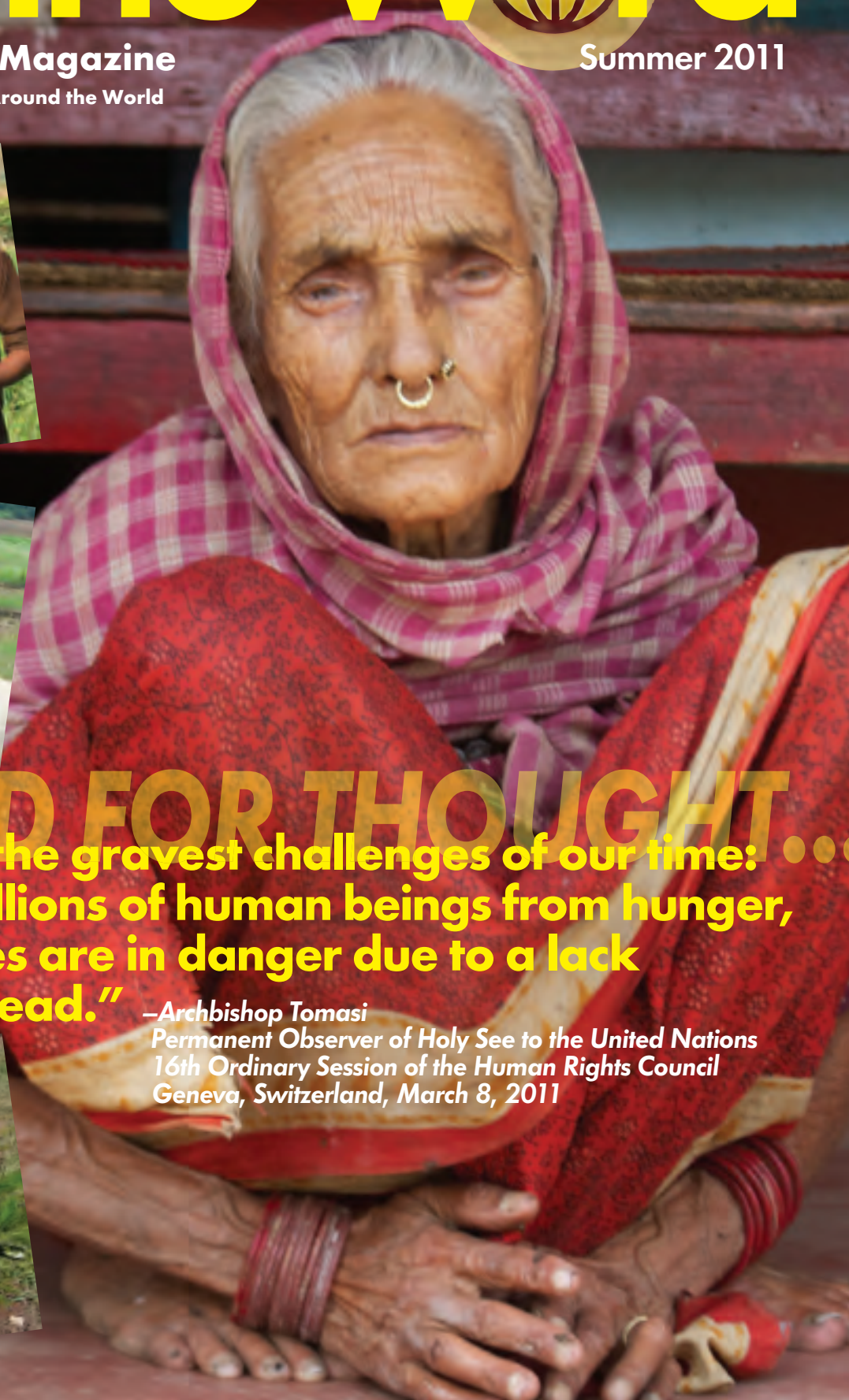
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Divine Word

Missionaries Magazine

Mission Updates from Around the World

Summer 2011



FOOD FOR THOUGHT...

"...one of the gravest challenges of our time: freeing millions of human beings from hunger, whose lives are in danger due to a lack of daily bread."

—Archbishop Tomasi
Permanent Observer of Holy See to the United Nations
16th Ordinary Session of the Human Rights Council
Geneva, Switzerland, March 8, 2011

Editorial

Eating His Own Cooking

Warren Buffet, the “Oracle of Omaha,” counsels you to ask investment managers if they invest their own money where they advise you to invest yours. He calls it “eating their own cooking.”

After eighteen years as president of Divine Word College Seminary, Father Michael Hutchins SVD will have to eat his own cooking, literally.



For nearly two decades, Fr. Mike has given outstanding leadership at the college seminary. He has dealt with faculty, staff, and students; been the public face of the institution; balanced budgets; done fundraising; and occasionally taught. Fr. Mike was looking for a new type of ministry with less administrative responsibility.

A new and completely different possibility presented itself, namely, moving to Divine Word Farm in Weldon, Iowa, where he will devote himself to writing, reading, visiting benefactors, doing pastoral work in the local area, gardening, and, for the first time in many years, eating his own cooking.

A native of Dubuque, Iowa, Fr. Mike is no stranger to the values, lifestyle, and concerns of rural Iowans. As a missionary who has worked overseas, he is also aware of global issues affecting the poor. While our farms in Iowa help to fund our overseas missions, they also provide us with the opportunity to talk about food, world hunger, and environmental issues. Fr. Mike’s presence in south central Iowa, along with his speaking, preaching, and writing, will add a thoughtful voice to that conversation.

Before becoming president of Divine Word College Seminary, Fr. Mike was vice-principal and teacher of English and religion at Verbum Dei High School, an inner-city, predominantly African American high school in Los Angeles. From 1989–1991, he was chair of the religious education department at the University of San Carlos in Cebu City, Philippines. In 1995, Fr. Mike earned a Ph.D. in education from the University of Iowa.

In the next issue of *Divine Word Missionaries Magazine*, you will be able to hear from Fr. Mike about how his new career is going.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dennis Newton SVD". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Bro. Dennis Newton SVD

Mission Director

Contact me any time; my e-mail address is: director@svdmissions.org



DIVINE WORD MISSIONARIES

AN INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY OF ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIESTS AND BROTHERS

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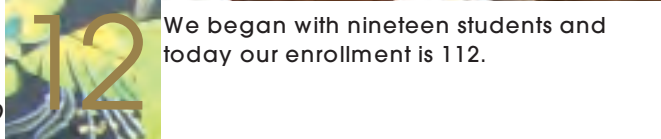


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Stewards of Creation in Nepal

Philip Gibbs SVD

“You are stewards of some of the most important resources that God has entrusted to humanity. Therefore, conserve the land well, so that your children’s children and generations after them will inherit an even richer land than was entrusted to you.”

These were the words of Pope John Paul II when he visited Des Moines, Iowa, in 1979.

His remarks are applicable far beyond the heartland of the United States. They would be appropriate today in the mountains of Nepal, a landlocked nation located between India and China. Nepal is slightly larger than Arkansas and has a population of 28 million people. The country is known for Mount Everest and the Himalaya Mountains, which form the northern border. Less well known is that climate change is affecting the lives of people there.

As a Divine Word Missionary, I was invited to join a team from Caritas Aotearoa New Zealand to assist Caritas Nepal with documenting on film some of the ways people are coping with the changes that are occurring. We were in villages in the hill region of the Syangja Province, a ten-hour drive from the capital, Kathmandu.





The so-called Green Revolution technologies have not brought the growth and prosperity expected. In many places, the technologies have had negative impacts on livelihoods of the local farmers, who have become dependent on others for seed, fertilizers, pesticide, credit, and marketing of produce. In recent years, degradation of the environment has meant lower production and an increase in the external inputs required. In addition, weather patterns appear to be changing. Long, dry periods and lighter snowfalls in the mountains result in less water in the rivers, which have their sources in the mountains. With extended dry spells, forests are more susceptible to fires, and burned slopes are subject to landslides and erosion.

Caritas Nepal is helping farmers adopt more sustainable organic farming techniques. Small farmers have formed cooperatives, and we visited communities now practicing sustainable, integrated crop and pest management, organic farming, and drought mitigation through water management and forestry replanting programs. These measures are leading to much higher yields for rice and vegetables, which enables more people to feed themselves for longer periods in the year.

The integrated pest management training is quite remarkable. I observed how farmers (mostly women) gather at one of the training test plots where they move in teams through the field, literally collecting insects of all kinds. They put them in small jars and bring them back to discuss which are “bad” insects that hinder plant growth and which are “good” ones (perhaps ones that





feed off the “bad” ones). If there was any doubt, they will set insects free in a small gauze “zoo” to observe their behavior. Pesticide is made from animal urine, and fertilizer from animal leavings and compost.

Forests provide timber for housing, wood for fuel, and foliage for feeding animals. Every able-bodied person is expected to plant and tend at least fifty trees each year, and cooperatives manage tree nurseries for this purpose. The schools run enviro-learning programs with their own areas of forest that the students plant and tend.

The majority of Nepalese are Hindu. The next largest group are Buddhist. Buddha himself was born in Nepal and is very much respected by Hindus of the country. A number of Buddhists in Nepal are refugees from Tibet. Less than one percent of the population are Christian. People appear very devout in their faith. We were welcomed at the village Buddhist monastery, and morning and afternoon, people went to worship, turned the prayer wheels, and lit incense. I stayed with two different families and, in each, the children had morning chores that included putting fresh flowers in the family shrine and offering respect before the image of the god portrayed at the shrine. As a Divine Word Missionary, I have learned about interreligious dialogue. It is said that the principal aim of dialogue is not conversion. Yet, while living with these Hindu-Buddhist families, I experienced “conversion” to new ways of integrating the Divine Mystery into my own Catholic faith.



The Buddhist and Hindu religions stress how we humans live in relation to other beings and the world around us. We see in recent times a greater appreciation of this in the Catholic Church with the understanding of how we can relate to God through creation. Everything that exists coexists. In his message for the World Day of Peace in 1990, Pope John Paul II stated that care for creation is an essential part of what it means to be Christian.

Today, there is also a renewed understanding of Genesis 1:28, “Be fertile, multiply, fill the earth and subdue it.” In the past, this was seen as putting humanity in a central, dominant position that too easily sanctioned plundering the earth’s resources. Now the stress is on “stewardship” rather than “domination.” The earth has been entrusted to us, and not just to us, but to future generations also. In his World Day of Peace message in 2007, Pope Benedict XVI spoke about a “human ecology,” and in 2010, he noted, “Natural resources should be used in such a way that immediate benefits do not have a negative impact on living creatures, human and not, present and future.”



The staff of Caritas Nepal impressed me. They have a large number of personnel working in hundreds of projects throughout the country. They have earned the respect of the Nepalese authorities through their professionalism. There are few Catholic priests in Nepal so people appreciated my presence. They even asked me to present the certificates to graduates in a special ceremony of the Farmer School. The administrator of the diocese in Kathmandu knows the reputation of the Divine Word Missionaries in the area of interreligious dialogue and sharing the Word, and invited more of our missionaries to come.

I also saw another, more challenging, side of Nepal. With a general "strike" looming, we had to hurry back to Kathmandu before everything stopped. From our lodging, we watched thousands of Maoist youth marching through the streets. It was a difficult time.

For my part, I am left with a great respect for what communities in Nepal are doing together to cope with ecological changes. There are questions in my own mind about how we can live more simply so that others may simply live. Practical measures are called for. For example, there is an arrangement whereby carbon offset donations by New Zealand World Youth Day pilgrims go toward assisting community forestry plantings in Nepal. With creative imagination, a lot more can be done. Creation is not something that happened and was completed thousands of years ago. As the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* states: "Creation has its own goodness and proper perfection, but it did not spring forth complete from the hands of the Creator. The universe was created 'in a state of journeying' (*in statu viae*) toward an ultimate perfection yet to be attained." (#302) ♦



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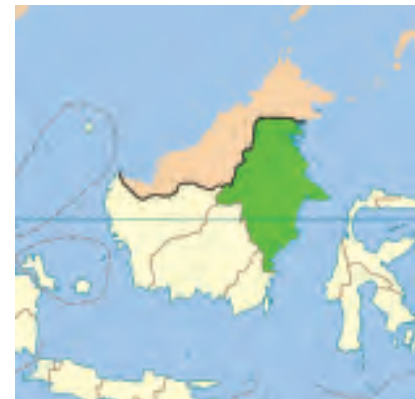
The Lost Paradise

Paul Rahmat SVD

One of the largest rainforests in the world is located on the island of Kalimantan in the northern part of Indonesia. Traveling from Samardina, the capital of East Kalimantan, to the inland area of the province, one arrives at St. Paul Parish in the village of Long Bentuk, where Father Vitus Hari SVD is pastor.

The villagers of Long Bentuk are of the Modang people, an indigenous group that came to the island about three thousand years ago. The soil in Long Bentuk is very fertile and readily yields bananas, coconuts, cocoa, and rice. Fish and shrimp are also plentiful in the Atan-Kelinjau River. Families can easily catch fish with a simple cast net and the river provides bathing facilities and recreation after a long day in the fields.

As idyllic as all of this sounds, there are some shadows across this paradise. Although the government has built elementary and high schools,





many of the Modang are not really interested in education. Most adults are illiterate and there is little access to health care. There are few roads and electricity is not yet available to the villagers. These concerns would be enough for any missionary, but the biggest threat to the villagers comes from the outside.

Heavy tractors, chain saws, and earth excavators have descended on the entire region. They are the tools of many transnational corporations. The equipment is viewed by the villagers as scary monsters looking for victims to meet their greedy needs. Three targeted sectors are forests, farmland, and mines.

In the area where Long Bentuk is located, seven national and transnational corporations are at work. These businesses have threatened the lives and livelihoods of the tribal communities and endangered the future of their children. Living in harmony with nature has been the mode of life of the Modang people for ages, but all of that is now threatened.

Tribal lands and forests are exploited for coal mining, palm oil farming, and clearcut forestry. Corporations induce local governments and tribal chiefs through bribery or by offering false promises of future benefits. Villagers who fail to cooperate with the corporations are often threatened and intimidated.





Foreign corporations have also co-opted with the Indonesian national government, which has authorized these short-term investments by offering the companies contracts to manage the mining and timber industries.

The corporations have made false promises that exploitation of the tribal forests and mines would raise people's income and improve their economic well-being, but this has been a myth. When the corporations have used up the natural resources in one area, they move on, leaving massive environmental devastation that produces floods, soil erosion, disease, and wasteland. Much of the beautiful earth of Kalimantan has become a lost paradise.

Since 1984, Divine Word Missionaries have worked on the island of Kalimantan and have dedicated themselves to advocacy for the rights of villagers over their tribal lands and forests. They have fought the palm oil corporations.

Father Hari Vitus SVD has conducted many training and educational programs on environmental degradation and desertification. He has also instituted a credit union for villagers.

Fr. Vitus would very much like to begin a pilot project of proper forest management with trees that are economically as well as socially and environmentally beneficial. The villagers have donated twenty hectares of land to St. Paul Parish and Divine Word Missionaries for this purpose.

The Divine Word Missionaries of the Java Province fully support Fr. Vitus' project. In fact, they have initiated similar projects in three other districts and are actively seeking benefactors and supporters for these projects. With success, the lost paradise might become more like Eden again. ♦

Making the Most with What We Have

Joseph Puthur SVD

In 1986, I began *Adivasi Sangathan* (Federation of Tribals) to help the poor, in the village of Tangarpali, in Orissa, India.

The villagers are Tribals (indigenous people), who depend on agriculture for their livelihood. Our soil is fertile, but since only about twenty percent of the arable land is irrigated, we depend largely on the graces of nature. We are able to grow maize, other vegetables, spices, and fruit in our area.

Adivasi Sangathan has made great strides in helping farmers use better farming practices, such as composting and other organic methods. By leveling the land, we were able to convert 1,000 acres of land unsuitable for farming into farmable acreage. We have also planted thousands of trees by supplying villagers with young saplings.

Our Divine Word Mission has about two and a half acres of land and we make the most with what we have. During the rainy season, we grow mostly vegetables. In the winter season, the land produces onions, sunflowers, cauliflower, cabbage, and tomatoes. Our two cows supply us with milk, and we have numerous fruit trees, including seven varieties of mangoes. All this supplies food for everyone at the mission, with enough left over to distribute to those in need. ♦



Here a Cow, There an *Elephant*? And goats and *Paul Shiju SVD* sheep and wild dogs too.



The coat of arms of Botswana features the head of a bull. This reflects the importance of the cattle industry for that nation. If it were up to Brother Jan Potyka SVD, the coat of arms would feature goats and sheep as well.

Bro. Jan works on the farm owned by the Catholic Vicariate of Francistown (a vicariate has not yet been established as a diocese). The head of the vicariate is Bishop Frank Nubuasah SVD.

The 6,000-acre farm was given to the Church in 1949 by a settler leaving Botswana. For many years, it was neglected and in disrepair. Through the vision and efforts of Mr. Julius Gaborekwe, the farm has been brought back to productivity. Since 2009, Bro. Jan has devoted his knowledge and expertise to improving the farm.

Before receiving his assignment to the Botswana mission, Bro. Jan worked at the Divine Word Missionary farm in Pieniezno, Poland, for over twenty-five years. He did not grow up under the searing sun, but Bro. Jan has adjusted well to the wide blue skies and scorching African sun. He is assisted by three Zimbabwean workers and even Bishop Nubuasah lends a hand.

To increase the revenue of the vicariate farm, Bro. Jan introduced goats and sheep. This is a relatively new venture in Botswana, where cattle production has always been considered the premier agricultural endeavor. The small ruminants do not have the same social importance as cattle.

Besides the livestock which Bro. Jan raises, he also has some uninvited animals. During migratory seasons, warthogs, kudus (large African antelopes), impalas, wild dogs, leopards and, occasionally, elephants traverse the ranch.

Because of the scant rainfall, it is difficult to grow row crops. Water pumped from holes dug in riverbeds serve the cattle and the workers. A typical day for Bro. Jan means checking the miles of fences, monitoring the health of the cattle, feeding, watering, and giving vaccinations.

Bro. Jan continues to make improvements to the farm, which supports evangelization, the primary mission of the vicariate. ♦



Brother Jan Potyka SVD



A typical day for Bro. Jan means checking the miles of fences, monitoring the health of the cattle, feeding, watering, and giving vaccinations.

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Kenya High School Teaches Farming

Justus Rottuk SVD



When we started Divine Word Boys High School in Katani, Kenya, in January 2009, my heart was full of hope and fear, hope because of the imminent birth of a new school and fear because of the enormous challenges that lay ahead. We began with nineteen students and today our enrollment is 112. The student body is comprised of more than ten ethnic groups and two main religious affiliations, Christian and Muslim.

The principal, Mr. Paul Emuria, has designed a comprehensive curriculum, which emphasizes traditional subjects such as English and Kiswahili, mathematics and physical sciences, as well as religion and business classes.

One of our students, Kelvin Waweru, who was interviewed for the school newsletter, describes our campus on the outskirts of Nairobi as “a very quiet and peaceful place, suitable for learning.” According to Kelvin: “The Christian values taught in the school help us to be God-fearing and



respectful of our parents and elders. The students live together in the spirit of brotherhood. There is no bullying among the students. We live as one, big family.”

Since it is located outside the capital city, agriculture has been incorporated into the curriculum of Divine Word Boys High School. Agriculture is the backbone of the Kenyan economy, and the school’s program has three goals: 1) to teach modern agricultural technologies; 2) to train students for future employment; and 3) to provide fresh food for the school’s dining room.

We would like to build a greenhouse on our property to enhance our agricultural program. The cost to purchase and erect the tunnel greenhouse with drip irrigation is approximately \$2,785.

As our third year at the school begins, I am hopeful that we have built a strong foundation. We strive to live up to our vision for the school: To be a witnessing community of learners and believers. ♦

GIVE www.svdmissions.org
Online

Moo-ving Families Forward

Damien Lunders SVD



Micro-finance can give practical assistance by launching new initiatives and opening up new sectors for the benefit of [vulnerable peoples] in society, even at a time of general economic downturn.

-Caritas in Veritate, Pope Benedict XVI, 2009

Each day the Mother of Perpetual Help Center in Nong Bua Lamphu, Thailand, meets the immediate needs of many children and adults through food and medicine distribution programs, and its orphanage and hospice center. The staff and I began to realize that so many of these families we have come to know have long-term needs that must be addressed.



Seven years ago we launched a cattle program to help families become financially self-sufficient. Five families in each of the seven civil districts in Nong Bua Lamphu Province were given a cow and a calf.



Today each family that participates in the cattle program signs a contract to return some of the proceeds of their small operation so other families will be able to receive cattle in the future. From their first cow and calf, a family can increase its herd by keeping a male offspring for breeding or by cooperating with a neighbor who has a bull. The family who owns the bull will make extra money by renting him to a neighbor.



The cattle help provide a steady income for the families. Our hope is that the families will become more financially self-reliant and have a better way of life. ♦

Give the gift of a cow! \$300 for a mature cow
Help a family raise some "moo-laa"! \$200 for a calf

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Your gift can provide sustainable income for a family AND will help build the future for many, many more.





The Right to Food Is Linked to the Right to Life

Archbishop Silvano Tomasi

The right to food is a basic right because it is intrinsically linked to the right to life. Almost a billion people, however, do not enjoy this right. The challenge for the world's community is "to tackle one of the gravest challenges of our time: freeing millions of human beings from hunger, whose lives are in danger due to a lack of daily bread."

Two conditions are involved: there must be safe food available in sufficient quantity and each person should have access to food. Special attention should be directed to the 2.5 billion people dependent on agriculture for their daily sustenance. Among this population are found most of the people who suffer from malnutrition and hunger. Solutions exist to improve the situation, but they demand vigorous action by the governments and peoples of the countries concerned. The international community is also expected to act. My Delegation would like to indicate some conditions it thinks necessary for the enjoyment of the human right to food and the development of policies of food security as a prerequisite for self-sufficiency.

First, it is necessary to recognize and strengthen the central role of agriculture in economic activity; thus, to reduce malnutrition in rural areas, production per person must increase in order to enhance local, regional, or national food independence. Investments to improve productivity are required in the areas of seeds, training, sharing of tools for cultivation and of the means for marketing. . . .

Archbishop Tomasi, the Permanent Observer of Holy See to the United Nations, delivered a message on the basic right to food at the 16th Ordinary Session of the Human Rights Council in Geneva on March 8, 2011.

This article is an excerpt from the archbishop's address.

For the full text, go to:

<http://www.svdmmissions.org/food.aspx>

[Ed.]





We must ensure that food flows to those who need it. The current food crises have shown that some regions are facing serious shortfalls, and in areas that traditionally produce food the stocks are now exhausted or limited. These circumstances entail strong restrictions to food aid in emergency situations. The smooth flow of food products involves several conditions: local markets should be efficient, transparent, and open; information must flow efficiently; investment in roads, transport, and storage of crops is indispensable. Barriers to exports that have been decided by sovereign states must be limited. These barriers temporarily exacerbate deficits in importing countries and strongly raise prices; finally, food aid that plays a vital role in cases of disasters must not disrupt local agricultural production. For example, the distribution of large amounts of food either free or cheap can ruin the farmers of the region who can no longer sell their products. In so doing, we jeopardize the future of local agriculture.

Adequate measures, therefore, should be taken to protect farmers against price volatility which has a strong impact on food security for several reasons: high prices make food unaffordable for the poor and low prices give farmers the incorrect information on needed seedlings after harvest for the following year. To prevent price volatility or at least weaken its impact, local food crops need to be protected against sudden disruptions in international prices. The customs duty at the entrance of an importing country (or the cyclical adjustment of special and differential treatment) must take into account both the needs of

poor consumers and . . . the price to be paid to small farmers so they may afford a dignified standard of living and promote production. . . .

The availability of food is not a sufficient factor to ensure food for everyone. People must have sufficient income to purchase food or food should have an affordable price for the poor. This raises the question of a comprehensive safety net that may consist in making available food products at subsidized prices for the poorest people at a regional level. The level of subsidy would vary according to the market price so that the cost of subsidized food can remain stable. It is illusory to believe there is a “good price” for wheat or corn. The price that a poor consumer may be able to pay may not correspond with what a small African farmer needs to live. We must construct mechanisms that bridge the gap between these two prices and for the poorest countries solidarity requires that they be internationally funded.

A recent development in the world search for food security regards the purchase or rent of large extensions of arable land on the part of foreign organizations in countries other than their own. It seems a reasonable precondition to require that the people who are in the area should be respected, included in the project, and that the level of food security in the region should be increased. This said, investment in hunger and agriculture is essential to eradicate hunger and malnutrition. . . . ♦



Coats of arms were, at one time, actual designs on a tunic which covered armor. Although one seldom sees armor these days, the stylized coats of arms are still very prevalent. A country may have a coat of arms, as do some families. Catholic bishops also have coats of arms, including the pope, the bishop of Rome.



Vatican



The coat of arms of Pope Benedict XVI incorporates a bear. The explanation for the bear is given on the Vatican website: "A brown bear, in natural color, is portrayed in the sinister (left) corner of the shield, with a pack-saddle on its back. An ancient tradition tells that the first bishop of Freising, Saint Corbinian (born ca. 680 C.E. in Châtres, France; died 730 C.E.), set out for Rome on horseback. While riding through a forest, he was attacked by a bear that tore his horse to pieces. Corbinian not only managed to tame the animal but also to make it carry his baggage to Rome. This explains why the bear is shown carrying a pack."

Botswana



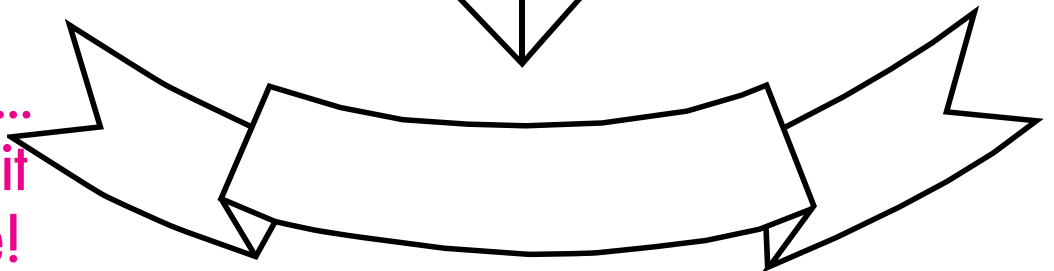
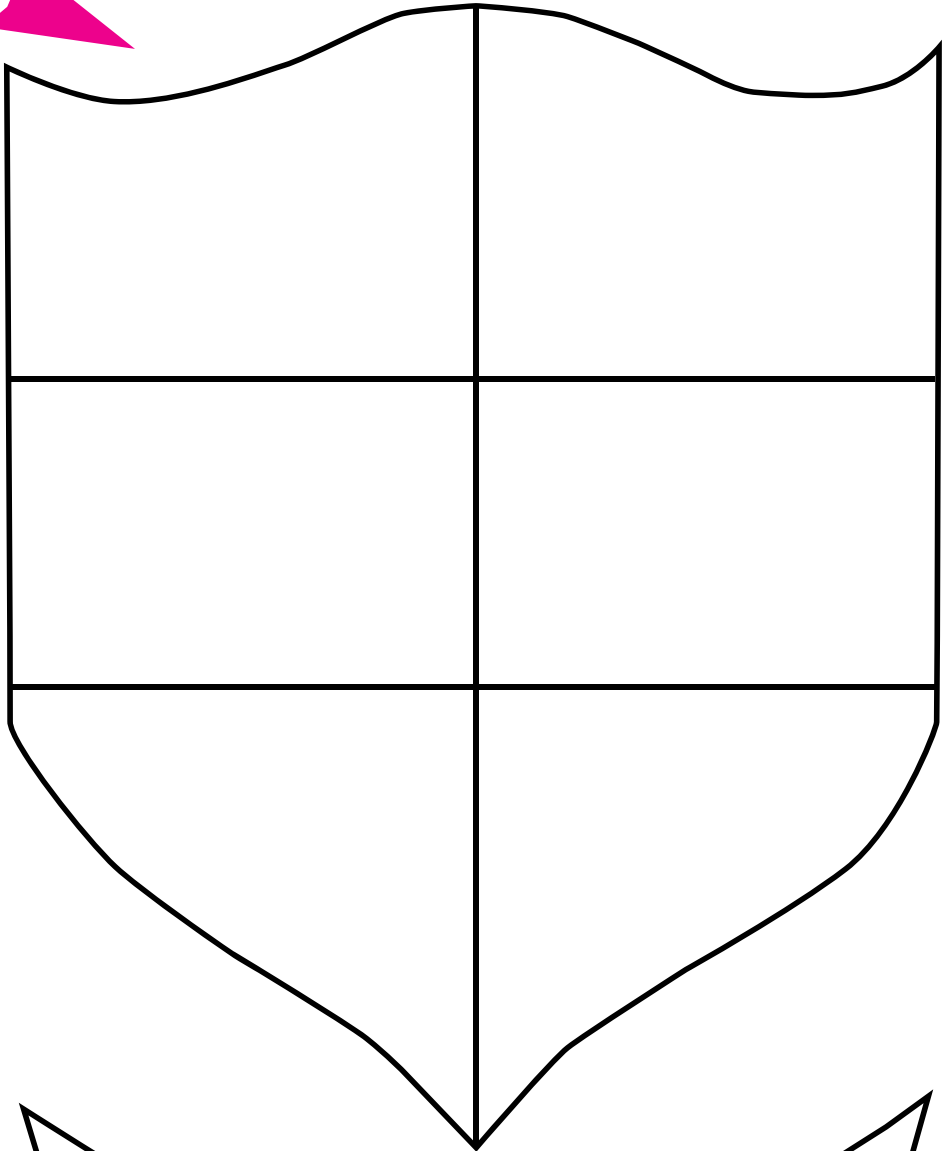
The bull's head on the national coat of arms of Botswana shows the importance of cattle ranching.



Coat of arms of Bishop Frank Nubuasah SVD also shows the importance of cattle farming in Botswana by including a cattle herder and two cows.

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Down on the Farm

Dennis Newton SVD

Divine Word Cattle Farm in Thayer, Iowa, supports the Mother of Perpetual Help Center orphanage and hospice in Thailand.

This past spring, the cattle farm welcomed ninety new Angus calves into the world.

The calving barn was a very busy place for the a few weeks as members of the Russell Kelly family took turns monitoring the heifers' progress and making sure everything went well.



Granddaughter Kelsey checks on two newborns

Lundy



Lundy, the cattle farm's cowboy, rides through the herd to make sure all the mothers are doing all right.

MEET THE AUTHORS

Philip Gibbs SVD is a Divine Word Missionary priest from New Zealand. Since 1973, he has served in various capacities as parish priest, director of a pastoral center, seminary teacher, and researcher for Caritas Australia and at the Melanesian Institute. He is currently the director of the new Office of Social Concern in Papua New Guinea. Father Gibbs has a post-graduate diploma in anthropology and a doctoral degree in theology.

Justus Rottuk SVD was born in Kapsabet, Kenya. He professed first vows as a Divine Word Missionary in 1995 and was ordained to the priesthood in 2000. He is currently assigned to Divine Word High School in Katani, Kenya. Father Rottuk is also a member of the Kenya Province provincial leadership team.

Joseph Puthur SVD is from Parappur, India. He professed perpetual vows and was ordained a priest in 1967. Father Puthur is the founder of Adivasi Sangathan.

Paul Shiju SVD is the provincial superior of the Botswana Province of Divine Word Missionaries. He is originally from Kanjoor, India. Father Shiju entered Divine Word Missionaries in 1991, professed first vows in 1992, and was ordained in 1997.

Damien Lunders SVD is from Salem, South Dakota. He entered Divine Word Missionaries in 1961 and professed perpetual vows in 1969. After many years as a missionary in Papua New Guinea, Brother Lunders founded the Mother of Perpetual Help Center in Nong Bua Lamphu, Thailand, in 2000.

Paul Rahmat SVD is from Ruteng, Indonesia. He entered Divine Word Missionaries in 1985, professed first vows in 1987, and was ordained to the priesthood in 1995. Father Rahmat is the peace and justice coordinator for the Java Province of Divine Word Missionaries.



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DIVINE WORD MISSIONARIES, Vol. LIV No. 2 Summer 2011, issued quarterly

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

Subscription \$20.00 a year

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