



SVD CHINA PROVINCE NEWSLETTER

天主教聖言會中華省通訊

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願天主聖三生活在我們和眾人心中

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Servants of the Word

I have been reading the recent Apostolic Exhortation of Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, The Joy of the Gospel. There is a long section in the document (paragraphs 135 – 159). “The homily is the touchstone for judging a pastor’s closeness and ability to communicate to his people. We know that the faithful attach great importance to it, and that both they and their ordained ministers suffer because of homilies: the laity for having to listen to them and the clergy for having to preach them! It is sad that this is the case. The homily can actually be and intense and happy experience of the Spirit, a consoling encounter with God’s word, a constant source of renewal and growth” (paragraph 135). What is our experience, both as preachers and as listeners?



Originally, I was thinking to summarize what Pope Francis had to say. However, I realized that I would probably end up selecting those parts with which I personally agree and resonate. So instead I offer a few of my own comments. Take them for what they are worth. Perhaps better use them as a spring board to see what Pope Francis has to say on the topic.

So what is my definition of the homily: It is a reflection on the Word of God in Scripture, in the context of the liturgy, bringing the listener to an intellectually satisfying, emotionally moving, faith-filled encounter with Sacred Scripture. The homily should be intellectually satisfying – it should make sense, not nonsense. But while our intellects may be the guide, the momentum of life is in emotion and feeling. Listening to a good homily should be an emotional as well as an intellectual experience. Finally the homily has everything to do with our faith as Christians. To put this in other words, we can consider what the homily is not. It is not a classroom lecture; it is not a stirring, emotional appeal devoid of faith; it is not a commentary on society, economics or politics. At the same time all of these elements can be important elements of our reflection on God’s Word.

In line with the above I always remember the suggestion of one of my homiletics professors: Your homily should have two outlines – the intellectual one, what do I want to say, and the emotional one – what do I want my listeners to feel.

The homily should be short. The purpose is not for the homilist to shine, but to help all those who hear to encounter the Word of Scripture more deeply. I am thinking of other speeches where there is a loud applause at the end. Is the audience applauding because the speech is finally over or because they heard something of value? At the end of our homilies, are the listeners praising the Lord because it is finally over, or wishing we could say something more?

I said above that the homily should be intellectually satisfying. The homily should have a structure – a beginning, middle and an end. How often have we heard a homilist obviously bringing the message to an end and then all of a sudden beginning part two? Save part two for a later day.

Of course careful preparation is essential. For the best preachers, the Sunday sermon is something we begin crafting on Monday. First really read the liturgical text. What was the author saying at the time the text was written; what is the Scripture telling the people of God and in particular the homilist at this moment in history? Make use of commentaries and contemporary exegesis to really encounter the Word. Some may argue that their best homilies were those that were not prepared. My reply is that may be true – the Spirit may work even if we have not prepared well. But that great unprepared homily would most likely never have happened if you had not carefully prepared other homilies.

Depending on the audience, examples and stories are very important. They help bring the listeners attention and often bring out the emotion of the text. But they should be used carefully. Do the stories really fit the topic? Do they really help us encounter the Word of God in Scripture? Sometimes very late in homiletic preparation, one realizes that the story or example one is using is a hindrance rather than a help. Do not be afraid to put it aside.

But most importantly, the most important listener to the homily is the homilist himself or herself. After I give a homily, I always sit back and ask if I believe what I have just said? Am I willing to practice what I have just preached? If no one else listens to and takes to heart what I just said, at least I should. To do anything else is intellectually dishonest, emotionally manipulative and ultimately unfaithful to God's Word. May we all be true servants of God's Word!

I take this opportunity to wish all in the China Province and our friends in greater China and around the world a happy and blessed New Year! May God bless you all in the Year of The Horse!

Frank Budenholzer, SVD

Migration Consultation Meeting of the SVD China Province 2013

Conference Statement

We, the eight members of the SVD China Province, currently involved in the various migrants apostolate, representing Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macau, and Mainland China, after our consultation meeting from 28-31 of October at the Diocese Retreat House in Chung Hom Kok, Hong Kong, issue our conference statement as follows:

I. Affirmations:

1. We affirm that the migration phenomenon is a reality in Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macau, and Mainland China that urgently needs response from the Province.
2. We affirm that the services done by our confreres, be it through official appointment or voluntary, in helping the Indonesians, Vietnamese, Filipinos and other migrant workers including internal migrants and refugees in greater China is an important part of the apostolate of the China province.
3. We affirm that works with the non-Chinese in the China province is also very missionary in nature.
4. We affirm that our ministry to migrant workers should indeed be a priority concern of the China Province.
5. We affirm the openness of the Province to minister to the Chinese migrants abroad as much as the availability of personnel allows.



II. Proposed Recommendations:

1. All the members, schools and parishes of the Province should adopt the 2012 “Guidelines for SVD ministry for Migrants and Refugees” in the practice of hospitality towards the “strangers” among us.
2. Include migrant issues among the main concerns of the JPIC coordinators in the province and in the districts in particular.
3. Regular consultation and evaluation meetings may be held among those working with migrants within the districts, and every two years for the whole province to be organized by the JPIC office.
4. When feasible the District council may assign a confrere as person responsible each for Indonesians, Vietnamese, Filipinos and Chinese migrant groups.
5. We cooperate with dioceses and other organizations when called upon to help in their ministry to the migrants by providing personnel and resources.
6. Through the JPIC zonal coordinator, networking between sending and receiving countries must be established.

Signed: Dennis Manzana, Joseph Tran, Emilio Lim, Alfredo Rollon, Jay Flandez, Johannes Indarta, Heribertus Hadiarto, Franz-Josef Himbert, Edwin Corros

ASPAC Triennial Gathering of Characteristic Dimension Coordinators: Mission, Bible, JPIC and Communication (Nongbualamphu, Thailand from 4-9 November 2013)

MISSION ANIMATION:

ASPAC four SVD Characteristic Dimensions Coordinators Forum truly helps us participants get a lot of inspirations through the input and report from the generalate perspective that give us the panorama and concern of the whole Society on the four CDs; and the reports, discussions and sharing within the coordinators from each country / sub-zone and inter-characteristic dimensions as well give us a lot of inputs, insight, information and sometimes new understanding and new ways to deal with the responsibly or task entrusted to us by the Society. It indeed enables us to enlarge and strengthen our understanding of the four characteristic dimensions integrated and help us to bring it back to share with our confreres in our respective province/region or sub-zone.

It is our hope that we could continuously communicate and share information among mission secretaries within the ASPAC zone and with the Generalate Mission Secretary at least once a month and to build the spirit of collaboration with the other CD's on the implementation of our programs.

We also wish that one who is appointed be a mission secretary should undergo proper training and preparation so he could live out his role to animate mission in the society, care for the confreres, encourage and foster the missionary formation for our lay partners and think of creative ways to do fund raising for the global mission of our society.

Fr. Charlton Plateros, SVD



BIBLE:

The ASPAC Zonal Assembly opened with the Enthronement of the Sacred Scriptures -an acknowledgement of its central place to make real the Characteristic Dimensions of the Society of the Divine Word. The group of Provincial Bible Coordinators agreed to have one focus priority from among the priorities put forward by the last SVD General Chapter between this Zonal Assembly and the next: **FAMILY AND YOUTH**. This Zonal Assembly has fired up the need to join efforts with the three other Priority Dimensions of the SVD: The **BIBLICAL APOSTOLATE** is the Content, The Soul / The Spirit, The Strength. **JUSTICE AND PEACE AND INTEGRITY OF CREATION** is the Way, the Direction, and The Flavour. **COMMUNICATIONS** gives the Shape, the Style, and the Expression.

*Make use of Province /District / Unit Meetings as opportunities for Bible Sharing among confreres.

*Facilitate to commit confreres participate in existing on-going Biblical Formation, Conferences. Example: the "Jornada Biblica".

*Help create useful and practical materials to be made available for confreres

*Get the collaboration of willing lay partners to create materials for schools

*Establish collaboration with existing Christian/Catholic Marriage Groups to produce relevant and useful materials especially for the year 2014.

*Where it may be viable, work with the other CD, the Youth, Parents and other lay leaders organise and conduct Youth Camps

*Continue holding Biblical Seminars, pursuing regular Lectio Divina or Biblical Reflections using relevant and practical methods.

Fr. Henry Cabral SVD



JPIC:

Carrying with me the Conference Statement of the then just concluded China Province Migration Consultation Meeting held in Hong Kong and the collated report from Paul Han JPIC district coordinator for mainland China, James Areechira the JPIC district coordinator for Hong Kong – Macau and that of myself as province coordinator, I participated in the ASPAC Zone Gathering of Characteristic Dimension Coordinators held Thailand. The Action Plan I presented was: Make migrant issues be among the main concerns of the JPIC coordinator in the province and in the districts in particular. Facilitate regular consultation and evaluation meetings among those working with migrants within the districts and for the whole province. Work with JPIC zonal coordinator in establishing network between sending and receiving countries of migrants. This action plan resonates with one of the Congregational Direction presented in the 17th General Chapter and one of the four priorities chosen by our province. And this concern for migrants was taken into the action plan of the ASPAC zone as it echoes the concern of the coordinators from the other province/region.

Fr. Dennis Manzana SVD



COMMUNICATIONS:

The eight social communication coordinators representing India, Indonesia, Philippines, PNG, China, Korea, Viet and Japan gathered at Nongbualamphua. We shared and evaluated our ministry in social communication during last three years. We listen to and share with confreres who are ministering in other characteristic dimensions. We recognize and share our common concerns and challenges; we call for more collaboration and cooperation in order to enhance our svd identity ministries in a more effective way. The value of constant communication among ASPAC areas is highly emphasized, thus, twice a year a zonal SVD ASPAC e.letter is to be published. The content can also be provided from other characteristic dimension coordinators. On The Province level, the CONCRETE PLAN OF ACTION is now being coordinated to assist the SVD youth camp in Chiayi this will present cooperation among province's 4 CDs. And lastly, the Coordinators are willing to spend time with YCP (young conference in perpetual vows) in order to update young confreres about Bible, Communications perspective, Mission and justice and peace situation of the Society.

Fr. Lito Salvador SVD



Handover Ceremony for the New Pastor of Holy Trinity Church New Taipei City, Xin Zhuang District, Da Ping Lin



On October 27, 2013, Father Abdon Gusti Mansurdi, SVD took over from Father Dennis Manzana, SVD as pastor of Holy Trinity Church in the Xindian District of New Taipei City in Taiwan. Father Manzana had been pastor for over six years and after a six-month course in the Philippines will take over as director of the Taiwan SVD Formation Community. Fr. Mansurdi had recently returned from the United States after completing an MA degree in Missiology. Formerly he was pastor in the Alishan mountain mission of Chiayi County.

Closing Ceremony of the Year of Faith in Taipei

On November 23, 2013, the Catholics of Taiwan held the closing ceremony for the Year of Faith at the Taipei Municipal Stadium. Father Hung SVD Archbishop of Taipei was the main celebrant. Father Joselito Salvador was in charge of the liturgy. Among the many SVDs attending were Father Paulino Suo, Father Arnold Sprenger and Fr. Jac Kuepers.



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“Asia Pacific (ASPAC) Universities Collaboration Forum”

Attending were the presidents or other representatives of Nanzan University (Nagoya, Japan), Fu Jen Catholic University (Taipei, Taiwan), San Carlos University (Cebu, Philippines), Holy Name University (Bohol, Philippines) and Widya Mandira (Kupang, Timor, Indonesia). Fr. Mark Weber, SVD, the Generalate Secretary for Formation and Education and Father Sebastian M. Michael, ASPAC Coordinator, also attended.

Fr. James Vyathappan, the Representative of the SVD Section at Fu Jen Catholic University and the current convener of the ASPAC SVD Universities Association, also invited a group of administrators and faculty from Catholic universities in India who held a parallel meeting to enhance cooperation between Fu Jen University and Indian Catholic Universities.

Here are pictures from the meeting of the SVD Asia Pacific Universities, formally known as the "Asia Pacific (ASPAC) Universities Collaboration Forum," which took place at Fu Jen University October 29-31.



Greenest School on Earth 2013

The Hong Kong Green Building Council (HKGBC) and our School held a joint press conference on 13 December, where we shared our experience as the winner of the prestigious global award and introduced our future plan in promoting sustainability. Through integrally weaving the concept of sustainability into hardware and software of the school including curriculum and infrastructure in recent years, we have encouraged our teachers and students to create a green campus, at the same time reduced energy consumption significantly and proudly achieved an energy saving efficiency of over 30%. In the ceremony, our supervisor, Fr. Johnson svd received the certificate of appreciation from Mr Wong Kam-sing, Secretary for the Environment and Ir Conrad TC Wong, the Chairman of the HKGBC, recognizing our pioneer role in promoting environmental education.



Vows and Celebration of SVD/SSPS Jubilees:

Frater Peter Chen Hung-Sheng pronounced perpetual vows on September 8, 2013 at St. Joseph Freinademetz Parish in New Taipei City, Linkou. Frater Lukas Chrunik, Frater Lucas Duan, Frater Joseph Cheng and Frater Damasus Yong, renewed vows and Father James Li pronounced first vows. The two new OTP students, Frater Joseph Youta DJIBA and Frater Patrik Palenik also renewed vows.

At the end of Mass, there was a common SVD/SSpS celebration of jubilees. Jac Kuepers, Shan-Chuan John Hung, Paskalis Bako, James Huang Kuei-Hsiung, Jih-Liang John Chang attended the ceremony. The two SSpS Jubilarians also attended: Sr. Josephine Chen and Sr. Mariola Stawasz.



Outstanding NGO Volunteer Award

On 30th October 2013, during an award presentation ceremony held at City University of Hong Kong, the Hong Kong Correctional Services Department presented a long service Outstanding NGO Volunteer Award to Fr. James Areechira SVD for his services for the prisoners for more than 18 years. The award was presented by Mr. Sin Yat-kin, CSDSM, the Commissioner of Correctional Services.



Priestly Ordination

Reverend Heribertus Hadiarto, Reverend Antonius Reynolds Baluban and Reverend Melchor Fuerzas, were ordained by the bishop of Hong Kong, John Cardinal Tong Hon, on January 5. Around 40 priests concelebrated the service, which was conducted in English and Cantonese, with Indonesian and Tagalog hymns. The ordination Mass was attended by a thousand people from different nationalities, parishes and communities. At the end of the Mass, Father Frank Budenholzer, provincial



congratulated the three young priests. The new priests invited the congregation to pray for priestly vocations so that more young people would hear and answer God's call. We congratulate them and pray that the Lord will shower His choicest blessings upon them and accompany them in their missionary journey.



A Drop of Kindness, a Barrel of Service!

Fr. Charlton Plateros, SVD



Before that super typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda) hit Leyte and Samar and the whole of Central Visayas on November 8, 2013, my home province Bohol was first hit by a massive 7.2 magnitude earthquake last October 15, 2013 and my home town Loon was the hardest hit in terms of casualties and the number of damaged infrastructures. My parish church, the biggest in Bohol was reduced into rubble. The whole church literally collapsed. My heart really broke when I heard the news, it was indeed unbelievable that everything was gone in an instant. But in spite of the destruction, I am still thankful to God that members of my family were all safe.

Knowing the catastrophic effects of typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda) and the earthquake in Bohol, we desperately made an appeal to different NGOs and religious groups for help and financial support. With the help and contribution from both Chinese and English Speaking communities, Church and non-Church based organizations, we were able to send considerable amount of money, boxes of goods and food items, tents and rechargeable electric lights to the affected victims.

Fr. Emil as the head of the Chaplaincy for the Filipino community with the coordination of St. Joseph Church led by Fr. Midas and some other parishes in HK, were also able to collect more than 300 boxes of "in-kind donations" like canned goods, rice, noodles, clothes, etc. and sent them to SVD-PHS (JPIC). The Mission Animation HK-Macau with the collaborative efforts from our SVD HK-Macau confreres was also able to raise a total of HK\$292,841.93 for SVD PHS JPIC, Diocese of Tagbilaran and Oplan Bangon Bohol Foundation. We also help facilitate in the process of communication and coordination of SWAB Philippines Typhoon, a non-governmental organization based in Hong Kong and the SVD-PHS JPIC on their joint-relief efforts for the typhoon victims.

I am truly grateful to all of you my dear confreres who selflessly offered donations, said prayers and showed care and concern for our brothers and sisters in the Philippines. We continue to pray for our Filipino people and all the suffering people all over the world that they may remain strong and hopeful in the midst of tragedy and devastation. We also hope and pray that we may continue to show our support for the rebuilding and reconstructions in the areas affected by these calamities.

