

Divine Word Missionaries



# SVD MISSION 2012

SHARING INTERCULTURAL LIFE AND MISSION

Reports for the 17<sup>th</sup> General Chapter from the Provinces, Regions and Missions

SVD Publications - Generalate - Rome





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Generalate - Rome

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# Foreword

The advent of the 17th SVD General Chapter (17 June – 15 July 2012) is a welcome occasion for issuing this second update of *SVD Mission*. Its first edition ushered in the 15th General Chapter of 2000, which had been a congregational effort to “re-invent” *what we Divine Word Missionaries should do* at the dawn of a new century being rocked by globalization. It was during that chapter that we have come to envision anew our SVD charism as being above all a mission of “prophetic dialog”. The second edition ushered in the 16th General Chapter of 2006, which drew out *what we Divine Word Religious should be* in creative fidelity to our mission as prophetic dialog.

In light of the precedent chapters, the 17th SVD General Chapter will aim to spell out more concrete and practical directions for our Society –*ad extra* (in prophetic dialog with the people whom we serve) and *ad intra* (in prophetic dialog among ourselves as confreres)– in the coming sexennium 2012-2018. This chapter’s agenda has been thematically expressed as *Sharing Intercultural Life and Mission*. In other words, what will guide the main reflections and decisions of the Chapter is this central conviction: that *in our present age of rapid global changes, the “catholic” or universal mission of the Church is better advanced by building intercultural bridges among peoples of diverse colors, countries and cultures than by serving on just one side of some estranging divide*.

This theme has served as central norm in editing the reports submitted for the 17th General Chapter by all our SVD provinces, regions and missions. These reports (that came in varying forms and lengths) have been further condensed in keeping with a standard outline to facilitate a comparative reading of them from zone to zone.

In the first section of each report, the main source for the statistical profiles of the countries where the Society has missionary presence is *The World Factbook 2011* ([www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook](http://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook)). The reason for this choice is that this website draws its data from what governments officially publish as their most up-to-date statistics. Where data were lacking or dubious, other sources were comparatively consulted –mainly *NationMaster* ([www.nationmaster.com](http://www.nationmaster.com)) or the *United Nations Statistics Division* ([www.unstats.un.org](http://www.unstats.un.org)). As for the religious statistics, data given by the *World Factbook 2011* were compared mainly with those of *The Catholic Hierarchy* ([www.catholic-hierarchy.org](http://www.catholic-hierarchy.org)) and *Christianity Today* ([www.christianitytoday.com](http://www.christianitytoday.com)). In cases of disparate figures, the editorial team preferred the more conservative estimates.

Some reports did not offer a sufficiently clear profile of the intercultural setting of their respective mission countries. In these cases, the editorial team took the liberty to complement them with data comparatively drawn from online encyclope-

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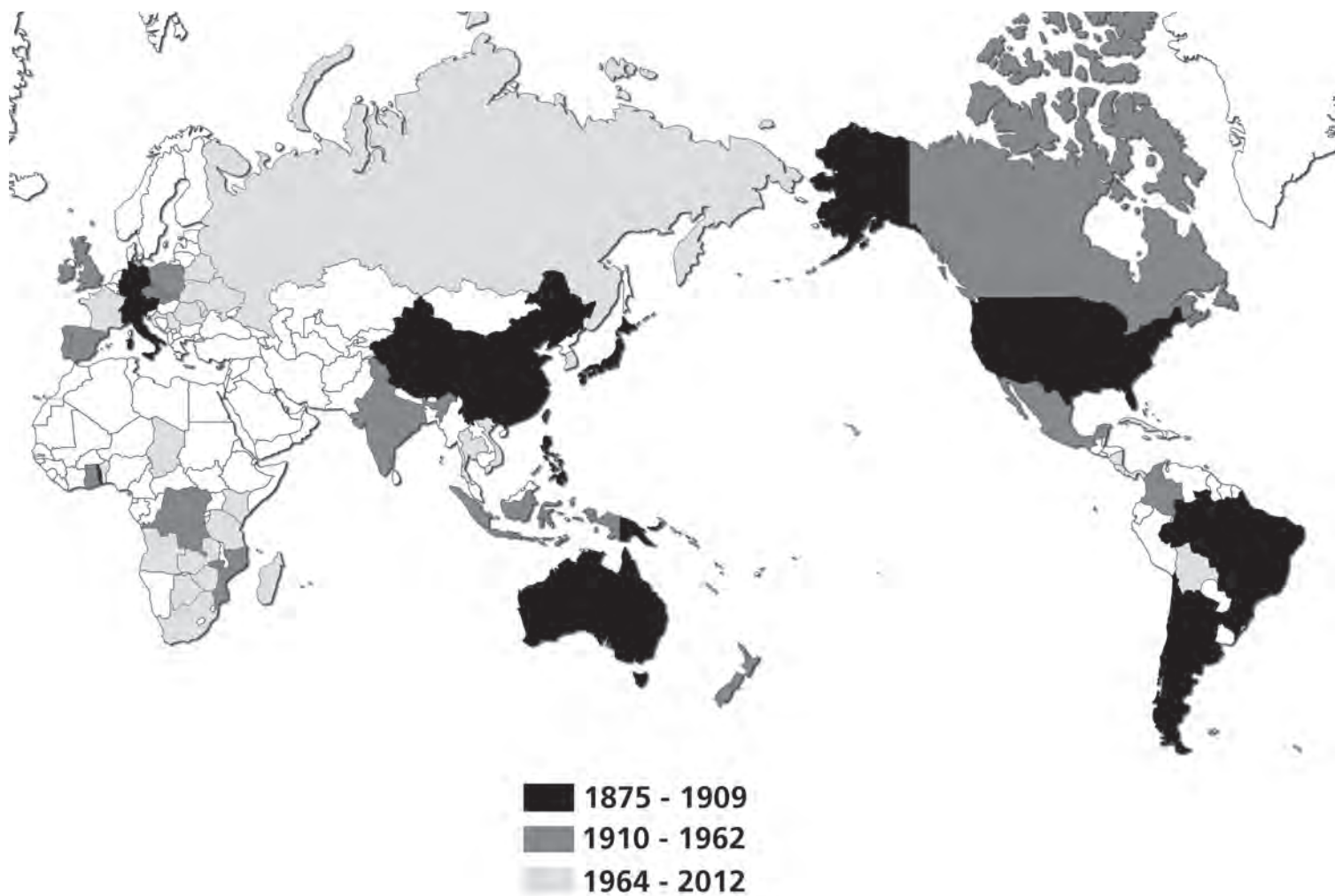
dias –mainly the *Encyclopedia Britannica* ([www.britannica.com](http://www.britannica.com)), *Countries and Their Cultures* ([www.everyculture.com](http://www.everyculture.com)), *Country Studies* ([www.country-studies.com](http://www.country-studies.com)), and *Wikipedia* ([www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org)). The resulting drafts were then e-mailed back to the superiors of the provinces, regions and missions for feedback on their accuracy.

The third and fourth sections of each report feature statistical profiles of every province, region or mission. In composing these tables, minimal differences occurred between what some provinces and regions reported and what is published in the *SVD Catalogus 2012*. For the sake of consistency, the editorial team preferred the latter source of data.

Lastly, one may note that the mission-vision statements of provinces, regions and missions have not been published in full. Cited are only those pertinent parts that eloquently express their respective missionary commitments (to be found under the third section subtitled ‘Sharing Intercultural Mission’) and their corporate missionary self-awareness (to be found under the fourth section subtitled ‘Sharing Intercultural Life’). These citations that express what a given province, region or mission aims to achieve is followed by a report on what confreres there are actually doing at the mission grassroots –*ad extra* (sharing intercultural mission) and *ad intra* (sharing intercultural life).



# SVD FOUNDATIONS



# SVD FOUNDATIONS

## 1875 SVD Foundation-Steyl

1875 Netherlands  
1882 China  
1888 Rome  
1889 Austria  
1889 Argentina  
1892 Togo (\*1974)  
1892 Germany  
1893 Ecuador (\*1962)  
1895 Brazil  
1895 USA  
1896 PNG  
1900 Australia  
1900 Chile  
1906 Japan  
1909 Philippines

## 1909 Death of St. Arnold Janssen

1910 Paraguay  
1911 Mozambique (\*1997)  
1913 Indonesia  
1920 Poland  
1920 Switzerland  
1923 Slovakia  
1924 Hungary  
1928 Belgium  
1930 United Kingdom  
1932 India  
1938 Ghana  
1938 Italy  
1939 Ireland  
1945 Spain  
1947 Czech Republic  
1949 Portugal  
1950 Canada  
1951 Congo (Kinshasa)  
1962 Mexico

## 1962-1965 II Vatican Council

1964 Colombia  
1965 Angola  
1965 Panama  
1970 Serbia-Montenegro  
1971 West Indies  
1979 Croatia  
1980 Nicaragua  
1981 Botswana  
1982 Bolivia  
1984 Kenya  
1984 South Korea  
1985 New Zealand  
1986 Zambia  
1987 Benin  
1987 Zimbabwe  
1989 Cuba  
1989 France  
1989 Madagascar  
1991 Romania  
1991 Belarus  
1993 Jamaica  
1994 Russia  
1994 Ukraine  
1996 Moldova  
1998 Thailand  
1998 Vietnam (1936)  
2001 Tanzania  
2002 Timor Leste (1976)  
2003 Chad  
2003 South Africa  
2006 Costa Rica  
2007 Macau  
2008 Venezuela  
2012 South Sudan

\* returned anew

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# THE SVD IN THE YEAR 2012

Report of the Superior General to the XVII General Chapter

**Antonio M. Pernia, SVD**  
Superior General

## INTRODUCTION

This is now my second time to be giving a report to the general chapter on the state of our Society. Preparing such a report demands a lot of research and reflection, and takes a lot of time and effort. Once done, however, the report becomes, as it was six years ago, a source of joy and a reason to be grateful. For one can see how much our Society has been blessed during the last six years. With this report, then, I invite you to give thanks to God for all his blessings on our Society all over the world. The general chapter is, indeed, an occasion to celebrate the Lord's many blessings despite the awareness that often we are not entirely deserving of them.

I divide this report into four parts. Part I will give an overview of the state of our Society's personnel; Part II will reflect on the state of our missionary and religious spirit; Part III will review some of the recent developments in the zones and at the generalate; and Part IV will offer, in the light of the theme of the chapter, a reflection on Intercultura-

lity in the SVD and hopefully indicate the tasks of the XVII General Chapter of 2012.

### 1. STATUS PERSONARUM

Let me begin with an overview of our status personarum, underlining a few significant facts about our personnel situation.

#### 1.1. Our Total Numbers.

First of all, let's take a look at our total numbers. Six years ago I reported that we were the 7th largest male religious congregation in the Church, and that of the 10 largest we were the only ones growing in number. Our growth, I said, was modest; but still we were growing.

Looking at our numbers at present, I do not think that I can say the same thing today. While we remain the 7th largest male religious congregation in the Church, we do not seem to be growing as we used to.

*Chart-1: 2006-2012 Summary*

2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
6102	6096	6138	6131	6105	6067	6015

From this summary, we can see that our overall numbers during the last six years have fluctuated from a high of 6,138 to a low of 6,015. Over the last six years, this year, 2012, represents the lowest overall total. Let's take a closer look at our overall numbers by comparing the figures of 2006 and those of 2012.

*Chart-2: 2006 Details*

Episc.	Fr.l. Patr.	Fr.l. v.p.	Fr. v.t.	Nov. sch.	Nov. cler.	laic.	Summa
47	3881	635	91	1085	335	28	6102

*Chart-3: 2012 Details*

Episc.	Fr.l. Patr.	Fr.l. v.p.	Fr. v.t.	Nov. sch.	Nov. cler.	laic.	Summa
46	4106	602	89	919	234	19	6015

Comparing the figures of 2006 with those of 2012, we note the following:

- (a) our overall total number has decreased by 87;
- (b) while the number of members in perpetual vows has increased by 191,
- (c) the number of members in temporary vows has decreased by 168,
- (d) and the number of novices has decreased by 110.

Where is the decrease coming from? The decrease continues to come from EUROPE and PANAM. But, at the same time, we are beginning to see a decrease in the numbers from ASPAC. For instance, in 2006, there were 811 scholastics and only 700 in 2012 (i.e., 111 less); in 2006, there were 69 Brothers in temporary vows and only 59 in 2012 (i.e. 10 less); and in 2006, there were 301 novices and only 217 in 2012 (i.e., 84 less).

*Chart-4: Scholastics/ Brothers v.t./Novices from ASPAC*

2006		2012
811	Scholastics	700 (less 111)
69	Brothers in temporary vows	59 (less 10)
301	Novices	217 (less 84)

Indeed, it seems to me that we may have already reached our peak. I think that the increase which we expect to see in AFRAM in the coming years will be just enough to compensate for the decreases that we will continue to see in EUROPE and PANAM, as well as the beginning of the decrease in ASPAC.

*Chart-5: Membership from the Zones 2006-2012*

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
<b>EUROPA</b>	1787	1735	1705	1662	1609	1570	1523
<b>PANAM</b>	710	699	682	665	649	644	624
<b>ASPAC</b>	3310	3356	3428	3471	3499	3485	3487
<b>AFRAM</b>	295	306	323	333	349	368	381

We probably will not grow bigger than what we already are, i.e., 6,000 men, give and take a hundred. In any case, this is already a gift that we need to be thankful for.

### 1.2. Our Age Profile.

Secondly, our age profile. Six years ago, I reported that we seemed to be a relatively young congregation with an average age of 47.62. Today, our average age still stands at 47, to be exact, 47.67. This has been consistent over the last few years. In 1996, our average age was 47.84 and in 2000, it was 47.18. This is counting everyone in the Society, i.e., confreres in perpetual vows, in temporary vows, and novices. If we count only the confreres in perpetual vows, our average age goes up to 52.90. Even then, I would consider this still a young age – well below the standard retirement age of 65. This, too, is a gift we need to thank God for.

### 1.3. The Brothers in our midst.

Thirdly, let us take a look at the situation of our Brothers in the Society.

Over the last six years, we see a very slight but steady decrease in the number of our Brothers. From 2006-2012, Brothers have remained around 11% of our entire membership.

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
<b>Summa</b>	6102	6096	6138	6131	6105	6067	6015
<b>Total Fr.I.</b>	726	724	714	705	700	699	691
	(11.8%)	(11.8%)	(11.6%)	(11.4%)	(11.4%)	(11.5%)	(11.4%)
<b>Fr.I.v.p.</b>	635	634	624	611	609	603	602
<b>Fr.I.v.t.</b>	91	90	90	97	91	96	89

Comparing the numbers of 2006 and 2012:

Chart-7: Brothers 2006 Details

	Fr.I.	Fr.I.	Fr.I.	
	v.p.	v.t.	Total	Summa
EUROPA	291 =(17.4%)	11 =(10.4%)	302 =(16.8%)	1787
PANAM	85 =(13.9%)	7 =(08.9%)	92 =(12.9%)	710
ASPAC	223 =(10.4%)	69 =(07.8%)	292 =(08.8%)	3310
AFRAM	36 =(23.5%)	4 =(03.5%)	40 =(13.5%)	295

Chart-8: Brothers 2012 Details

	Fr.I.	Fr.I.	Fr.I.	
	v.p.	v.t.	Total	Summa
EUROPA	245 =(17.4%)	8 =(14.0%)	253 =(16.6%)	1523
PANAM	82 =(14.9%)	13 =(18.3%)	95 =(15.2%)	624
ASPAC	239 =(09.5%)	59 =(07.7%)	298 =(08.4%)	3487
AFRAM	36 =(14.8%)	9 =(07.4%)	45 =(11.8%)	381
Summa	<b>602 =(12.6%)</b>	<b>89 =(08.8%)</b>	<b>691 =(11.4%)</b>	<b>6015</b>

So, comparing the figures of 2006 and 2012, we can see that in 2006, we had a total of 726 Brothers (635 in perpetual vows and 91 in temporary vows). This represented 11.8% of the total Society membership, 13.9% of all members in perpetual vows, and 07.6% of all members in temporary vows. In 2012, the total number of Brothers has gone down to 691 (602 in perpetual vows and 89 in temporary vows), representing 11.4% of the entire membership, 12.6% of all members in perpetual vows, and 08.8% of all members in temporary vows.

Chart-9: Brothers 2006 / 2012

2006		2012
726 (11.8%)	Fr.I.Total	691 (11.4%)
635 (13.9%)	Fr.I.v.p.	602 (12.6%)
91 (07.6%)	Fr.I.v.t.	89 (08.8%)

1.4. Our Internationality.

The latest Catalogus indicates that, counting everyone, there are 69 nationalities (in the sense of “countries of birth”) in the Society. If we count only those in perpetual vows, then the number of nationalities goes down to 67. This means that, among those in temporary vows or novices, we have two more nationalities, namely, Malaysian and Peruvian.

*The 10 biggest nationalities in 2012 are the following:*

	Fr.I.	Fr.I.	Fr.	Nov.	Nov.	Nov.			
	Episc.	Patr.	v.p.	v.t.	sch.	cler.	laic.	Summa	
1. Indonesia (ISA)	3	835	141	39	331	123	13	1485	=24.6%
2. India (IND)	9	667	43	3	168	38	-	928	=15.4%
3. Poland (POL)	2	455	50	4	24	7	-	542	=09.0%
4. Philippines (PHI)	4	444	25	4	39	15	-	531	=08.8%
5. Germany (GER)	3	264	113	3	1	1	-	385	=06.4%
6. Vietnam (VIE)	-	149	12	5	104	14	1	285	=04.7%
7. U.S.A. (USA)	5	151	39	-	-	1	-	196	=03.2%
8. Ghana (GHA)	3	83	22	1	38	4	2	153	=02.5%
9. Brazil (BRZ)	3	98	20	4	21	1	1	148	=02.4%
10. Argentina (ARG)	-	78	17	2	6	3	-	106	=01.7%

The 10 biggest nationalities over the last six years, 2006-2012, are the following:

Chart-11: The Ten Biggest Nationalities 2006-2012

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
1.	ISA	ISA	ISA	ISA	ISA	ISA	ISA
2.	IND	IND	IND	IND	IND	IND	IND
3.	POL	POL	POL	POL	POL	POL	POL
4.	PHI	PHI	PHI	PHI	PHI	PHI	PHI
5.	GER	GER	GER	GER	GER	GER	GER
6.	USA	VIE	VIE	VIE	VIE	VIE	VIE
7.	VIE	USA	USA	USA	USA	USA	USA

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
8.	BRZ	BRZ	BRZ	BRZ	BRZ	BRZ	GHA
9.	GHA	GHA	GHA	GHA	GHA	GHA	BRZ
10.	NED	NED	ARG	ARG	ARG	ARG	ARG

The five biggest national groups have remained consistent over the last six years, namely, ISA, IND, POL, PHI and GER. We see changes only starting with the sixth place, occupied by USA in 2006 and now occupied by VIE. USA drops to seventh place starting 2007. The eighth place is occupied by BRZ until 2011, but now is occupied by GHA, which formerly occupied ninth place. Now BRZ is in the ninth place. NED occupied the tenth place until 2007. Starting 2008, ARG occupies the tenth place.

Most of our provinces, regions and missions are international in composition, with an average of about 13-15 nationalities. The only exception are our Indian, Vietnamese, and to some extent our Indonesian provinces, and this is because of government restrictions on the entry of foreign missionaries into these countries.

Province/Region	Nationalities	Members	Locals	Expatriates
<b>USC</b>	29	147	115	132
<b>JPN</b>	24	139	49	90
<b>PNG</b>	23	133	16	117
<b>GHA</b>	23	165	78	87
<b>KEN</b>	22	64	9	55
<b>PAR</b>	22	84	22	62
<b>MEX</b>	22	87	22	65
<b>AUS</b>	20	90	17	18
<b>GER</b>	20	327	231	96
<b>ARE</b>	18	63	15	48
<b>BRC</b>	18	96	42	54
<b>BOL</b>	17	44	1	43



**The provinces/regions with the least number of nationalities:**

*Chart-13: Lowest Twelve Provinces/Regions with least number of nationalities*

Province/Region	Nationalities	Members	Locals	Expatriates
INE	1	156	156	0
INM	1	152	152	0
INH	1	97	97	0
ING	1	33	33	0
INC	2	262	261	1
VIE	2	144	143	1
TLS	4	34	1	33
IDJ	4	237	226	11
IDT	5	186	170	16
TCD	5	7	0	7
PHN	6	81	68	13
POL	7	228	213	15

To summarize our status personarum, I think the following can be said regarding the state of our personnel:

- (a) We are a total of 6015 members. We probably have reached our peak at 6000 members. We will probably be fluctuating around this number in the coming years, a little less or a little more than 6000 men. Members from EUROPE and PANAM will continue to decrease; members from ASPAC will begin to decrease slightly; but we expect a steady though modest increase of members from AFRAM.
- (b) We continue to be a relatively young congregation with an average age of 47, or 53, if we count only the members in final vows. Our average age will probably continue to be within this range over the coming years, as older members pass away in EUROPE and younger members join us from AFRAM.
- (c) Unfortunately, the number of our Brothers continues to decrease. They now constitute only 11% of our membership. It is difficult to foresee the future in terms of the number of our Brothers. We can only hope that the situation can be turned around, or at least that the decline can be arrested and kept at least at 10%. In any case, no matter how small, the presence of the Brothers in the Society continues to be significant in several provinces/regions/missions.
- (d) We are a very international religious congregation with 69 different nationalities among our members. More significantly, the com-

position of most of our provinces/regions/missions is very international. Of our 58 provinces/regions/missions, only 19 units (32.7%) have less than 10 nationalities. All other units, i.e., 39 provinces/regions/missions (67.2%), are composed of confreres coming from 10 nationalities or more.

Let me conclude this first part by telling a story about a visit I made many years ago to Argentina. In Buenos Aires, I went to visit our Colegio Guadalupe, accompanied by the Vice-provincial and the school chaplain. I was received by the school director together with a group of lay teachers. During our meeting with the teachers, one of them suddenly asked: “How do you do it?” We were caught by surprise with the question. So the teacher pointed out: “You are four SVDs, and each one of you comes not just from four different countries but also from four different continents”. And, indeed, it was so. The Vice-provincial was European from Spain, the school chaplain was African from Congo, the school director was Latin American from Argentina, and I was Asian from the Philippines. At this, we SVDs just looked at each other and smiled. And one of us said: “That is how the SVD is. We are different but one. We are brothers from diverse nations and languages.” That was one experience of SVD internationality that I will never forget.

## **2. OUR MISSIONARY COMMITMENT AND RELIGIOUS SPIRIT**

From numbers and statistics, let us now turn to the state of our missionary commitment and re-

ligious spirit. As always, this is the most difficult part of a report like this. The great diversity of situations in our provinces, regions and missions makes it difficult to make a statement that applies to all. One statement that is true of one area can easily turn out to be untrue of another area. What follows, then, are simply general observations on the quality of our missionary commitment and religious spirit.

### **2.1. Our Missionary Commitment.**

The primary question here is: how is the missionary commitment of our confreres? Is it strong? Is it weak? Aside from being a difficult question to answer, there are also many ways of approaching it. In this report, I would like to use the issue of the “early returnees” as a springboard for a reflection on this question.

In several gatherings of superiors, alarm is often raised about the phenomenon of the “early returnees” or what one provincial called the lack of “stickability” of our young missionaries, that is to say, the impression that too many of our young missionaries do not seem to stick it out long enough in their mission assignments and ask too soon to return to their home provinces. I am grateful to General Councilor, Fr. Robert Kisala, for his patience in going over our database and undertaking a serious study on this question. The results of that study will appear in an issue of *Verbum SVD*. Here, I would like to share the main conclusions of the study.

The study defines an “early returnee” as a confrere with a first assignment outside his home country

[outside their country of residence for the Vietnamese who entered the Society outside their country of birth] and returns to that country within 7 years after taking final vows, excepting those who are called back to do a specific work in their home country and those who return for clear reasons of health.

Now, between the years 1991-2010 (i.e., a 20-year period), a total of 2442 confreres professed final vows in the Society (an average of 122 a year). Of these 1374 (56%) received first assignments outside their home country. During this period of time, a total of 106 could be identified as “early returnees” as defined above. This represents 4.3% of all those who took final vows, and 7.7% of all those who received a first assignment outside their home country, during this period.

There are several reasons why confreres return early. Each case is usually a story in itself and should be treated as such. Still, the various reasons can be grouped into five categories: (1) Vocation crisis (especially in the area of affectivity – they usually become “nulli stationi adscripti” shortly after going home): 34 of 106; (2) Enculturation (i.e., difficulty in language learning or cultural adaptation): 24 of 106; (3) Disappointment (with the mission, with the superior, or with the community): 17 of 106; (4) Family concerns (e.g., sick or elderly parents): 8; (5) Sent back by the province or region for various reasons: 6 of 106. For the rest of the 106 (i.e., 15), records were unclear or unavailable.

Fr. Kisala concludes that the problem of “early returnees” is probably not as large as it is usually as-

sumed. While it is a cause of concern, and therefore should be addressed accordingly, it is not a cause of alarm. Moreover, many of the “early returnees” have been able to learn from their experience and are making a positive contribution to mission in their home country. And finally, it should be remembered that – discounting those who have already left the Society, those who are “nulli stationi adscripti”, early returnees, and those who have already died – about 85% of those who took final vows during this period continue in their assignment or have taken on a new assignment in the Society.

With this as background, the following observations (in terms of “lights” and “shadows”) can be made about the state of our missionary commitment:

**Lights:** On the one hand, despite the phenomenon of “early returnees”, our missionary commitment, in general, remains quite strong.

- (1) First of all, it continues to be possible to find confreres for our different mission engagements, even for the so-called “difficult missions”. Perhaps not too many volunteer immediately for the “difficult missions”, but generally confreres do not refuse when asked to go to these missions. And so, for instance, it was not entirely difficult to find confreres for our new missions in South Sudan and Venezuela.
- (2) Secondly, a good percentage of those applying for their first mission assignments volunteer for an assignment outside their home countries. In the period cited above (1991-2010), the percentage was 56%. Over the last eleven years (2000-2011), the

percentage is 62%. In fact, the percentage has been increasing over the last few years. During the first half of this last period (i.e., 2000-2005), the percentage was 60%, while in the second half (i.e., 2006-2011), the percentage rose to 64%.

- (3) Thirdly, I think there is a genuine effort on the part of many of our provinces, regions and missions to implement “prophetic dialogue” and promote our “characteristic dimensions”. I sense among the confreres the openness to discern new missionary challenges and the search to respond to these challenges in innovative ways. Oftentimes the results of the discernment and the searching are not immediately visible, but at least the desire and the effort are genuine.

**Shadows:** On the other hand, however, there is the permanent need to strengthen and deepen our missionary commitment.

- (1) First of all, while it may not yet have reached alarming proportions, the issue of “early returnees” needs to be attended to adequately. The study, mentioned earlier, includes information about the formation houses where the “early returnees” were trained, the provinces they came from and the provinces they returned from. The provinces and formation houses concerned should discuss the study and look into the reasons for the “early return” of the young confreres.
- (2) Secondly, a certain individualism continues to plague some of our missions, and thus impede or threaten genuine team work and

collaboration in mission. One form of this is the assumption by individual confreres of personal projects without sufficient discussion in the community or the necessary approval of the superior and his council. Sometimes this is connected with access to funds or benefactors. Another form is the inability to work with others, often because of the attitude whereby one thinks that he always should be the one in-charge or that his way of doing things is the best; thus, the inability to see one’s mission as larger than oneself and simply part of a larger vision.

## **2.2. Our Religious Spirit.**

Here, the primary question is similar to the one regarding our missionary commitment: what is the state of the religious spirit of our confreres? Is it intense? Is it feeble? Again, a difficult question to answer, and also with several ways of approaching it. As in the previous section, here too I would like to use one issue – that is, the issue of departures from the Society – as a springboard for a reflection on the question of our religious spirit.

Fr. Kisala’s study mentioned earlier is actually Part Two of a two-part study. Part One focuses on departures from the Society spanning three generations of SVDs over a sixty-year period, i.e., from 1951-2010. By “departures” the study understands someone who has left the Society “officially”, that is, with the full process of departure completed. The following chart gives an overview of the situation:

*Chart-14: Three Generations of SVDs*

	<b>Third-Age</b> <b>1951-1970</b>	<b>Middle</b> <b>1971-1990</b>	<b>Young</b> <b>1991-2010</b>
<b>FINAL VOWERS</b>	2464	1923	2442
<b>Yearly Average</b>	123	96	122
<b>DEATHS</b>	735	143	28
<b>Percentage</b>	28.9%	7.4%	1.1%
<b>DEPARTURES</b>	681	412	140
<b>Percentage</b>	27.5%	21.4%	5.7%
<b>NULLI STATIONI</b>	12	100	120
<b>Percentage</b>	0.5%	5.2%	4.9%
<b>ACTIVE TODAY</b>	1,036	1,268	2,154

- After the number of final vows went down in the “Middle” generation, we recovered the numbers seen in the “Third-Age” generation in the “Young” generation.
- The overall departure rates for the generations show a decline, from 27.5% in the “Third-Age” generation, to 21.4% in the “Middle” generation, and 5.7% in the “Young” generation. We can expect more departures from the “Middle” and “Young” generations as the years go on, but we can hope that they will not eventually equal the rate of the “Third-Age” generation.
- The highest rates of departure are seen those who took final vows between 1959 and 1967.

The total rate for these years was 33%. The highest rate for a single year was 1963. Of the confreres who took final vows in that year, 41% ended up leaving the Society.

- A comparison can be made with the study done for the USG (Union of Superiors General) in 2005, using data from 26 male congregations (cf. Fr. Luis Oviedo, OFM, “An Approach to Abandonment” in Fidelity and Abandonment in Today’s Consecrated Life). The data from the years 1990-2004 indicated an annual departure rate of 0.4% to 0.5% for priests in final vows, and an annual departure rate of 0.6% to 1% for brothers in final vows. Over 20 years that would mean of departure rate of 8-10% for priests and

12-20% for brothers. Our overall rate for the “Young” generation would be slightly less than that (i.e., 5.7%).

With this as background, I would like now to make the following comments (again in terms of “lights” and “shadows”) about the state of our religious spirit:

**Lights:**

- (1) First of all, while departures are always a cause for concern, the rate of departure in our Society seems to be within the normal range or even lower. More data are available on this question in the report of the Procurator General.
- (2) Secondly, my overall impression is that, in general, our confreres are basically committed to the ideals of the religious life and the demands of our vowed life. While there are failings in the living of the vows, the more serious cases which normally reach the generalate are not beyond the normal rate. In general, too, confreres appear to be faithful to regular personal and community prayer and days of recollection and retreat. One would perhaps wish that there be greater creativity or originality in these spiritual activities or religious practices, but at least the basic demands are met.
- (3) Thirdly, while the quality of community life is uneven over our many provinces, regions and missions, there seems to be a genuine desire to meet more often – for community discussions, for ongoing formation, and also occasionally for faith sharing. I believe the number of province and community assemblies has increased in the last few years. This, I think, is a positive sign that confreres are taking community life seriously.

**Shadows:**

- (1) First of all, a cause of concern is the number of confreres who are “nulli stationi adscripti”. Principally, these are those who are on an “extended leave of absence”, in “exclaustration” or simply “missing”. As we saw earlier, the numbers are: 12 (0.5%) for the “Third-Age” generation, 100 (5.2%) for the “Middle” generation, and 120 (4.9%) for the “Young” generation. Obviously the percentages in the “Middle” and “Young” generations will eventually go down as the cases are processed and the process is terminated. What causes concern is that there are 120 in the “Young” generation – for instance, there were 23 who were recorded to have “left” in 2010. This seems to indicate a trend the younger confreres whereby “leaves” and “exclaustrations” are requested too easily, sometimes for the flimsiest of reasons.
- (2) Secondly, in the context of the seductions of a secular culture and a consumerist society which surround us, there is the permanent and ongoing need to deepen our spiritual life. We need, in particular, to develop a spirituality that goes beyond merely being faithful to the demands prescribed by the Constitutions or the general norms of the religious life – that is, a spirituality that is rooted in and constantly nourishes one’s personal experience of God. This calls for the creation of an atmosphere whereby one can talk about and share his journey of faith, either through regular spiritual direction and community faith sharing. There is need, therefore, to stress the importance of spiritual animation, both for



the superiors who should see it as the primary task of their office, and for the confreres who should regard it as their responsibility as members of the community.

### 3. SOME RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

Let us now move on to examine some of the recent developments in the zones and at the generalate.

#### 3.1. Developments in the Zones.

##### 3.1.1. AFRAM.

The general visitations conducted in the zone during the last sexennium noted a “New Era” of our SVD Presence in AFRAM, an era marked by the “coming of age” and the “growing self-confidence” of our communities and missionary service in the zone. There are many indications of this “new era”.

First is the continuing growth of our membership in and from the zone. In 2006, there was a total of 498 confreres assigned in AFRAM; in 2012 that figure stands at 541, i.e., an increase of 43 confreres. In 2006, we had a total of 295 AFRAM-born confreres; in 2012 that figure stands at 381, i.e., an increase of 86 confreres.

Secondly, precisely because of the growth of our membership in the zone, we have been able to take up new initiatives in AFRAM.

- In South Africa, beyond the initial engagement in the diocese of Tzaneen (2003), we have expanded to three other dioceses – Polokwane (or St. Pietersberg, 2007, where we took over the

administration of the Mater Dei Pastoral Center in Mokopane), Johannesburg (where we took over the administration of the LUMKO Center, 2009/2001) and Kokstad (2011).

- In Chad (2004), we have accepted a second parish in Boro in the same diocese of Goré and, from the original four, we now have 7 confreres in the mission.
- In 2008, Zimbabwe was separated from the BOT Province and became an independent mission. Since then, we have expanded to the capital city of Harare (2011) and accepted a new parish in Bulawayo (2010).
- In the same year, the Togo-Benin Region became a Province.
- Our latest mission in the zone is in the Diocese of Yei in the newest nation of the world, South Sudan. The pioneering team began there in April this year.

Thirdly, we note the continuing expansion of our formation programs. A postulancy house has been in existence in Madagascar since 2008. Candidates for the novitiate are sent to CNG and GHA. The first Malagasy to profess final vows did so in 2008 and was ordained in 2009. He is now working as a missionary in the Philippines. MOZ is about to begin a formation program, and ZIM has revived its pre-postulancy program and has been sending postulants to Zambia (BOT). Our three Common Formation Centers (CFC) in Nairobi (KEN), Tamale (GHA) and Kinshasa (CNG) continue to have an overflow of students who need to be sent to the formation centers in other zones. Serious thought is being given to a fourth CFC in Luanda in ANG.

*Chart-15: Vocations from AFRAM*

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
<b>Summa</b>	6102	6096	6138	6131	6105	6067	6015
<b>AFRAM</b>	295	306	323	333	349	368	381

Like other zones in the Society, our provinces, region, and missions in the AFRAM zone are highly international or intercultural. The following chart shows the level of internationality of our AFRAM provinces, region and missions.

*Chart-16: Internationality in AFRAM*

Province/Region	Nationalities	Members	Locals	Expatriates
<b>GHA</b>	23	165	78	87
<b>KEN</b>	22	64	9	55
<b>CNG</b>	15	104	49	55
<b>ANG</b>	14	47	15	32
<b>TOG</b>	14	53	19	34
<b>BOT</b>	13	62	3	59
<b>MAD</b>	12	27	1	26
<b>MOZ</b>	10	19	0	19
<b>ZIM</b>	9	23	3	20
<b>TCD</b>	5	7	0	7
<b>SSD</b>	3	4	0	4

### 3.1.2. EUROPA.

The general visitations in the zone highlighted the emergence of a “New Face” of the SVD in Europe. There are three senses in which this expression can be understood.

First of all, it is a face that is no longer just turned outwards toward the world, but also inwards to-

ward Europe itself. The new understanding of mission signalled by the Roscommon Consensus of 1990 has now taken root in the provinces and region. Confreres are becoming more and more aware that mission exists not only outside Europe (“ad-extra”) but also inside Europe (“ad-intra”), and that there is an urgent need to respond to the missionary situation in the zone. “Project Europe”



has made this sufficiently clear. Its publication, Today’s Europe and the SVD, indicates the varying missionary needs of the contemporary European situation.

Secondly, the faces of the people we work with have also changed. That is to say, the face of Europe itself is changing. There are many ways to describe this new face of Europe – secularized, multi-cultural, pluralistic, post-modern, post-Christian. Both the changed situation of Europe and a new understanding of mission require new ways of carrying out our mission in the continent. There is need to enter into prophetic dialogue with different groups of people, particularly those

involved in and affected by the changes arising from globalization, secularization and migration. Thirdly, the faces of the confreres who now compose our provinces and region and who help carry out our mission in Europe have also changed. No longer exclusively Europeans but also Asians, Africans and Latin Americans. Over the last few years, our European provinces and region have become more and more international and inter-cultural through the arrival of many missionaries from abroad, especially from the so-called “global south”. These “new missionaries”, along with the local vocations which can hopefully be recruited and our lay partners, will be indispensable for the future of our missionary presence in Europe.

The following chart shows the level of internationality of the provinces and region of the zone.

Chart-17: Internationality in EUROPA

Province/Region	Nationalities	Members	Locals	Expatriates
GER	20	327	231	96
OES	13	95	63	32
ITA	12	37	21	16
ESP	11	54	34	20
NEB	11	80	64	16
SWI	10	31	28	13
IBP	10	60	43	17
HUN	9	34	14	20
SLO	8	65	53	12
POR	7	40	25	15
URL	7	40	4	36
POL	7	228	213	15

The visitations also noted the decreasing number of our members from Europe. Indeed, the numbers show a steady decline of members from the zone.

*Chart-18: Vocations from EUROPA*

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
<b>Summa</b>	6102	6096	6138	6131	6105	6067	6015
<b>EUROPA</b>	1787	1735	1705	1662	1609	1570	1523

In view of this, the visitations underlined the need for vocation promotion in our provinces and region in Europe, as well as a more intensive collaboration in the zone and sub-zones toward even the possible merger of some provinces. In regard to the first issue, many provinces in the zone, particularly the German-speaking provinces, have responded positively by organizing vibrant vocation promotion teams which are often interprovincial or subzonal and sometimes in joint effort with our SSpS sisters. And in regard to the second issue, the zone continues to enhance collaboration among the provinces and region. And in 2007, after a long process of preparation, the former North German (GEN) and South German (GES) provinces were merged into the present single German Province (GER).

The new possibilities for mission in Europe, as well as the coming of “new missionaries” from the global south, have given new enthusiasm to many of our older provinces in Europe. For instance, on the occasion of its centennial in 2011, the NEB Province announced the reversal of their earlier decision to prepare for the eventual extinction of

province and their renewed commitment to continue its missionary presence and service in the Netherlands and Belgium.

**3.1.3. PANAM.**

The general visitations in the PANAM zone underlined the “New Challenges” for SVD mission in the zone. The beginnings of our presence in the zone were marked principally by pastoral assistance to European immigrants, rural parishes, schools, the press apostolate, and mission among the indigenous population and with African Americans. Large mission houses were built in the European style, dedicated to the formation of the youth, the majority of them coming from immigrant areas. One of the objectives was to prepare these young men for mission “ad gentes.” As a consequence, many missionaries were sent to different parts of the world, especially to Asia and Africa.

In contrast, we seem to see new challenges for SVD mission in PANAM: new situations of social inequality as a result of economic globalization, continuing urbanization and increasing migration resulting in the influx of new immi-

grants (no longer only from Europe but also from Asia, Africa and Latin America itself); the continuing presence of other cultures, especially the indigenous groups and the African Americans; the presence of other Christian communities, different religions, and people seeking spiritual values, especially the youth.

Our provinces and regions in the zone respond to these new challenges by, among other things, developing better the missionary profile of our parishes, strengthening the evangelization and mission animation dimension of our education

institutions, promoting the SVD characteristic dimensions of our missionary service, and sharing our mission with the laity. At the same time, the effort is made to develop a personal and communal spirituality that is incarnated in the new reality, sharpen the missionary character of both initial and ongoing formation, foster administrative and financial co-responsibility, and promote intercultural communities.

The following chart shows the level of internationality of the provinces and regions of the zone.

Chart-19: Internationality in PANAM

Province/Region	Nationalities	Members	Locals	Expatriates
USC	29	247	124	123
PAR	22	84	22	62
MEX	22	87	22	65
ARE	18	63	15	48
BRC	18	96	42	54
BOL	17	44	1	43
CHI	17	83	25	58
USW	16	72	25	47
COL	15	55	13	42
ARS	15	121	60	61
CAM	14	40	5	35
BRN	14	94	42	52
BRA	13	40	6	34
ECU	13	43	3	40
USS	13	63	22	41
BRS	13	72	25	47

Our statistics also show that our membership from the PANAM zone is in decline:

*Chart-20: Vocations from PANAM*

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
<b>Summa</b>	6102	6096	6138	6131	6105	6067	6015
<b>PANAM</b>	710	699	682	665	649	644	624

Perhaps a concrete indication of this is the merger in 2008 of the former Argentina South (ARS) and Argentina North (ARN) provinces into the present Argentina South Province (ARS). The decline in membership, however, has not prevented the zone from taking new initiatives in the last six years. Among these is the decision to begin in 2008 a mission in the Archdiocese of Maracaibo in Venezuela which is under the jurisdiction of the COL Province, as well as the decision to begin in 2012 a common formation program for the Southern and Andean subzones. This includes a common novitiate located in PAR (Asuncion), an international theologate located in ARS (Córdoba) and a common theologate located in CHI (Santiago).

**3.1.4. ASPAC.**

The general visitations in the ASPAC zone noted a “New Chapter” in Mission in the zone. In other words, a feeling was created among the visitors that, in significant parts of the zone, one chapter in our history is ending and a new one is beginning. Some provinces and subzones have already celebrated, or will soon celebrate, the centennial of SVD presence (SIN 1979, PNG 1996, JPN 2007, Philippines 2009, Indonesia 2013).

We can look back with pride and gratitude that in some of these places, like Ende and Timor,

PNG and the Philippines, our mission has been a success – the local church has been largely established and the local clergy has already taken over or is in the process of doing so. The provinces in Indonesia have begun to place more resources on some of the other islands in the country where the church is not yet sufficiently established, and in the Philippines and PNG we continue to move into more difficult areas. Although our mission in India is more recent (1932), in some of the traditional areas of our mission in the country the local clergy is also taking over, and we continue to move into new areas where there is still a need to build up local Christian communities. Indeed, new mission situations can be identified throughout the zone: work with Aborigine groups in AUS, work with immigrants in KOR and JPN, a new establishment in Macau in SIN (2007), new initiatives in Thailand, the elevation of VIE into a province (2008) and a movement into minority tribal areas in this new province, and the creation of the newest region in the Society in TLS (2011). All of these indicate a new chapter in mission in ASPAC.

In addition, this new chapter in mission is marked by the fact that ASPAC has, in a certain sense, taken up the burden for mission throughout the world.

An area that in the past was seen as the “object” of mission has now become a primary source of missionaries. More than two-thirds of those receiving first assignments in the Society in recent years have come from the ASPAC zone. Of these, about 53% received first assignments outside their home

countries. To date almost 1,000 ASPAC confreres work or study outside their home countries.

Indeed, vocations continue to be abundant in the zone, although the statistics reveal the beginning of a drop in the overall numbers.

Chart-21: Vocations from ASPAC

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Summa	6102	6096	6138	6131	6105	6067	6015
ASPAC	3310	3356	3428	3471	3499	3485	3487

Maintaining an international membership is a special challenge for a few provinces and regions in the zone, particularly those in countries which have placed restrictions on the entry of foreign missionaries. But even in these provinces and regions, the diversity of the local cultures of the country ensures a certain degree of interculturality.

Chart-22: Internationality in ASPAC

Province/Region	Nationalities	Members	Locals	Expatriates
JPN	24	139	49	90
PNG	23	133	16	117
AUS	20	90	17	18
SIN	20	153	69	84
PHC	15	245	201	15
IDE	12	499	479	20
PHS	10	121	101	20
IDR	8	177	165	12
KOR	7	21	6	15
PHN	6	81	68	13
IDT	5	186	170	16
TLS	4	34	1	33
IDJ	4	237	226	11
VIE	2	144	143	1

Province/Region	Nationalities	Members	Locals	Expatriates
INC	2	262	261	1
ING	1	33	33	0
INH	1	97	97	0
INM	1	152	152	0
INE	1	156	156	0

## 3.2. Developments at the Generalate.

### 3.2.1. Generalate Institutions.

#### (a) Freinademetz Center.

The Freinademetz Center, located on the ground floor of the St. Raphael building at the entrance to our SVD Generalate property in Rome, was born out of the failed effort of the SVD and the Benedictines to establish a “China Center” in Rome. The original plan, envisioned particularly by the Benedictines, was for an institute that would offer Sinology courses in Rome. When this failed to materialize, the SVD general council decided to begin with a small center that would “serve the China concerns of the Church in Rome and thus help it to enter more deeply and more competently into dialogue with China”.

The Project Design, approved by the general council on 21 April 2006, identified the goals of the center as: (1) setting up a library of sinological materials, especially Chinese-language books and journals, for use by researchers, particularly Chinese ecclesiastical students in Rome; (2) providing academic and non-academic assistance to Chinese ecclesiastical person-

nel training in Rome; (3) gathering and sharing information and/or documentation on China and Christianity in China; (4) finding opportunities to present China, particularly Christianity in China, to the ecclesiastical and other public in Rome; (5) networking with other entities concerned with Christianity in China; (6) facilitating exchanges on China among Church entities in Rome; and (7) keeping contact with and hosting Chinese scholars and other scholars on China.

The center was officially inaugurated on 29 January 2007, the feast of St. Joseph Freinademetz, with an academic event in the aula magna of the Collegio which featured a lecture by Fr. Wilhelm Müller on “The Contribution of Divine Word Missionaries to Sinology”. This was followed by a Eucharistic celebration and the blessing of the center presided over by the Cardinal Prefect of the Propaganda Fide, Cardinal Ivan Dias. Other eminent guests, mostly China scholars and Chinese students, were also present.

The first years of the center, under the directorship of Fr. Paulino Belamide, were characterized by the efforts to set up its physical facilities, build up its

library, establish contact with the Chinese ecclesiastical students in Rome, and make the center known to the Church in Rome. Activities of the center revolved around the visits of Chinese students to consult its library and the organization of social, spiritual and pastoral gatherings for them. Two years ago, Fr. Augustinus Lee took over from Fr. Belamide who had become Rector of the Collegio in Rome.

Under Fr. Lee, and in collaboration with some volunteers, the activities of the center have widened to include spiritual assistance and guidance to Chinese sisters in Rome, Italian and English language classes to Chinese students and migrant workers, catechism classes to non-Christian Chinese workers in restaurants and other factories, invitation to visiting Chinese professors and scholars. The library has grown and now has some 6,000 volumes. Two websites have been created, one in Chinese [www.centrofu.com](http://www.centrofu.com) and the other in English [www.ccicnews.com](http://www.ccicnews.com).

A special project is the publication of a journal entitled Catholic Translation Journal which aims to translate into Chinese articles written in Western languages (English, Italian, French, etc.). The plan is to have two issues a year, one in June and the other in December, and to print about 2000 copies for each issue. The first issue came out early this year and contains 144 pages or 123,698 Chinese characters. Other publication plans are the translation into Chinese of Fr. Joseph Henckels, SVD's *My China Memoirs* and Fr. Josef Alt, SVD's *Arnold Janssen - Letters to China*, Vol. 1 (1879-1897).

#### *(b) Catacombs of St. Domitilla.*

Around the beginning of 2008, the congregation of the Brothers of Mercy from Trier ("Barmherzige Brüder von Maria Hilf von Trier") decided that they were no longer in a position to continue to administer the Catacombs of St. Domitilla. For years, the Society had a close relationship with the Brothers since our confreres of the Collegio celebrated daily mass for the Brothers and the religious sisters they had employed for the hotel nearby. Because of this, the Brothers proposed that they would recommend to the Vatican that our Society take over the administration of the catacombs.

After a long period of discernment, consultation and discussion, the general council decided on 29 April 2008 to take over the administration of the catacombs. A group of SVD confreres was then identified and formed, a separate legal entity established for the project [Soverdi Catacombe Domitilla], and a contract with the Vatican signed. We began our service at the catacombs on 01 January 2009 with a team of three confreres. The primary reasons for accepting this offer were: (1) the possibility of mission animation among the pilgrims who come to the catacombs, and (2) the monetary income that comes with the work of administering the catacombs.

About 145,000 pilgrims come to visit the catacombs every year. This offers a great opportunity for mission animation. Nothing explicit is being attempted, but no chance is lost to say something about our Society whenever the opportunity offers itself. In addition, many of our magazines and pu-



blications, as well as memorabilia of our saints, are on display in the souvenir shop. A few provinces have begun to collaborate by directing groups of pilgrims who come to Rome to the catacombs. During the first year of our service, the monetary income was barely E. 60,000 (since some renovation work had to be done in the place). But by the second year, the catacombs could already donate to the generalate the amount of E. 250,000. Yearly donations will probably revolve around this sum.

The work at the catacombs is not simple and easy. It requires a lot of patience and persistence, aside from a special preparation and formation in ancient Christian archeology. The turn-over of confreres working at the catacombs can be quite fast. Beginning this year, we have a new team of four confreres, three of whom are completely new. I appeal to you to be generous when the generalate comes knocking on your doors for confreres for our mission at the catacombs of St. Domitilla.

*(c) “Ad Gentes” Center.*

The last general chapter recommended that the general administration pursue “Option-B” in the proposal to renovate the Nemi International Center. Under Option-B, the Society would continue to hold courses organized for our members at the center but would open it up to group activities of the local clergy, other religious orders and the laity.

Thus, hand in hand with the physical renovation of the center, a small commission of generalate members was tasked to re-think the vision of the

Nemi International Center in view of the above-mentioned recommendation of the last general chapter. This commission proposed the following as the renewed vision of the center:

In the light of St. Arnold Janssen’s vision for periodic religious missionary renewal, the SVD International Center in Nemi aims to serve as a venue for ongoing formation for Divine Word Missionaries, members of the Arnoldus Family, their mission partners, and for lay people, religious, and clerics, as a Church called to share in the mission of Jesus, the Word Incarnate.

Along with this renewed vision, the commission also suggested that the center be given a new name – preferably one that would express its vision and identity. Among the many suggestions made, the general council decided on “Ad Gentes Center” as the new name of the Nemi International Center.

The principal reasons for the choice of this name are the following: (1) to record a historical fact connected with Nemi and Vatican II’s Decree on the Missionary Activity of the Church, *Ad Gentes*; (2) to pay an indirect and unofficial tribute to Superior General, Johannes Schütte, for his role in the drafting of *Ad Gentes* and in the building up of the “Nemi Tertiate”, not only as a physical facility but also as a renewal program; (3) to reaffirm our identity as an *ad gentes* missionary congregation in the spirit of the charism bequeathed to us by our Founder, St. Arnold Janssen; and (4) to renew, in these uncertain times, our commitment to Vatican II’s vision of Church and of its mission.



*(d) VIVAT International.*

Last November 2010 was the 10th anniversary of the establishment of VIVAT International. This event was celebrated in Rome on January 15, 2011, with the Cardinal President of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, Cardinal Peter Kodwo Appiah Turkson, presiding at the Eucharistic celebration. What originally started as a joint SVD-SSpS project has now grown into an NGO constituted by 12 religious congregations. Aside from the two “founding congregations”, two other congregations are “full members” (CSSp/Spiritans and ASC/Adorers of the Blood of Christ), and the remaining eight are “associate members” (OMI/Oblates of Mary Immaculate; MCCJ/Comboni Missionaries; CMS/Comboni Sisters; MSHR/Missionary Sisters of the Holy Rosary; LSA/Little Sisters of the Assumption; Cssp/Missionary Sisters of the Holy Spirit; SCJ/Dehonians; RA/Religious of the Assumption).

Aside from the growth in member congregations, another development is the establishment of national branches of VIVAT in several countries. To date, three national branches have been approved – VIVAT International/Indonesia, VIVAT International/Argentina, and VIVAT International/Bolivia. Two other national branches are in the process of finalizing their statutes, namely, Kenya and India. The establishment of national branches is the offshoot of the holding of “VIVAT workshops” in different countries. The first workshop was held in Rome in 2007, and since then seven other workshops have been held in Brazil, Bolivia, Kenya, North America, Ecuador, Congo and India. More workshops are being

planned for Indonesia, the Philippines, Eastern Europe and West Africa.

These workshops have helped to bring VIVAT closer to our sisters and confreres on the grassroots level. They have also helped to establish greater collaboration with the provincial or regional JPIC coordinators. Hopefully, the national branches will play a significant role in linking our missionaries in the field and our officers who work at the VIVAT offices in UN locations around the world. To date, VIVAT has an office in New York and Geneva, and a representation in Vienna. The VIVAT representative in Geneva is a Spiritan Father, Fr. Edward Flynn, CSSp, while the one in Vienna is an OMI Father, Fr. Thomas Vyhnalek, OMI. VIVAT is also collaborating with a group of religious congregations in Rome seeking accreditation at the FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization).

The last meeting of the VIVAT Board of Directors on 23 January of this year marked the beginning of a new triennium. In accordance with its Charter, the presidency of VIVAT changed hands, from the SVD Superior General to the SSpS Congregational Leader, Sr. Ma. Theresia Hörnemann. A corresponding change also took place in the Executive Team in the VIVAT Office in New York. Fr. Felix Jones, SVD took over as chairperson from Sr. Zelia Cordeiro dos Santos, SSpS.

*(e) AJSC - Arnold Janssen Spirituality Center.*

Over the last six years, the members of the Core Team of the Arnold Janssen Spirituality Center in Steyl began a process of searching for a more relevant structure that would better serve the

Center's vision and goals. On 19 January 2009, the SVD General Council and the SSpS Congregational Leadership Team held a joint meeting with the Arnold Janssen Spirituality Center Team for the purpose of studying and discerning the future direction of the Arnold Janssen Spirituality Centre, which has been in existence since 1990 as a joint venture of the Arnoldus Congregations.

To involve the members of both Congregations in the process of discernment, a questionnaire was sent to the SVD and SSpS provinces/regions in March 2009. The survey was designed to find out how the Spiritual Animation Teams (SATs) were working at the provincial/national level and what possible structure of, and connections with, the AJSC they would suggest based on their needs and possibilities. The results of this survey were the subject of discussion, reflection and further discernment in the SVD-SSpS Joint Council meetings during 2009 and 2010.

It became abundantly clear that the awareness had grown in both congregations of the importance and need of spiritual animation. It was pointed out that our congregations are richer today because of the AJSC and the spiritual animation done in the provinces/regions by the local animators. The efforts of the AJSC in Steyl during its twenty-one (21) years of existence and the various ways of doing spiritual animation at the local level were recognized and appreciated by both Generalates and the entire membership of our congregations.

Still, it was felt that a refocusing of the AJSC's vi-

sion and goals was needed. On 17 January 2011, the joint councils concluded the process restructuring the AJSC with the following basic decisions:

- (1) Regarding the Core Team in Steyl: That the team in Steyl be composed of two (2) SVDs and two (2) SSpS, although they are free to invite other resource persons for the planning and implementing of programs; their main function is to animate, form and collaborate with local spiritual animators, and prepare materials and programs for spiritual animation; they should work towards setting up a research arm, of which their collaboration with the Arnold Janssen Secretariat in Steyl could be the beginning.
- (2) Regarding the Local Animation Teams: That instead of a fixed team, a pool of resource persons should be charged with the spiritual animation of our members; this pool of resource persons can be flexibly structured on the basis of language or geography; the resource persons should give at least some of their time during the year for the task of spiritual animation; the resource persons should be supported and encouraged by the provincial and regional superiors.

### **3.2.2. Collaboration with other Institutions / Entities.**

#### *(a) With the Vatican.*

Our relationship with the Vatican continues to be good. We lend an important service to the Vatican with confreres working in several areas, (e.g. Propaganda Fide, Pontifical Council for Interreligious

Dialogue, Collegio San Pietro, Collegio Urbano). We were asked for a confrere for the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace. The confrere came to Rome to meet with the officials at this dicastery but in the end decided he preferred his present assignment in one of our universities. As mentioned earlier, three years ago the Vatican entrusted to the Society the administration of the Catacombs of St. Domitilla. These requests, as well as the appointment of nine (9) confreres as bishops in different local Churches around the world during the last sexennium, reveal the high regard that the Holy See has for the Society. Occasionally too the Vatican asks us for a special service like preparing the publication of the updated edition of the *Atlas Hierarchicus*.

*(b) With the USG.*

Our participation in the Union of Superiors General (USG) can be described as rather active. During my term as superior general, I've been a member of practically all the important commissions of the USG, i.e., the Executive Council, the "Commission-16" (which meets three times a year with the Congregation for the Religious), and the "Commission-18" (which meets two times a year with the Propaganda Fide). Until now I am co-president of the USG-UISG Commission for Justice and Peace. Twice I was chosen to represent the USG at the Synod of Bishops (i.e., the 2001 Synod on "Role of the Bishop in the Church" and the 2008 Synod on "The Word of God"). Last November the Union was about to elect me as one of their representatives at the coming Synod of Bishops on "New Evangelization", but I declined the nomination because I was coming to the end

of my term. I have also been asked quite often to give a talk, moderate a meeting or share our experience as a congregation with the Union as a whole or with different groups within the Union. This is also true, to some extent, with the UISG, the Union of Superiors General of the Women Religious. I believe I can say that the Society is considered within the Union as one of the more important religious congregations in the Church today.

*(c) With Other Religious Congregations and Groups.*

Aside from our collaboration with our own Sisters (SSpS and SSpSAP) through various initiatives (e.g. VIVAT, AJSC) and the twice yearly meetings and monthly bible sharing sessions of the general councils in Rome, we also collaborate with other congregations in a variety of ways. As mentioned earlier, VIVAT International is now composed of 10 other religious congregations, in addition to the SVD and SSpS. This allows for collaboration not just on the level of the generalates in Rome or the Central Office in New York, but also on the grassroots level among our confreres and sisters. VIVAT also collaborates with a group of religious congregations in Rome seeking to undertake advocacy work at the FAO. We continue to collaborate with the JRS (Jesuit Refugee Service), although unfortunately with less confreres now than before. Likewise, we continue our collaboration with the AEFJN (Africa-Europe Faith and Justice Network). Also, as mentioned earlier, our Freinademetz Center provides several opportunities to work together with other groups and religious congregations with a particular interest in China.

Our support for, and collaboration with, SEDOS is always highly appreciated. Members of the general council, as well as our generalate secretaries and coordinators, also participate actively in the various religious or missionary groups or activities in Rome. We continue to have professors teaching at the Roman Pontifical universities.

#### **4. INTERCULTURALITY IN THE SVD** **Heritage, Commitment and Mission**

In this last part of my report, I wish to offer, in the light of the theme of the general chapter, some reflections on Interculturality in the SVD. I feel that, in regard to this theme, we seem to take a number of things for granted and assume that they are understood and accepted in the same way by everyone in the Society. And so, the aim of these reflections is to try to reach a consciousness and a consensus about some fundamental aspects of Interculturality in regard to our Society. I make these reflections under the heading of “Interculturality in the SVD: Heritage, Commitment and Mission”.

##### **4.1. Interculturality as Our Heritage.**

I believe we can speak of interculturality as a heritage which we have inherited from our Founder. It is rooted in the intention of the Founder and so is now justly enshrined in our Constitutions.

**The Intention of the Founder.** First of all, interculturality is rooted in the intention of the Founder. Three events can be cited in support of this (Cf. Josef Alt, *Journey of Faith: The Missionary Life of Arnold Janssen*, pp. 916 ff.).

First, from the beginning, Arnold Janssen intended his project as the establishment of a “German-Austrian Mission House” to which representatives from different nations would belong. Because of this, he thought of Rome as the place for its headquarters so as to avoid nationalistic conflicts and tensions. He was unable to start in Rome, as we know, and did so instead in Steyl with a small group of three men representing three nations: Germany, Austria and Luxembourg.

Secondly, already the very first general chapter in 1885 sought to “liberate the Society from its national limitations, provide it with far more members and helpers, and thus ensure a greater development within a short time.” The February Rule which resulted from the Chapter contained a strict prohibition to “criticize the nationality of a confrere or promote one’s own at the expense of others.” The September Rule developed this further, stating that confreres should “avoid false pride in their own nation. For that contradicted not only the goal of the Society but also the spirit of the Church and the Spirit of God.”

Thirdly, when the Superior General’s official gazette was introduced, it was given a Latin name, *Nuntius Societatis Verbi Divini*. Thinking of the future internationality of the Society, the Founder remarked: “Finally the possibility came to my mind that later, perhaps, the Society will recruit priests from places where German is not spoken. Maybe later it will be necessary to replace German with Latin in the text.”

**A Fundamental Conviction in our Constitutions.** It is no surprise, then, that internationality or in-

terculturality has come to be enshrined in our Constitutions. About 15 constitutions speak, directly or indirectly, about internationality in our Society. Four of these present internationality as a defining mark of our Society. First, the Prologue which states that: “As a community of brothers from different nations and languages, we become a living symbol of the unity and diversity of the church.” Secondly, c. 104 which repeats this idea by saying that “the charism of our Society is further characterized as follows: we give witness to the universality of the church and the unity of all people through the international character of our Society”. Thirdly, c. 303.1 which strengthens the same idea and says that “a distinguishing feature of our community life is that confreres from different nations live and work together”. And finally, c. 501 which states that “the goal of all formation and education in our Society is growth by the power of the Holy Spirit into unity with the Incarnate Word of the Father and into a missionary community comprising of members from many countries and cultures....”

The other constitutions speak about internationality or interculturality as an ideal which needs to be promoted in our initial and ongoing formation programs (503, 504.1, 511.2, 515.3, 516.4, 516.5, 519), a principle to be used in the distribution of our personnel (116.2), a factor to be considered in the election of superiors and appointment of officials for the government and administration of our Society (619.2), and a value which enriches our community living (113.1, 504.1, 303.1, 303.6).

## 4.2. Interculturality as Our Commitment.

From what has been said so far, it becomes clear that internationality or interculturality is an essential element of our SVD charism. It is rooted in the intention of our Founder and enshrined as a fundamental conviction in our Constitutions. Thus, we are international or intercultural not just by accident or by force, but by choice and design. Internationality or interculturality is part and parcel of our DNA, a distinguishing feature of who we are, a constitutive element in our self-understanding. It is a precious heritage that we have received from our Founder.

As such, internationality or interculturality becomes a permanent commitment and an ongoing responsibility – that is to say, the commitment to promote it as an ideal in our life and mission and the responsibility to care for it as a value in our community life and missionary work. In this regard, the following principles are important:

- (1) First, the conviction that the purpose of our choice to be international or intercultural is missiological in nature, that is to say, because we feel called to give witness to the unity and diversity of the Kingdom of God and of the Church. As the Prologue to our Constitutions puts it: “As a community of brothers from different nations and languages, we become a living symbol of the unity and diversity of the church.”
- (2) Secondly, the realization that true internationality or interculturality does not come about automatically by simply putting together under



the same roof people from different nations or cultures. Rather, true international or intercultural communities need to be consciously created, intentionally promoted, carefully cared for, and attentively nurtured. Internationality or interculturality requires some basic personal attitudes, certain community structures, and a particular spirituality. Consequently, it calls for a specific program of formation, both initial and ongoing, which prepares us to live effectively and meaningfully in international or intercultural communities.

- (3) Thirdly, the awareness that the ideal is not just a community composed of people from different nationalities or cultures (or mere “internationality”). Nor is it simply a community where people of different cultures or nationalities can co-exist side by side each other (or mere “multiculturalism”). Rather, the ideal is a community where the different cultures of the members can interact with each other and thereby mutually enrich the individual members and the community as a whole – (i.e., a real “interculturality”).
- (4) Fourthly, the understanding that a genuine intercultural community is characterized by three things, namely: (a) recognition of other cultures (i.e., allowing the minority cultures to be visible in the community); (b) respect for cultural difference (i.e., avoiding any attempt to level off cultural differences by subsuming the minority cultures into the dominant culture); and (c) promotion of a healthy interaction between cultures (i.e., seeking to create a climate whereby each culture allows itself to be transformed or enriched by the other).

I believe these principles are clear. What we seem to lack are concrete practices or programs with which to actualize these principles. My impression is that often we take these principles for granted and do not actively seek concrete ways of implementing them. Indeed, formation towards “intercultural competence” is a real need but seems to be lacking among the confreres. Consequently, in our communities or mission teams, we achieve nothing more than the mutual tolerance of our cultural differences. We often do not reach the point where our cultural differences interact with each other and thus enrich our individual members and our communities. It is my hope that this general chapter will address this need and propose a concrete action plan to respond to it.

#### **4.3. Interculturality as Our Mission.**

In the end, however, our internationality or interculturality is for mission. As mentioned earlier, we choose to be international or intercultural because it is a way of giving witness to the unity and diversity of the Kingdom of God and of the Church. In this sense, our internationality or interculturality is a call to mission.

Today, in a special way, we are challenged to respond to the missionary challenges of an increasingly multicultural world. Many of our provinces, regions and missions are responding to a number of these challenges especially by engaging in various ministries to migrants, refugees and other displaced people. Other related ministries are urban ministry (since most migrants and refugees are found in the cities), ministry among women (since women

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make up the bulk of migrants and often have to carry the heaviest consequences of migration), interfaith and ecumenical dialogue (since migration brings together not only people of different cultures but also people of different religions).

I would like to suggest that we see all of these ministries related to a multicultural world in the context of the larger vision of mission as promoting a multicultural Church. Indeed, some provinces and regions are already engaged in this through confreres serving in multicultural parishes. In any case, I believe the promotion of a multicultural Church is a particular need today in view of what seems to be a “centralizing tendency” in the Church. Talk about the “Universal Church” is often based, consciously or unconsciously, on an interpretation of unity as uniformity, where the various cultures of people are subsumed into the dominant culture which informs the “Universal Church”. One indication of this is the liturgy, where vernacular translations of the Mass texts have to follow literally the Latin text.

On the other hand, a multicultural Church is premised on the understanding of unity as “unity in diversity”, allowing the variety of cultures of the world to have a place in the Church as they are. A multicultural Church is part of the vision of Vatican II, where, in the words of Karl Rahner, for the first time in history the Church was experienced as a “world Church” and “no longer the Church of the West with its American spheres of influence and its export to Asia and Africa.” A truly multicultural Church is one which characterized by three things,

namely, (1) the church as a home for people of different cultures, (2) the church as an instrument of the intercultural dialogue, and (3) the church as a sign of the all-inclusiveness of the Kingdom of God. A word on each of these three ideas.

**Home for people of different cultures.** A multicultural Church will be seen by strangers and foreigners not just as a more tolerant but also a more welcoming Church. And for the Church to be more welcoming, three elements are essential, namely, that it be a Church that fosters the recognition of other cultures (i.e., allows the culture of migrants, strangers or foreigners to be visible in the community), encourages respect for cultural difference (i.e., avoids any attempt to level off cultural differences by subsuming the minority cultures into the dominant culture), and promotes a healthy interaction between cultures (i.e., seeks to create a climate whereby each culture allows itself to be transformed or enriched by the other). With these characteristics, a multicultural Church will be a community where people of various cultures will feel they belong.

**Instrument of intercultural dialogue.** A truly multicultural Church, however, cannot limit itself to just caring for those who belong to its community, i.e., strangers and foreigners who are Christians or Catholics. A truly multicultural Church must also look beyond itself and minister to non-Christian migrants, refugees and displaced people by being an instrument of intercultural dialogue in the larger society. It must work towards creating in the larger human community the conditions whereby the three elements men-

tioned above can be realized, i.e., recognition of other cultures, respect for cultural difference, and healthy interaction between cultures. This will mean promoting genuine dialogue among people of various cultures.

**Sign of the all-inclusiveness of God's Kingdom.**

A Church that fosters genuine interculturality within itself ("ad intra") and promotes intercultural dialogue outside itself ("ad extra") will be a truly credible sign of the all-inclusiveness of the Kingdom of God. It will be witness to the genuine universality and openness to diversity of God's Kingdom. A multicultural Church will be a proclamation that the Kingdom includes everyone and excludes no one, and that in it there are no strangers or foreigners but only brothers and sisters. It will be an image of the universal gathering in the endtime "of people of every nation, race, tribe and language ... standing in front of the throne and in front of the Lamb, dressed in white robes and holding palms in their hands" (Rev 7:9).

## CONCLUSION

Dear Confreres,

I know it is too presumptuous to present ourselves as a model of interculturality. But I believe part of our mission today is to be an experiment or a laboratory of what it means to be a truly multicultural Church. Hopefully, by being faithful to our heritage, our commitment and our mission, we can mirror for the wider Church an image of a truly multicultural Church.

Thus, for us gathered in this general chapter under the theme, "From Every Nation, People and Language: Sharing Intercultural Life and Mission", the fundamental question is: Given our heritage of interculturality and in the context of an increasingly multicultural world, what do we need to do and be? What directions should our Society take? Thus, the need for an Action Plan. Thus, the need for clarifying our congregational directions in the coming six years.



# AFRAM ZONE



<b>ANG</b>	Angola
<b>BOT</b>	Botswana, Zambia South Africa
<b>CNG</b>	Dem. Rep. Congo
<b>GHA</b>	Ghana
<b>KEN</b>	Kenya, Tanzania
<b>MAD</b>	Madagascar
<b>MOZ</b>	Mozambique
<b>TCD</b>	Chad
<b>TOG</b>	Togo, Benin
<b>ZIM</b>	Zimbabwe

In April 2012 a team of confreres has arrived in Sudan to start the newest mission of our Society.

## A NEW ERA IN AFRAM

“What we have seen and heard”

Circular Letter to all confreres in AFRAM  
After the general visitations of 2007

Dear Confreres,

During our planning sessions in January 2008, we reviewed the visitations of the provinces, regions, and missions in AFRAM. In this letter we would like to share with you some of our reflections on the visitations. Above all we would like to share with you our joy over a new era in AFRAM, an era marked by the “coming of age” and growing self-confidence of our communities and missionary service in the zone. Our membership in the zone, especially our indigenous membership, continues to grow, and this has allowed us in the last six years to take up new initiatives in Chad and South Africa, as well as continue to take on new responsibilities in the other countries, regions, and provinces where we work. Soon the Togo/Benin Region will become a province, and Zimbabwe an independent mission. We believe that your growing self-confidence was reflected in the decisions taken at the special zonal assembly held in 2006 in preparation for the 16th General Chapter to not ask the Chapter to renew the Society’s priority for AFRAM and to propose a reso-

lution on the attainment of self-reliance by all of our provinces and regions. Above all, we note and give thanks to God for the continuing expansion of formation programs in the zone and the consequent increasing number of African members serving in the zone as well as in our provinces and regions throughout the world.

It is in light of our awareness of this new era in AFRAM that we share with you our reflections on the social and ecclesial situation in which we carry out our missionary service in AFRAM and then highlight some areas of our religious community life that are meant to enhance our missionary service, the theme of the recent General Chapter. While we are aware that there are vast differences in the situation of societies, local churches, and our own communities across the continent, we have tried to pick up some elements that seem to be common throughout the zone, so that this letter might serve as a complement to the individual visitation protocols and an aid in reflection on our missionary life and service in the context of this new era on a zonal level.

As a subtheme for this letter, we have chosen a passage from the First Letter of John that we used as the opening meditation for our recent planning sessions: “We declare to you what we have seen and heard so that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. We are writing these things so that our joy may complete” (1 John 1:3). We share with you what we have seen and heard during the recent visitations, as we also recall that all of our missionary life and service is a sharing of what we have seen and heard, the Divine Word, so that we might all be in fellowship with God and with all peoples, and that our joy may be complete.

## 1. Our Missionary Service to the People of Africa

**1.1.** In many ways, the new era in AFRAM is a reflection of the dawning of a new era in the societies of the continent. The Lineamenta for the Second Special Assembly for Africa of the Synod of Bishops lists some of these positive developments: “the advent of peace in some African countries; the burning desire for peace throughout the continent, ...; growing opposition to corruption; a deep consciousness of the need to promote African women and the dignity of every human person; the involvement of the laity in ‘civil life’ for the promotion and defense of ‘human rights’; and

### RELIGIOUS PROFILE

Christian %	Catholic %	Other %
90.0	55.58	10
71.6	4.47	28.4
97.6	32.8	2.4
79.7	6.98	20.3
95.6	52.91	4.4
68.8	12.39	31.2
85.1	25.10	14.9
62.0	29.89	38.0
45.0	25.0	55
56.1	21.72	43.9
34.0	9.68	66
29.0	25	71.0
42.8	25.58	57.2
85.0	10.56	15.0

### COUNTRIES

Angola
Botswana
Zambia
South Africa
Dem. Rep. Congo
Ghana
Kenya
Tanzania
Madagascar
Mozambique
Chad
Togo
Benin
Zimbabwe

### DEMOGRAPHIC FEATURES

POPULATION	Fertility Rate	Median Age	Life Expect.
15,068,163	6.07	18.1	48.0
2,065,398	2.5	22.3	58.0
13,881,336	5.98	16.5	52.3
49,004,031	2.3	25.0	49.3
71,712,867	5.24	17.4	55.3
24,791,073	3.48	21.4	61
41,070,934	4.19	18.9	59.4
42,746,620	4.16	18.5	52.8
21,926,221	5.09	18.2	63.2
22,948,858	5.46	16.8	51.7
0,758,945	5.05	16.8	48.3
6,771,993	4.69	19.3	62.7
9,325,032	5.31	17.4	59.8
12,084,304	3.63	18.3	49.6

the ever-growing number of African politicians who are aware and determined to find African solutions to African problems” (7).

1.2. However, problems persist: “the infant mortality rate continues to grow; ... the constant deterioration of revenues persists in some of the poorest countries of Africa; access to potable water is still very difficult for many; ... the great majority of African people live in a state of want for basic goods and services” (8). Some of the countries where we work are now enjoying peace after years of civil war, but still suffer the effects of the physical and spiritual destruction of war. Some countries are enjoying considerable economic development, but that development and growing prosperity often has

no effect on the lives of those most in need of it. All of the countries of Africa are experiencing a rapid urbanization, with both the positive effects of greater opportunity for individual advancement as well as the negative aspects of the breakdown of families and traditional social ties, the depopulation of the countryside and overcrowding in towns and cities, unemployment and squalor. Despite a growing sense of belonging to a nation and stability in many of the States on the continent, tribalism continues to be a problem in African politics, and, tragically, in the lives of people who have sometimes lived side-by-side for decades.

1.3. This situation renews us in our commitment to the missionary service of prophetic dialogue:

#### LABOR FORCE

1 Agriculture	2 Industry	3 Services
85	15	15
n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
85%	6%	9%
9%	26%	65%
80%	205	20%
33.7%	24.7%	41.6%
22%	16%	62%
42%	18%	40%
80%	n.a.	n.a.
81%	6%	13%
80%	20%	20%
65%	5%	30%
n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
66%	10%	24%

#### COUNTRIES

Angola  
Botswana  
Zambia  
South Africa  
Dem. Rep. Congo  
Ghana  
Kenya  
Tanzania  
Madagascar  
Mozambique  
Chad  
Togo  
Benin  
Zimbabwe

#### SOCIAL INDICES

Below Pov. Line	Urban Population	Migration Rate
40.5%	59%	0.82
30.3%	61%	4.82
64%	36%	-0.84
50%	62%	-6.19
80%	35%	-0.54
28.5%	51%	-0.58
50%	22%	0
36%	26%	-0.53
50%	30%	0
70%	38%	-2.18
80%	28%	-3.84
32%	43%	0
37.4%	42%	0
80%	38%	-24.83

to witness to what we have seen and heard, to witness to the Reign of God where all are called to equal fellowship, with the attitude of solidarity with all (especially those who suffer the effects of war, lingering tribalism, and the negative consequences of current social developments), with respect for each individual and the positive aspects of traditional culture (such as the emphasis on relationships, conversation, hospitality, and celebration) and with a love that embraces all and challenges all to take responsibility for their own lives as well as for their societies and civil life.

**1.4.** Concretely we might ask: What aspects of poverty and the negative consequences of social

change are we called to address in our missionary service today? How can we help to address corruption? What can we do to support families? How can we help young people to dream and work towards a better society? How can we help people recover self-esteem by rediscovering their positive cultural values? How can we help awaken a sense of duty and obligation towards others? We are invited to spend time and energy in exploring answers to these questions during community meetings and assemblies, in order to enhance our contribution to the people of Africa, especially through the perspective of prophetic dialogue with the poor and marginalized, with cultures and religions.

#### MASS MEDIA per 1000

Daily	Radio	TV
10	69	16.5
24	154	19
21	106	24
25	383	135
2.7	296.7	106.6
13.6	569.5	86.5
8	90	21
0	239	3
4.4	169	18
2	37	3
0.26	173	1
1.8	174	8.6
6.3	86.3	8.6
0	93.7	30.4

#### COUNTRIES

Angola
Botswana
Zambia
South Africa
Dem. Rep. Congo
Ghana
Kenya
Tanzania
Madagascar
Mozambique
Chad
Togo
Benin
Zimbabwe

#### LITERACY RATE %

Total	Youth
67.4	72.2
80.5	93.5
68.1	72.6
82.7	93.6
67.2	70.42
58	70.6
73.9	79.8
69.8	78.6
68.9	70.24
47.8	48.8
25.7	37.5
60.9	73.6
36.6	46.1
90.7	93.5

#### INTERACTIVE MEDIA per 1000

Mobile	Internet
68.6	8.1
466	44
81	50
724	108
47.7	3.5
128.5	28.3
134	81
51	10
27	5.7
61	9
21.5	6
72	51
88.8	18.5
53.7	109.7

## 2. Our Missionary Service to the Local Churches of Africa

**2.1.** The new era in AFRAM is also a reflection of developments within the local churches of Africa. For example, the Lineamenta lists these developments: “the remarkable increase in Africa of the number of Catholics, priests and consecrated persons; the growing number of African missionaries in Africa and outside the continent ... ; the vitality of African liturgies and living ecclesial communities; the creation and restructuring of dioceses and ecclesiastical territories; the growing role of the Church in promoting the continent’s development, especially in education, health, the struggle for the emergence of legally constituted states throughout the African continent; and, lastly, despite her weaknesses, the great credibility which the Church continues to enjoy among the African peoples” (6).

**2.2.** On the other hand, one negative aspect of the local churches seems to be a strong and growing clericalism. This is especially disturbing when we consider that the church has been able to grow in Africa largely through the dedicated efforts of lay catechists.

**2.3.** In our conversations with bishops, with parish councils, and with others during the recent visitation, it seems clear that the local churches in Africa are asking us particularly to share our characteristic dimensions and our internationality. We are known especially for our work with the biblical apostolate and mission animation, but the situation of the local churches in Africa also

seems to be calling us to share more our characteristic dimensions of JPIC and communication: to work with the churches in their struggles against corruption, environmental destruction, and tribalism. The multiethnic situation of the societies and the churches where we work also challenge us to witness to the diversity and openness of the Reign of God through an authentic internationality: a true appreciation of the different gifts that we bring to the community through our cultural heritages, as well as an awareness of, and ability to learn and teach others about, the different cultural signals that so often lead to misunderstanding, and even rejection.

**2.4.** One further contribution we are called upon to make to the local churches today is to help them to become self-reliant. Our constitutions proclaim that, “as members of the Society of the Divine Word, we consider it our duty to proclaim the word of God to all, to bring new communities into being within the people of God, to foster their growth and to promote communion among them as well as with the whole church” (c. 102). An essential part of bringing new communities into being and fostering their growth is to help them to support themselves. While solidarity, the sharing of resources with those in need because of emergency situations or particularly important projects, is an important part of the communion between churches that we seek to foster, the new era of the local churches in Africa must entail the ability of the churches to support their normal livelihood and structural growth on their own. Our mission theory for some time already has pointed out the problems of using money from abroad

to build structures that cannot be maintained by the local community, and we are more and more aware that the best contribution we can make to the local churches is not building big new structures but rather promoting lay formation and a common responsibility for mission in the local church.

**2.5.** The financial situation of the Society has also now made it imperative that we take to heart the conversion called for by the 16th General Chapter: “Living prophetic dialogue in regard to finances implies a really fundamental change of mentality. We need to leave behind the stereotype of the missionary as a ‘giver-of-things’ and to live as partners with the people, staying and working with them, listening to their voices and worries, not being afraid to be powerless and vulnerable” (IDW6, 75).

### **3. Our Religious Community Life in Service to Our Mission**

**3.1.** The recent General Chapter reminds us that our religious community life, the way that we live prophetic dialogue, is itself part of our missionary service. From the visitations we would like to offer the following reflections as a means to enhance this part of our witness in AFRAM.

#### **3.2. Mission Spirituality**

In our missionary service we share with others what we have seen and heard, the Divine Word. But in order to speak the Word of God in prophetic dialogue, we must first see, hear, experience it

ourselves, through our meditation and community prayers, through bible sharing and the sharing of our experience of God in spiritual direction, through a life lived in solidarity with the people and our listening in dialogue, through the social and ecclesial situations in which we live. We are called—individually, as a community, and with the people with whom we work—to see and hear God’s word today, to discern from the present concrete situation in which we live how God is active in our lives today.

#### **3.3. Community in Service of Mission**

As mentioned above, especially the internationality of our communities is seen as a positive contribution to the societies and local churches where we work. However, we need to ask ourselves whether our internationality isn’t sometimes little more than mere tolerance, rather than a real appreciation, even celebration, of diversity. International living cannot be left to good intentions, but must be worked at, including the use of input and training in recognizing cultural signals and in the dynamics of cross-cultural communication. Such courses or workshops should be a part of our initial formation, as well as part of the introduction of new missionaries and other forms of ongoing formation for all of us. In the increasingly individualistic societies that are a consequence of urbanization, our communities are also called to be witnesses to traditional values of family, relationship, conversation, and hospitality. Despite the demands of our various apostolates, the call to witness to these values invites us to make participation in community functions—meals, prayers, community meetings, celebrations—our priority.



### 3.4. Leadership in Service of Mission

To a large extent, the quality of our community life depends on those called to the service of leadership. Our leaders are called to sacrifice their time and their own projects in order to care for our communities: to foster a spirit of brotherhood and commitment to our missionary service, to enhance collaboration through the preparation of fruitful community meetings and the promotion of dialogue, to see to the good stewardship of our common resources. In this they are called to be witnesses to the kind of political and ecclesial leadership needed in the societies and local churches where we work.

### 3.5. Finances as Commitment to Mission

The push to attain self-reliance is one indication of the new era in AFRAM and a positive contribution that we are called upon to make to the local churches in Africa today. As mentioned above, it involves a fundamental change in mentality regarding the way that we conduct our missionary service. We must be careful not to rely too much on investments or income generating activities; these can be part of the solution towards financial self-reliance of our communities, but they must be undertaken with prudence and in consultation with those who have the expertise in this area that we do not have. Rather than placing our trust in the security that these kinds of investments seem to promise—a security that has all too often proven to be false—we are called to trust in the generosity of the people with whom we work, and above all to trust that God will provide what we really need for our missionary service.

3.6 Effective witness against corruption also calls us to be accountable and transparent in all our financial dealings, and to live the simple life style called for by our vow of poverty. The General Chapter stresses that, “all of our confreres must have some training in administration and accounting” (IDW6, 79). We need to make this a part of both our initial and ongoing formation in order to practice good stewardship, as well as enhance financial accountability and transparency.

### 3.7. Formation in Service of Mission

We witness to each other as much as we witness to those we encounter in our missionary service. Our own personal commitment to lifelong “growth by the power of the Holy Spirit into unity with the Incarnate Word of the Father and into a missionary community comprising members from many countries and cultures” (c 501) is the most effective witness that we can give to each other, especially to our younger confreres in initial formation. It is for this reason that the 16th General Chapter reminds us that, “formation is a concern for all provinces, and it is an obligation for all confreres and communities. The overall situation of the mission and the community life of a province should contribute to a climate that is favorable for formation” (IDW6, 89). The flourishing of our formation programs in AFRAM, and the perceived need to open new programs, is another sign of the new era in AFRAM for which we give thanks. But it also calls us all to recommit ourselves to the formation of our younger confreres through the authenticity of our religious community life in service of mission.

3.8. Throughout the zone we noticed a great interest in pursuing higher studies. While the interest in further education is indeed commendable, we should remember the distinction between advanced studies and ongoing formation. Advanced studies are undertaken to prepare a confrere for a specific specialized task, and this should be weighed against the real needs of the province and the Society. In contrast, all confreres are encouraged to participate in the Nemi renewal course and periodic local workshops or short courses as part of our ongoing formation. Here we are invited especially to make use of programs offered by the local churches and associations of religious, to the extent that these can help us in our mission in the provinces, regions, and missions in the zone.

#### 4. Conclusion

We invite you to make use of this letter for reflection together in our communities and formation houses, in conjunction with a similar letter written after the visitations six years ago. We feel that

many of the suggestions made there are still valid, and thus worth considering again. Once more we give thanks for what we have been privileged to see and hear during the recent visitations in the provinces, regions, and missions of AFRAM, to what is being accomplished through the grace of God and the power of the Spirit in ushering in a new era for the peoples and local churches of Africa, as well as for our SVD communities in the AFRAM zone. In this spirit of gratitude, let us recommit ourselves to discerning how best we can fulfill our call to missionary service in AFRAM today, and how we are called to live prophetic dialogue in our communities and with the people with whom we work.

Faternally in the Divine Word,

Antonio M. Pernia, SVD  
Superior General

Emmanuel Kofi Fianu, SVD  
Secretary general

IN PERPETUAL VOWS			INITIAL FORMATION			Average	Total	Nation- alities	ORIGIN BY ZONES			
BIS	CLE	BRO	CLE	BRO	NOV	Age			AFRAM	ASPAC	EUROPE	PANAM
7	377	64	96	9	17	42.18			271	176	93	30
1	34	7	5	0	0	43.11	ANG	14	19	14	8	6
1	52	8	1	0	0	44.54	BOT	14	10	37	13	2
1	58	13	22	4	4	46.00	CNG	15	67	17	18	0
2	90	24	33	3	13	50.90	GHA	23	103	30	25	7
0	34	3	27	1	0	42.31	KEN	22	35	17	7	6
0	23	2	1	1	0	42.50	MAD	12	3	16	5	3
0	14	3	2	0	0	37.11	MOZ	10	3	13	1	2
0	7	0	0	0	0	40.00	TCD	5	3	4	0	0
1	45	3	4	0	0	43.70	TOG	14	23	17	9	4
1	20	1	1	0	0	40.05	ZIM	9	5	11	7	0

MINISTRY AD EXTRA %			MINISTRY AD INTRA %		Zonal	NOT IN MINISTRY %		
Parish	Education	Other	Leadership	Formation	Average	Studies	Retired	Other
50.0	4.54	8.93	8.33	8.33		13.90	1.37	4.20
64.8	5.6	2.7	10.7	13.5	ANG	2.7	0	0
45.5	8.0	12.5	1.8	6.4	BOT	25.8	0	0
28.8	5.5	12.3	9.5	10.9	CNG	12.4	4.1	16.5
46.1	11.3	12.2	7.8	8.7	GHA	3.5	6.1	4.3
47.3	5.2	15.8	7.9	13.2	KEN	5.3	0	5.3
44.4	3.5	11.5	11.1	5.6	MAD	18.2	3.5	3.2
56.1	6.3	0	6.3	6.3	MOZ	25.0	0	0
42.8	0	0	14.3	14.3	TCD	28.6	0	0
60.5	0	13.3	4.9	4.9	TOG	13.0	0	3.4
63.7	0	9.0	9.0	4.5	ZIM	4.5	0	9.3

# ANGOLA PROVINCE



(July 2011 est.)

Population	Religious Profile %		
	Christian	Catholics	Others
15,068,163	90.0	55.58	10

Age Structure %			Fertility Rate
0-14	15-64	65	(babies per woman)
43.2	54.1	2.7	6.07

Median Age	Life Expectancy	Below Poverty Line
18.1	48	40.5%

GDP Output %			Labor Force %		
1	2	3	1	2	3
9.6	65.8	24.6	85	15	48.9

1=Agriculture, 2=Industry, 3=Services

Urban Population	Urban Rate of Change	Migrant(s) per 1000
59%	4%	0.82

Total Literacy: 67.4%		Youth Literacy: 72.2%	
male	female	male	female
82.9	54.21	83.7	63.2

Mass Media per 1000 persons			Interactive Media per 1000 persons	
Newspaper	Radio	TV	Mobile	Internet
10	69	16.5	68.6	8.1

- Official Language: **Portuguese**
- Visa: Since 2009 a periodic dialogue between the government and the Association of Men and Women Religious Superiors of Angola has facilitated the granting of residence visas for missionaries.

## 1. Intercultural Setting

Although Portuguese is the official language of Angola, more than 95% of its population speaks Bantu languages spoken by most Africans living south and north of the equator. The remaining 5% of the Angolan population can be further classified under two linguistic groups. The first one refers to

the Portuguese-speaking mestiços, most of whom live in urban centers of western Angola. The other consists of hunting and gathering bands found in the southern region of the country and characterized by their so-called “click languages” (for the tongue-clicking sounds that characterizes them). Their small stature and lighter skin color further associate them with the so-called “bushmen” of southern Africa.

25 years of civil war followed Angola’s declaration of independence from Portugal in 1975. The rebel party UNITA (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola) then opposed the governing MPLA (Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola). While the warlords fought for the country’s vast oil and diamond resources to further their political and economic interests, the people in the country lived in dehumanizing poverty under their crossfire. Ethnic differences along with class divides raised by colonialism came into play in what appeared to be a clash between socialist and capitalist ideologies.

Since that war finally ended in 2002, around 4 million Angolans who fled for refuge to neighboring countries have returned. At present, hope for peace and prosperity is stimulating economic recovery and fostering social reconciliation in the country.

## 2. Ecclesial Setting

The geographical spread of Christianity in Angola took a surprising ethno-linguistic turn. In the 15th century Catholic missionaries came from Portu-

gal to introduce the Catholic faith in the Kongo kingdom. When the colony of Angola was established in 1575, Catholic missions spread around Luanda and inland. In the late 19th century, Protestant missionaries came to the north, Methodists inland among Kimbundu-speaking people, and Congregationalists in the east and among the Ovimbundu settlements.

When the MPLA (Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola) came to power in 1975, its Marxist-Leninist ideology was understandably anti-religious. Roman Catholics were denounced for their collaboration with the colonial state, Baptists and Congregationalists for supporting its rivals – the UNITA (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola) and the FNLA (National Front for the Liberation of Angola). Only the Methodist Church received some favorable treatment, because many MPLA leaders emerged from it. Since the formal abandonment of Marxism, however, the government has shown tolerance toward the churches and allowed ecclesial organizations to once again operate openly – though still in restrained ways.

## 3. Sharing Intercultural Mission

*“We, Divine Word Missionaries, are inserted in the present reality of Angola, which is one of peace and national reconstruction. Looking forward to the future of our people with hope, we feel called to foster Prophetic Dialogue in proclaiming hope and justice and in promoting an authentic culture of pardon, reconciliation and peace.”*

–ANG Mission Statement

**Those in final vows****IN ACTIVE MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012**

Parish	45.2	32.9	64.8
Education	8.2	9.8	5.6
SVD Vocation/Formation	12.9	9.8	13.5
Administration/Support	14.5	15.8	10.7
Other Apostolates	12.9	15.8	2.7

**Those in final vows****NOT IN MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012**

Studies /Orientation	6.4	13.4	2.7
Retired/Sick	0	2.4	0
Other	0	0	0

**PLATFORMS FOR PROPHETIC DIALOGUE**

Since the arrival of the SVD in Angola in 1965, parishes have been the main bases and centers for our missionary presence and integral pastoral service. Many of them include clinics and schools. We run 4 urban parishes in 3 dioceses (Luanda, Viana, and Caxito), and 6 remote urban parishes of 5 dioceses (Dundo, Saurimo, Malanje, Lubango, M'banza Kongo). The parish in Sendi, officially established in 2008, is the most recent expansion of our missionary presence southwards in Angola.

**THE SVD CHARACTERISTIC DIMENSIONS**

**Mission Animation.** With the help of a lay team, the provincial mission secretary has recently be-

gun a ministry of fundraising –to support the worldwide mission of our Society, but starting with our own Angolan confreres now at work ad gentes. The response of lay people mostly in our own parishes has been surprisingly generous.

**Biblical Apostolate.** Our biblical coordinator offers his service to our parishes by offering biblical seminars to their catechists and lay leaders. Apart from our bookstore, the parishes also serve as centers for diffusing bibles and related spiritual literature at prices affordable to the common people.

**Communication.** Only one confrere is now left at work in Radio Ecclesia, a broadcasting station owned by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Angola and earlier entrusted to SVD management. His part-time service consists of broadcasting analytical comments on social and cultural events current in the country.

**JPIC.** Some confreres in the Province are active in networking for the Episcopal Commission of Justice and Peace. Its current focus is the protection of people and Mother Nature against ravages and abuses practiced by extractive companies such as the diamond mining and old industries.

A specialized JPIC apostolate is one among homeless children in the capital city. A good number of them have either escaped or been expelled from their own families or village communities after being accused and maltreated as 'children witches'. Whenever possible, the center strives to reintegrate them in their families. In any case, the center offers them food and shelter as well as some vocational training.

#### 4. Sharing Intercultural Life

*"Our identity as Divine Word Missionaries finds its ground in the Trinitarian Mystery. Thus, we are called to live our religious and missionary vocation in fraternal communion*

- *by forming local communities inserted in the Local Church, and*
- *by letting an authentic experience of God through the action of the Holy Spirit guide our sharing of the new life in Jesus Christ –our Lord and Savior."*

–ANG Vision Statement

MEMBERSHIP	2000	2005	2012
Bishop	0	0	1
Clerics	27	34	34
Brothers (final vows)	3	7	7
Scholastics	3	8	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>47</b>

#### AGE and COUNTRY

	2000	2005	2012
Average Age	38.2	40.3	43.1
Nationalities	13	16	14*

#### \* ZONAL ORIGIN of province members

AFRAM	19	15ang, 3cng, 1tog
ASPAC	14	7isa, 3ind, 2phi, 2vie
EUROPE	8	6pol, 1esp, 1po,
PANAM	6	3mex, 1arg, 1brz, 1col

The main internal challenge facing the Province today is that a good number of the experienced foreign confreres have left and returned to their respective home provinces. Most of those who have remained are young and energetic, but few are experienced veterans that can accompany and guide the former. As a consequence, the plan of action envisioned together in our provincial assembly and ratified in our chapter is greater than our limited personnel can carry out.

To pull through this critical present, we hope for more foreign confreres to be assigned to the Province –while doubling our efforts at vocation promotion for our Society among the Angolan youth. Meantime, our leadership focuses its energy on maintaining two main priorities ad intra:

**Formation.** The Province maintains a three-phased formation program. Our young candidates go first through a propaedeutic program before moving on to philosophical studies. And before being distributed to the three SVD common formation centers of the AFRAM Zone, they first go through one year of novitiate.

Our new house for philosophy students was inaugurated in December 2010. It lies close to the Catholic University of Angola where our 18 philosophy students of this current school year go for studies. Meantime, the Province is searching for a new place to relocate its present novitiate in Kifangondo. Also, zonal planning is on the way to creating a fourth common formation center for the AFRAM Zone in Luanda.



**Finance.** During this post-civil war period, the Province still relies much on the generalate to fund its efforts to rise from its wrecked mission structures and carry out its mission projects. At the same time, during this period of rapid national reconstruction, we realize that now is an opportune time for pro-

mising investments. But because the Province has no expert financial mentors to venture big investments, we limit ourselves to a few modest ones: a bookstore, a shop for religious articles, a cyber café for internet users, a mechanic shop, and the purchase of a 9-hectare land in a highly valued site. ♦



# BOTSWANA PROVINCE

Botswana, Zambia, South Africa



(July 2011 est.)

## Religious Profile %

	Population	Christian Catholics	Others
Botswana	2,065,398	71.6	4.47
South Africa	49,004,031	79.7	6.98
Zambia	13,881,336	97.6	32.8

## Fertility Rate

(babies per woman)

## Age Structure %

		0-14	15-64	65
Botswana	2.5	33.9	62.2	3.9
South Africa	2.3	28.5	65.8	5.7
Zambia	5.98	46.7	50.8	2.5

## Median Age

## Life Expectancy

## Below Poverty Line

Botswana	22.3	58	30.3%
South Africa	25	49.33	50%
Zambia	16.5	52.36	64%

## GDP Output %

## Labor Force %

	1	2	3	1	2	3
Botswana	2.3	45.8	51.9	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
South Africa	3	31.2	65.8	9	26	65
Zambia	19.7	33.7	46.6	85	6	9

1=Agriculture, 2=Industry, 3=Services

## Urban Population

## Urban Rate of Change

## Migrant(s) per 1000

Botswana	61%	2.3%	+4.82
South Africa	62%	1.2%	-6.19
Zambia	36%	3.2%	-0.84

## Total Literacy %

## Youth Literacy %

	male	female	male	female
Botswana	80.4	81.8	92	95
South Africa	84	81	93.	94.2
Zambia	76.2	60	72.6	72.6

- Common Official Language: **English**
- Visa: Visas are easily granted to Christian missionaries who are welcome for their works of social charity.

	Mass Media per 1000 persons			Interactive Media per 1000 persons	
	Newspaper	Radio	TV	Mobile	Internet
Botswana	24	154	19	466	44
South Africa	25	383	135	724	108
Zambia	21	106	24	81	50

## 1. Intercultural Setting

Although most of the citizens in Zambia, Botswana, and South Africa are of Bantu origin, the complex migratory patterns in each country have produced ethno-linguistic varieties of its own. Yet one common colonial heritage of great help in their respective efforts at national unity is the official use of English in education, commerce, and law.

The post-independence history of South Africa radically diverged from that of Botswana and Zambia where the white populations were too small to wield political power. The close to 10% whites in South Africa, however, managed to dominate the black majority and to impose an apartheid regime between 1948 and 1994. Under this legal system citizens were classified into four racial groups ("native", "white", "coloured", and "Asian"), and were segregated from one another by strict zones of residence and recreation, as well by selective access to public services such as education and medical care. Those whose civil rights were most curtailed and who received inferior treatment were the black Africans. Among them, therefore, emerged a national movement of social resistance met with state-sponsored violence. In 1990 President de Klerk began negotiations to end apartheid, culminating in multi-racial democratic elections in 1994. The

African National Congress won under Nelson Mandela, who subsequently dismantled the whole apartheid system, and promoted the process for social reconciliation. Cultural vestiges of racism, however, linger on and may require more than just a generation for intercultural reconciliation.

## 2. Ecclesial Setting

Christians form the great majority in Zambia, Botswana, and South Africa. Yet, *Badimo* –a cross-linguistic Bantu word for ‘ancestors’ that is now a popular label for native African beliefs and practices– lingers on as cultural syncretic base especially for rural African piety.

## 3. Sharing Intercultural Mission

*“Witnessing and proclaiming the Reign of God, and guided by the great commission of Jesus, we Divine Word Missionaries commit ourselves:*

- ♦ *to form viable, inculturated missionary Christian communities in parishes*
- ♦ *to foster works of advocacy, care and support for the marginalized*
- ♦ *to deepen and strengthen the life of faith among the youth through God’s Word*
- ♦ *to nurture the school children in our care with Catholic ethos and holistic education.”*

–BOT Mission Statement

## PLATFORMS FOR PROPHETIC DIALOGUE

The Province serves a diocese (Gaborone) and a vicariate (Francistown) in Botswana, two dioceses

**Those in final vows****IN ACTIVE MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2011**

Parish	60.7	56.4	45.5
School/Education	4.1	2.4	8.0
Vocation/Formation	8.2	9.7	6.4
Administration/Support	4.1	4.8	1.8
Other Apostolates	11.5	13.7	12.5

**Those in final vows****NOT IN MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2011**

Studies / Orientation	11.5	12.9	25.8
Retired/Sick	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0

(Livingstone and Lusaka) in Zambia, and three dioceses (Tzaneen, Polokwane and Johannesburg) in South Africa –where very soon it will extend to a fourth one (Kokstad). In most of these dioceses our prime commitment is to parish ministry. The SVD-run parishes engage in integral evangelization through the building and nurture of self-reliant ecclesial communities at the grassroots.

In the dioceses of Johannesburg and Mokopane we run pastoral centers (Lumko and Mater Dei) for lay leadership formation and ongoing renewal for the diocesan clergy. Some confreres also teach at diocesan major seminaries in Lusaka and Pretoria. We also have apostolates among orphans, prisoners, street children, internally displaced people particularly refugees and victims of HIV/AIDS. Other confreres are in campus ministry or school chaplaincy.

**THE SVD CHARACTERISTIC DIMENSIONS**

**Mission Animation.** On 08 September 2010 an SVD Lay Association was founded in South Africa in view of sharing with its members our missionary spirituality and engaging them in the local mission activities in our parishes. Some SVD-run parishes, on the other hand, have initiated together a pastoral movement of forming ‘neighborhood communities’ that seek and reach out to neighbors who are no-longer or not-yet faith-practicing believers.

**Biblical Apostolate.** In most of our parishes biblical seminars are offered to form lay leaders who can help us promote the biblical apostolate through prayer groups and retreats. Our parishes also serve as diffusion centers for the Bible and related spiritual readings at very affordable prices.

**Communication.** The province has many qualified personnel in the area of social communication. Some are engaged in producing broadcasts for diocesan radio stations, whereas others produce videos for group communication. Their service consists mainly in helping confreres retell the Jesus story in audiovisual ways that are contextually meaningful for its listeners at the grassroots.

**JPIC.** The confreres network with various NGOs and organizations to promote JPIC outreach programs. Many parishes run home-based care projects for orphans and vulnerable children. Wherever a notable number of migrants and internally displaced people are present, our parishes offer

welcome and service. Periodic seminars are organized at district levels on JPIC issues of pressing concern –such as promoting sustainable agricultural practices.

#### 4. Sharing Intercultural Life

*“As a religious missionary community, we commit ourselves:*

- *to provide SVD Formandi contextualized initial formation for Intercultural Mission*
- *to empower our religious missionary commitment through ongoing formation.”*

–BOT Mission Plan Ad Intra

MEMBERSHIP	2000	2005	2012
Bishop	1	1	1
Clerics	51	55	52
Brothers (final vows)	4	6	8
Scholastics	5	5	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>62</b>

AGE and COUNTRY	2000	2005	2012
Average Age	37.6	42.6	44.5
Nationalities	16	15	14*

#### \* ZONAL ORIGIN of province members

AFRAM	9	4gha, 3zam, 1cng, 1ken
ASPAC	38	15ind, 14isa, 5phi, 3vie, 1fij
EUROPE	13	11pol, 1ger, 1ire
PANAM	2	1brz, 1col

**Spirituality.** The district superiors invite to weekly Bible sharing confreres who live close enough to one another. The first day of all district meetings is devoted to prayerful recollection, at times guided by invited speakers. The Vademecum SVD is now regularly used in community prayers and during district meetings.

**Community.** A recent joint evaluation of Zambia and Botswana districts rated international and multicultural membership of the Province as one of its most welcome traits. This, however, has not casually happened but is the fruit of communal nurture. Confreres gather at district level to celebrate birthdays and SVD feasts. Communities, including those of the SSpS, take turns in hosting major events (Family Feast, annual retreats, ordinations and provincial assemblies).

**Leadership.** The provincial leadership offers its share in reinforcing community life and teamwork by assigning confreres in pairs or in teams of three or more persons. It also makes periodic visits of every community to encourage confreres in their respective ministries. Exchange of news and ideas is promoted through a provincial bimonthly newsletter entitled Word Aflame, made available in print as well as through the Internet.

**Finances.** The Province still relies heavily on foreign mission funding –except for those confreres at the service of dioceses in Gaborone (Botswana) and South Africa. In view of self-reliance two projects have then been initiated in Botswana: the Catholic Safaris, and the Tonota School. They are hoped to yield financial gains –though still not in the near fu-

ture. Also, a growing number of willing donors have pledged to contribute to the sustenance of our young candidates for religious and priestly formation. Lastly, the confreres strive to live a simple lifestyle close to that of the people they serve.

**Formation.** The pre-theologate stages of formation take place in Zambia. The province continues

to welcome OTP candidates every year. Nurturing intercultural competence is one of the main aims of the initial formation program.

As for ongoing formation the mission secretary organizes renewal courses for confreres. Each district has its own orientation program for newly arrived missionaries. ♦





# CONGO PROVINCE



(July 2011 est.)

## Population

71,712,867

## Religious Profile %

Christian	Catholics	Others
95.6	52.91	4.4

## Age Structure %

0-14	15-64	65	Fertility Rate (babies per woman)
44.4	53	2.6	5.24

## Median Age

17.4

## Life Expectancy

55.3

## Below Poverty Line

80%

## GDP Output %

1	2	3	1	2	3
52	7	41.1	80	20	48.9

1=Agriculture, 2=Industry, 3=Services

## Labor Force %

## Urban Population

35%

## Urban Rate of Change

4.5%

## Migrant(s) per 1000

-0.54

## Total Literacy: 67.2%

male	female	male	female
80.9	54	78	63

## Youth Literacy: 70.4%

## Mass Media

per 1000 persons

Newspaper	Radio	TV
2.7	296.7	106.6

## Interactive Media

per 1000 persons

Mobile	Internet
47.7	3.5

- Official Language: **Linggala, French**
- Visa: The government easily gives working and residence visas to missionaries. After 15 years of uninterrupted stay in the country, a permanent residence is granted.

## 1. Intercultural Setting

Besides French, which is the official language, the country is blessed with four national languages: Lingala, Kikongo, Swahili and Tshiluba. In a country of many different Bantu peoples

—including more than 250 tribes with their respective dialects— these national languages play an important role in maintaining a degree of national unity and a workable coexistence among different tribes in the same region, village or parish.

This former Belgian colony gained independence from colonial rule in 1960. In 1965 Mobutu Sese Seko came to power in a bloody rebellion, and his autocratic rule for 32 years plunged the country into misery and chaos. Mobutu's dictatorship came to an end in 1997 when Laurent Désiré Kabila marched with his rebel troops into the capital city. With the latter, however, the hope for democratic rule was once again dashed to the ground by a new repressive dictatorship.

Hardly a year after Laurent Désiré Kabila grabbed power in Kinshasa a new rebellion broke

The Church in Congo still heavily depends on foreign funding for its day-to-day maintenance.

But she manifests a lively faith.

for peace agreements and managed a transitory rule while surviving an unsuccessful coup in 2004 by the supporters of Mobutu. At present pacifying and reunifying the country is progressing, though at a turtle's pace.

out—once again in eastern Congo. The conflict awakened tribal and ethnic hatred and opened the door to the looting of the nation's wealth by neighboring countries. In January 2001 Laurent Désiré Kabila was assassinated and his son, Joseph Kabila, became the President. He negotiated

Thirty-two years of a dictatorial regime and the subsequent decade of civil war have wreaked destruction on Congolese culture. There is a lack of concern for the public good. Tribalism is often instigated for political ends. Corruption, deceit, oppression, looting, and the violation of human rights—one grave form it takes is human trafficking. Men, women, and children are lured or abducted for forced work or prostitution in other countries. But the greater number that remains in Congo is exploited or trafficked by armed groups and government forces outside government control within the country's unstable eastern provinces.

## 2. Ecclesial Setting

Because the Catholic Church accounts for more than 50% of the total Congolese population, it is able to play an influential role on the political and social scene, despite occasional conflicts between the Church hierarchy and the government.

The Church in Congo still heavily depends on foreign funding for its day-to-day maintenance. But she manifests a lively faith. With her own Eucharistic rite officially recognized about twenty years ago, the Church in Congo is a model of inculturation in sub-Saharan Africa. The beauty of local religious music and art are signs of the dynamism of the faith. Native vocations to the religious and priestly life also abound. And where priests and missionaries are lacking, voluntary lay leaders help in sustaining ecclesial communities.

### 3. Sharing Intercultural Mission

*“Conscious of the problems and challenges of our time, and with hearts free to serve, we proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom of God everywhere.*

*“Amidst the social, economic and political crises of our country, we opt for a special preference for the poor and the marginalized and work for the promotion of the whole human being. In particular we struggle against AIDS, corruption, poverty and illiteracy.”*

–CNG Mission Statement

#### Those in final vows

#### IN ACTIVE MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Parish	35.7	29.2	28.8
Education	1.6	4.6	5.5
SVD Vocation/Formation	8.7	9.2	10.9
Administration/Support	22.2	23.1	9.5
Other Apostolates	20.6	21.5	12.3

#### Those in final vows

#### NOT IN MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Studies /Orientation	9.5	4.6	12.4
Retired/Sick	1.6	0	4.1
Other	0	7.7	16.5

### PLATFORMS FOR PROPHETIC DIALOGUE

The Divine Word Missionaries arrived in the Belgian Congo in 1957 as the colonial era was near-

ring its end. We opened many parishes and established schools even in distant villages. Over the years the province has been creative in adapting its missionary presence and service to changing circumstances. When the nationalist movement confiscated private schools, most of the confreres worked in the parishes and dedicated themselves to primary evangelization, catechesis and lay formation. When the local clergy increased, most parishes were handed over to them, and many confreres engaged in specialized apostolates – especially those in line with our four characteristic dimensions.

**Parish Apostolate.** We currently serve in nine parishes in the dioceses of Kenge, Kinshasa, and Kikwit. The majority of them, whether in urban or rural settings, are in poor areas.

**Education Apostolate.** During Mobutu’s regime our SVD-run schools were confiscated along with other Catholic ones. The nationalization of the educational system made academic standards drop down rapidly because of corruption. Now more than thirty years later, we have assumed anew the administration of Kivuvu (Hope) College in Bandundu. Similarly some parish priests among us have revived some parochial schools.

**Pastoral Formation Centers.** To help meet the need for ongoing formation and renewal courses among the laity, clergy and religious, we have opened several centers for ongoing pastoral formation: Centre Liloba (the Word Center), Emmaüs (the Emmaüs Center) in Bandundu, and Centre Sychar (the Sychar Center) in Ngondi.

**Socio-Economic Development.** In Bandundu the economic crisis forced us to close our printing press, machine shop and carpentry shop. In Ngondi, about 350 km from Kinshasa, our machine shop is still helping to keep trucks and vehicles going. The carpentry shop is producing furniture and helping local carpenters in the region. An SVD Brother is educating farmers and promoting rural life.

**Street Children.** What began spontaneously as a shelter for street children has developed into a well-structured institution offering them refuge and integral care. A mobile team goes around at night to rescue children in need. We send the children to schools, and whenever possible we help in reintegrating them into their families.

**Pastoral Care of the Sick.** In Bandundu a confrere heads a pastoral team for visiting the sick and comforting the suffering and abandoned.

**HIV/AIDS Ministry.** Victims of AIDS have been on the increase, especially after the civil war. A confrere works with a non-governmental organization of HIV-positive women for popular education on this pandemic.

## THE SVD CHARACTERISTIC DIMENSIONS

**Mission Animation.** In coordination with the mission secretary, mission awareness is fostered in

parishes and schools by way of talks and exhibits. Around the feast of our founder a festival called FESTARJA (Festival Arnold Janssen) –initiated by Bana Ngayime– is organized every year in Kinshasa. Songs about Sts Arnold Janssen and Joseph Freindemetz are sung by choirs from our three parishes, Bana Ngayime, and our SVD seminarians. Also, a newly created lay group that calls itself les Amis de la SVD (Friends of the SVDs) help in promoting awareness and support of the worldwide mission of the Church, especially that of our Society.

**Biblical Apostolate.** The biblical apostolate is organized into different services which closely work with each other. Verbum Bible makes the Bible and related literature available in different African languages. Centre Liloba forms animators from different parishes of Kinshasa. This enables them to form other Christians at the parish level after a two-year formation. The Centre Liloba organizes the Dei Verbum course for priests, religious, and lay people from different dioceses –even from neighboring countries. The Centre d’Apostolat Biblique offers two programs: the Basic Bible Seminar and its sequel Grandir dans la Parole (Growing in the Word) –during which the participants come to deepen their knowledge of the Sacred Scriptures.

**Communication.** Our formation houses and some of our parishes have their bulletins that give information about their respective activities. The Catholic radio station Elykia and TV channel RTCE offer space to confreres to broadcast the Word of God. The Emibib (Emissions Bibliques) assures this service. Some confreres specialized in

social communication engage lay collaborators in producing such broadcasts, as well as cassettes.

**JPIC.** The SVD networks with other congregations at a diocesan level to defend and promote human rights. The local focus of JPIC concern is the fight against corruption in schools, the preparation for fair national elections, the protection of our Mother Earth.

#### 4. Sharing Intercultural Life

*“As companions of the Divine Word coming from different nations and united with the local Church in Congo, we commit ourselves to the mission of the Incarnate Word. In a world torn by all kinds of conflicts and divisions, our Trinitarian spirituality inspires and sustains our efforts to give communal witness to unity in diversity.”*

–CNG Vision Statement

MEMBERSHIP	2000	2005	2012
Bishop	1	1	1
Clerics	54	53	58
Brothers (final vows)	11	11	13
Brothers (temporal vows)	2	3	4
Scholastics	14	26	22
Novices	5	2	4
TOTAL	87	96	102

AGE and COUNTRY	2000	2005	2012
Average Age	45.2	41.7	46.0
Nationalities	15	20	15*

#### \* ZONAL ORIGIN of province members

AFRAM	67	48cng, 7mad, 6gha, 3tog, 1ang, 1zam, 1zim
ASPAC	17	7isa, 6phi, 4ind
EUROPE	18	9pol, 5ger, 2esp, 1ita, 1slo

**Community.** The members of the Province have changed radically in composition. The number of confreres from the first generation of European missionaries is fast decreasing, and the young generation has become the majority. The number of Congolese confreres has increased, while the nationalities of the foreign-born confreres have become more varied.

For this reason each district together with the provincial leadership team tries its best to foster a spirit of open dialogue and enhance cohesion and teamwork despite diversity in age, race and culture.

**Finance.** Concerted efforts are exerted to achieve progressive self-reliance in the Province. Many of our urban parishes in Kinshasa, Bandundu and Kikwit are becoming financially independent. For obvious reasons, however, our rural parishes remain poor and dependent. Having little cash, people there offer natural gifts (e.g., cassava, peanuts, eggs, chickens, goats ...). But these do not suffice for the maintenance of our confreres and their pastoral activities.

Confreres are asked to contribute to a provincial fund to generate income. We are also developing areas of land for farming in our districts. The fruits

of these projects, however, remain uncertain at their initial phase.

**Formation.** Only eight years after its existence the young Congo region started a formation program for SVD candidates. But because the national atmosphere was then not favorable for formation, the house was closed.

Recruiting candidates for the SVD vocation resumed in 1979, and the novitiate was inaugurated in 1981. Thirty years after this new beginning, a four-

phase formation program, for both clerical and brother candidates, is running. They are the propaedeutic, the novitiate, the philosophical and the theological houses. The theological house which is called the Common Formation Center (CFC) in Kinshasa now serves as a home for young confreres from several African and overseas countries: Angola, Ghana, Togo, Benin, Madagascar, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Kenya, India and Congo. A French language course has been opened for future theology and OTP students and for future missionaries in Congo and other French-speaking countries. ♦



# GHANA PROVINCE



(July 2011 est.)

Population	Religious Profile %		
	Christian	Catholics	Others
24,791,073	68.8%	12.39%	31.2%

Age Structure %			Fertility Rate
0-14	15-64	65	(babies per woman)
36.5	60	3.6	3.48

Median Age	Life Expectancy	Below Poverty Line
21.4	61	28.5%

GDP Output %			Labor Force %		
1	2	3	1	2	3
33.7	24.7	41.6	56	15	29

1=Agriculture, 2=Industry, 3=Services

Urban Population	Urban Rate of Change	Migrant(s) per 1000
51%	3.4%	-0.58

Total Literacy: 58%		Youth Literacy: 70.6%	
male	female	male	female
66.35	49.79	75.95	65.49

Mass Media per 1000 persons			Interactive Media per 1000 persons	
Newspaper	Radio	TV	Mobile	Internet
13.6	569.5	86.5	128.5	28.3

- Official Language: **English**
- Visa: Since 2010 the government has given the SVD Province a quota for granting of visas. This has now made the acquisition of visas for missionaries prompt and direct (without the mediation of the Local Church hierarchy).

## 1. Intercultural Setting

The people of Ghana belong to one broad African ethnic family –but with numerous branches, as mirrored in at least 75 differing languages spoken in the country. Among the largest ethnic groups are the Akan and the Ewe. This variety of ethnic identities, however, did not prove to be a grave national hin-

drance when Ghana gained independence from the British colonial rule in 1957. Since then, at all levels in government and in public life, a policy to play down ethnic differences was persistently enforced with the help of adopting English as the official language.

Despite its small area and population Ghana is one of the leading countries of Africa –partly because of its natural wealth, and partly because of the maturation of its political leadership that learned the hard way through a post-colonial era of corruption, malpractice, and military rule. The Pan-African leader Kwame Nkrumah, who championed sovereignty for the Ghanaian people and for all of Africa, said: “Our independence is meaningless unless it is linked up with the total liberation of the African continent.” Indeed, the 1960s saw 30 other African countries declare their own independence at the leading example of Ghana. By the 1990s the social situation of the citizens improved, and the country is now well esteemed as a showcase of economic recovery and political reform in Africa.

## 2. Ecclesial Setting

Next to the Christians, two other major religious groupings in Ghana are the Muslims (16%) and the devotees to native ancestral religiosity (8-10%).

The dawn of the 20th century saw the growth and spread of Christianity mainly in the southern zone of the country. Towards the end of the last century, however, Islam started spreading in the north, where Christian presence is but 4%. Also since then, Pentecostal denominations began emerging in the south as so-called ‘mushroom churches’.

Currently subdivided into 19 dioceses, the local Catholic Church in Ghana has gained sufficient viability by way of native clergy and vocations to the religious and priestly life. The pastoral response to the ethno-linguistic diversity of the Catholic faithful has been to pray and preach in the local languages. Thus, the laity can and do take active part in the intercultural sharing of the Gospel through faith expressions of common worship and living. Though the bishops in Ghana still heavily rely on foreign financial support to run their dioceses, efforts at self-reliance have begun.

## 3. Sharing Intercultural Mission

*“In cooperation with the local church, we Divine Word Missionaries ... commit ourselves especially to the Ghanaian youth, by way of our diverse parish and school-based ministries.”*

—GHA Mission Statement

### Those in final vows

#### IN ACTIVE MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Parish	39.8	36.5	46.1
Education	6.6	9.9	11.3
SVD Vocation/Formation	8.8	6.8	8.7
Administration/Support	10.6	9.0	7.8
Other Apostolates	18.6	20.3	12.2

### Those in final vows

#### NOT IN MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Studies /Orientation	9.3	10.8	3.5
Retired/Sick	5.3	4.0	6.1
Other	0.9	2.7	4.3

## PLATFORMS FOR PROPHETIC DIALOGUE

The SVD is present in 19 dioceses and 1 vicariate, where parish ministry is usually integrated with school apostolate. Other confreres engage in specialized ministries that assist those engaged in pastoral ministries through the SVD characteristic dimensions, or serve as officials in diocesan boards and commissions.

## THE SVD CHARACTERISTIC DIMENSIONS

**Mission Animation.** We inspire and prepare people to commit themselves to the Divine Word and His mission by forming the Friends of the SVD in our parishes and institutions. We nurture their mission-mindedness through regular recollections, initiating them into the devotion for our SVD Saints, and sharing with them literature on our SVD spiritual heritage.

**Communication.** In proclaiming the Gospel, we make use of both traditional and contemporary means of communication with the help of specialized ministries such as those of PALIMUS, Yendi Recording Studio, Catholic Book Centre.

**Biblical Apostolate.** We offer forty days of Dei Verbum Course every other year, and organize biblical study and reflection groups in our parishes and apostolate centers sustained by district BPM (Biblical Pastoral Ministry) teams.

**JPIC.** We actively take part in promoting the UNO millennium goals by joining hands with NGOs in

the campaign against child labor and human trafficking. Ghanaian traditional means of reconciliation, inspired by the Gospel, are promoted to bring about harmony in our parochial communities.

## 4. Sharing Intercultural Life

*“Called by the Triune God from diverse nations and cultures, we are a community of men committed by evangelical counsels to Christ and to the mission of incarnating His Gospel message in the multi-cultural Ghanaian situation.”*

–GHA Vision Statement

### MEMBERSHIP 2000 2005 2012

Bishops	1	1	2
Clerics	84	84	90
Brothers (final vows)	25	26	24
Brothers (temporal vows)	11	0	3
Scholastics	35	30	33
Novices	12	22	13
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>165</b>

### AGE and COUNTRY 2000 2005 2012

Average Age	42.3	42.7	50.9
Nationalities	26	21	23*

### \* ZONAL ORIGIN of province members

AFRAM	103	78gha, 8tog, 6cng, 4ben, 4ken, 2mad, 1zam
ASPAC	30	12ind, 10isa, 5phi, 1kor, 1png, 1vie
EUROPE	25	13pol, 5ger, 3ned, 2ire, 2oes
PANAM	7	3usa, 1bol, 1brz, 1chi, 1col

## GHA

Noteworthy ways in which intercultural life is nurtured and fostered among confreres within the province are as follow:

**Spirituality.** The Arnold Janssen Spirituality Team has been revived and, together with the SSpS, animates retreats and recollections for the Arnoldus Family as well as the local Church.

**Community.** Besides promoting regular fraternal gatherings at district level, a provincial initiative takes the form of offering the McCarthy Hill Residence primarily as welcome space for confreres in need of rest and recovery from illness, as well as to those who wish to make private retreats. The residence also serves at times as a venue for provincial meetings and gatherings.

**Formation.** The Province stands ever in need of more qualified formators as it runs are four formation houses. Two are located in Tamale: the Common Formation Centre (for theology students especially from the AFRAM zone), and the Freinademetz House (for postulants and philosophy

students). The other two are: the Arnold Janssen House (for Brother formation) in Accra, and the Divine Word Novitiate (for novices from the provinces of Ghana, Kenya, Botswana, and Madagascar) in Nkwatia-Kwahu. Our English as Second Language (ESL) Programme is also in Nkwatia-Kwahu.

As for ongoing formation, new missionaries go through an orientation course organized as the need arises. Also, a workshop on cross-cultural ministry is held twice a year together with the SSpS as part of on-going formation.

**Finances.** The Province is still at an initial phase of planning and exploring ways of generating local funds to sustain its missionary activities in the country. A modest start at striving after financial self-reliance consists in revamping and reinforcing the setup of our income-generating book store and carpentry shop. And in our contracts with bishops, we make sure that confreres receive proper remuneration for their pastoral service and personal upkeep –with respect to the financial viability of each diocese. ♦

# KENYA PROVINCE

Kenya, Tanzania



- Official Languages:

Kenya — **English, Swahili**

Tanzania — **Swahili**

- Visa: Both countries are welcoming to Christian missionaries and easily grant them visas for residence and work.

(July 2011 est.)

		Religious Profile %		
		Christian	Catholics	Others
Kenya	41,070,934	78	33	22
Tanzania	42,746,620	30	29	70

		Age Structure %		
		0-14	15-64	65
Kenya	4.19	42.2	55.1	2.7
Tanzania	4.16	42	55.1	2.9

		Median Age	Life Expectancy	Below Poverty Line
Kenya		18.9	59.48	50%
Tanzania		18.5	52.85	36%

		GDP Output %			Labor Force %		
		1	2	3	1	2	3
Kenya		22	16	62	75	25	68
Tanzania		42	18	40	80	20	64

1=Agriculture, 2=Industry, 3=Services

		Urban Population	Urban Rate of Change	Migrant(s) per 1000
Kenya		22%	4.2%	0
Tanzania		26%	4.7%	-0.53

		Total Literacy %		Youth Literacy %	
		male	female	male	female
Kenya		77.6	70.2	79.8	80.7
Tanzania		77.5	62.1	80.9	76.2

		Mass Media per 1000 persons			Interactive Media per 1000 persons	
		Newspaper	Radio	TV	Mobile	Internet
Kenya		8	90	21	134	81
Tanzania		0	239	3	51	10

## 1. Intercultural Setting

By far the largest linguistic group (more than 80%) of African peoples in Kenya and Tanzania is the Bantu. In Kenya the most known Bantu people are the Kikuyu, whereas in Tanzania the most numerous are the Sukuma. Again in both countries: the second linguistic group –about 15%– is that of the Nilo-Saharan, among which

the most known people are the Maasai and the Arusha. Both linguistic groups, however, are further divided into numerous ethnic sub-groups, each with a dialect of its own. In the course of ethnic interaction through several centuries one lingua franca that emerged was

Swahili. It started out as a market talk that mixed words from local Bantu languages, Arabic, Persian, Portuguese, Hindi, and English. Now it has matured and rose to the status of official language in Tanzania, but is also used formally –along with English– in the National Assembly and the judicial courts of Kenya.

Because of such a cultural plurality in both countries, ‘pulling together’ (literal translation of the Swahili word Harambee –the Kenyan national motto) all the ethnic groupings into one nation has been a political aim that made Kenya and Tanzania diverge into divergent historical paths: one opted for a European style of democracy, and the other for African socialism. Yet both ideological facades hide veil dramas of inter-ethnic

struggle for national supremacy –a power play that can explain much of the economic and political instability of both countries today.

What adds burden to the national project of ‘pulling together’ in both countries is the on-going flow of refugees and internally displaced persons. In Tanzania they have come since the last decade from Burundi, Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Kenya, on the other hand, provides shelter to almost a million refugees coming from Ethiopia, Sudan, and especially Somalia. Kenya further strives to prevent the clan and militia fighting in Somalia from spreading across its border long open to nomadic pastoralists.

## 2. Ecclesial Setting

Non-Christian religions of significant following in the two neighboring countries are Islam (10% in Kenya, 35% in Tanzania) and the native ancestral religiosity.

The Catholic Church in both countries is still dependent on foreign mission aid in terms of personnel and finances. Yet her vitality is manifest in the thriving number of Sunday churchgoers and of youthful vocations to the religious life and the priesthood. These may be the fruit of a common approach to pastoral work: that of forming and nurturing basic ecclesial communities parallel to those in Latin America. In national polity, the Catholic bishops also exercise weighty moral influence –more in Kenya than in Tanzania.



### 3. Sharing Intercultural Mission

*“To allow Jesus, the Incarnate Word, to reveal Himself to us and others by accepting and sharing His offer of life.”*

–KEN Mission Statement

#### Those in final vows

#### IN ACTIVE MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Parish	52.8	46.9	47.3
School/Education	0	0	5.2
SVD Vocation/Formation	15.3	6.2	13.2
Administration/Support	12.5	18.8	7.9
Other Apostolates	5.6	15.6	15.8

#### Those in final vows

#### NOT IN MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Studies /Orientation	8.3	6.2	5.3
Retired/Sick	2.8	0	0
Other	2.8	6.2	5.3

### PLATFORMS FOR PROPHETIC DIALOGUE

The SVD mission in Kenya began in 1984 and later extended to Tanzania in 1999. The majority of our confreres in the Province work as parish priests in a diocese and two archdioceses. We work in two Tanzanian rural parishes in Emboreet-Simanjiro and Orkesmet-Simanjiro –both populated by the well-known Maasai cattle-herding people. The other eight are urban parishes located in Arusha (Tanzania), Eldoret (Kenya), and Nairobi (Kenya). The people of the ur-

ban parishes come from many different tribes, though one group might be predominant in one or the other parish.

Other types of ministry in which confreres are engaged are school chaplaincy and campus ministry, apostolate among prisoners, animating retreats, and helping in popular out-of-school education (such as promoting Women Self-Help Group, organizing workshops on gender Issues and conflict resolution, and promoting biblical study groups in parishes.

### 4. Sharing Intercultural Life

#### MEMBERSHIP 2000 2005 2012

Clerics	32	28	34
Brothers (final vows)	3	4	3
Brothers (temporal vows)	3	1	1
Scholastics	26	23	27
TOTAL	64	56	65

#### AGE and COUNTRY 2000 2005 2012

Average Age	36.3	36.3	42.3
Nationalities	24	18	22*

#### \* ZONAL ORIGIN of province members

AFRAM	35	9cng, 9gha, 9ken, 5tog, 2zam, 1zim
ASPAC	17	9ind, 3isa, 2phi, 1chn, 1fij, 1jpn
EUROPE	7	3pol, 1ger, 1ire, 1slo, 1swi
PANAM	6	2brz, 1arg, 1chi, 1col, 1mex



## KEN

**Community.** To consolidate a province most of whose membership is of foreign origin, the provincial leadership puts its current stress on fostering teamwork and fraternity. Confreres come together and celebrate as ‘family’ on the feasts of the Society and special occasions such as ordinations and profession of perpetual vows. Besides these events, the Province gathers annually for common retreat, provincial assembly and/or provincial chapter.

**Finances.** Confreres are encouraged to lead a simple lifestyle in solidarity with the people whom they serve. Transparency and accountability is fostered through open and regular reporting of the local treasurers to their communities. The urban parishes are now self-reliant and no longer depend on subsidies from the generalate for their daily maintenance.

**Formation.** The Kenya Province hosts one of the three common formation centers of the SVD

AFRAM Zone. Since 1994, students from across Africa come to Nairobi to study theology at Tangaza College. One of the formators serves as the director of the college’s Institute of Social Communication. Yet a confrere has yet to represent the Society at its theological faculty, since it requires that all member congregations with 25 or more seminarians must provide two or more theology professors.

The Province has two other formation houses in Nairobi for vocations hailing from Kenya and Tanzania. One is for philosophy students and another for postulants.

As for the ongoing formation of those fully engaged in pastoral ministry, learning the local cultures and languages (after English and Kiswahili) is highly encouraged. Two of the elder confreres, for instance, learned the Maasai language to be of better missionary service among those people. ♦

# MADAGASCAR REGION



(July 2011 est.)

Population	Religious Profile %		
	Christian	Catholics	Others
21,926,221	45.0	25	55

Age Structure %			Fertility Rate
0-14	15-64	65	(babies per woman)
43.5	53.5	3	5.09

Median Age	Life Expectancy	Below Poverty Line
18.2	63.2	50%

GDP Output %			Labor Force %		
1	2	3	1	2	3
26.4	16.6	57	80	n.a.	n.a.

1=Agriculture, 2=Industry, 3=Services

Urban Population	Urban Rate of Change	Migrant(s) per 1000
30%	3.9%	0

Total Literacy: 68.9%		Youth Literacy: 70.24%	
male	female	male	female
75.5	62.5	72.7	68.19

Mass Media per 1000 persons			Interactive Media per 1000 persons	
Newspaper	Radio	TV	Mobile	Internet
4.4	169	18	27	5.7

- Official Languages: **French, Malagasy**
- Visa: Working or residence visas for missionaries are easily granted till now, despite slow and costly bureaucracy for them.

## 1. Intercultural Setting

Despite Madagascar's geographic proximity to the African coast, the inhabitants do not consider themselves as Africans. For the past 2,000 years peoples from far and wide came into this big island: from Africa, South and Southeast Asia (namely, India and Indonesia), the Near East, and

## MAD

Europe. Their multicultural mix is what gave rise to the present Malagasy nation.

On the highland plateaux the major ethnic peoples are the Merina (25% of the population) and the Betsileo (12%) –descendants mainly of Malayo-Indonesian origin about 2,000 years ago. On the other hand, the coastal regions are mainly inhabited by peoples of Malay-Indonesian, Black-African, and Arab descents. Despite this ethnic diversity, however, one common language of Malay-Polynesian blend has managed to spread throughout the island and has become the official language of the country –Malagasy.

## 2. Ecclesial Setting

There is a drastic increase in the number of Muslims in Madagascar. Today the Muslims count 7% of the total population and keep on increasing. The non-Christian majority (around 48%) of the Malagasy population consists of people who remain faithful to the native ancestral beliefs, more and rituals.

Most Catholics live inland on the plateaus where priestly and religious vocations also thrive. From there the local Church reaches out in primary evangelization to the coastal people who still live by ancestral religious beliefs and rituals. In this task she still relies much on foreign missionaries and funding. Yet one hopeful sign of budding ecclesial viability is that native religious women have by now outnumbered their expatriate counterparts.

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of Madagascar is a credible moral voice in this country currently

beset by economic and political instability. Together with the heads of other Christian churches (FJKM, Lutheran and Anglican), they form an ecumenical union for promoting JPIC causes at the nation's grassroots.

## 3. Sharing Intercultural Mission

*"Our prophetic dialogue with faith-seekers expresses itself in our commitment to primary evangelization."*

–MAD Mission Statement

### Those in final vows IN ACTIVE MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Parish	44.4	40.5	44.4
Education	5.6	0	3.5
SVD Vocation/Formation	5.6	2.4	5.6
Administration/Support	11.1	7.1	11.1
Other Apostolates	11.1	21.4	11.5

### Those in final vows NOT IN MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Studies /Orientation	22.2	23.8	18.2
Retired/Sick	0	0	3.5
Other	0	4.8	3.2

## PLATFORMS FOR PROPHETIC DIALOGUE

Before 2006, SVD missionary presence was limited to assisting the Diocese of Mananjary in its efforts at primary evangelization. Up to now, the majority of our confreres work as parish priests in

this Diocese, due to its acute lack of local clergy. The local bishop, on the other hand, entrusts to us responsibilities related to the biblical and JPIC apostolates:

- a center for catechetical and biblical formation (at the service of two dioceses),
- prison chaplaincy,
- the Diocesan Commission for Health and an association called "Friends of the Sick",
- missionary animation.

Since 2006, however, the Region decided to reach out to these other dioceses:

- the Archdiocese of Antananarivo (2006),
- the Diocese of Ambatondrazaka (2008),
- the Archdiocese of Fianarantsoa (2011).

In Fianarantsoa a confrere teaches dogmatic theology at the major seminary for the nine southern dioceses of Madagascar. At a national level another confrere takes charge of the Charismatic Renewal Movement.

**Communication.** We promote dialogue with the local cultures to help us better form basic ecclesial communities as characteristic pastoral approach. We collaborate with the local radio stations and a diocesan one in preparing broadcasts of biblical inspiration.

**JPIC.** At a district level seminars on civil law are given in parish centers to educate people about their civic rights and responsibilities. Some among us are engaged in prison ministry, while others try to help victims of injustices.

#### 4. Sharing Intercultural Life

*"We strive, beyond our daily tasks, to give communal priority to prayer – a prayer that closely binds us as brothers, a prayer that opens us up to the world, a prayer that sustains and inspires our apostolic action."*

–MAD Action Plan Ad Intra

### THE SVD CHARACTERISTIC DIMENSIONS

**Mission Animation.** At a district level youth camps and Marian pilgrimages are organized to serve as channels for promoting awareness and solidarity for the worldwide mission enterprise of the Church, especially of our Society.

**Biblical Apostolate.** We help form catechists and lay leaders through catechetical and biblical seminars. Lately, the Verbum Bible has opened a branch office linked to the central one in Kinshasa (SVD Congo Province).

#### MEMBERSHIP 2000 2005 2012

Clerics	13	20	23
Brothers (final vows)	3	1	2
Brothers (temporal vows)	0	0	1
Scholastics	2	2	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>27</b>

#### AGE and COUNTRY 2000 2005 2012

Average Age	38.5	39.9	42.5
Nationalities	8	9	12*

## MAD

**\* ZONAL ORIGIN of province members**

AFRAM	3	1cng, 1gha, 1mad
ASPAC	16	1lisa, 3ind, 1phi, 1png
EUROPE	5	4pol, 1slo
PANAM	3	1arg, 1brz, 1chi

**Community.** Because of the multinational and multicultural membership of the Region, we encourage living, praying and working in pairs or teams among ourselves. We gather annually for a common regional retreat. Yearly pilgrimages in different parishes are also an occasion for the

confreres to regroup as family. And our provincial bulletin encourages sharing of news and ideas among confreres.

**Formation.** For a decade now, the Madagascar Region is engaged in SVD initial formation. What began as a pre-postulancy has grown into a formation house for postulants and philosophy students based in Fianarantsoa.

The first Malagasy professed final vows in 2008, was ordained a priest in 2009, and now works as a missionary in the Philippines. ♦

# MOZAMBIQUE MISSION



(July 2011 est.)

Population	Religious Profile %		
	Christian	Catholics	Others
22,948,858	56.1	21.72	43.9

Age Structure %			Fertility Rate
0-14	15-64	65	(babies per woman)
45.9	51.1	3	5.46

Median Age	Life Expectancy	Below Poverty Line
16.8	51.78	70%

GDP Output %			Labor Force %		
1	2	3	1	2	3
28.8	26	45.2	81	6	13

1=Agriculture, 2=Industry, 3=Services

Urban Population	Urban Rate of Change	Migrant(s) per 1000
38%	4%	-2.18

Total Literacy: 47.8%		Youth Literacy: 48.8%	
male	female	male	female
49.3	18.44	66.12	31.67

Mass Media per 1000 persons			Interactive Media per 1000 persons	
Newspaper	Radio	TV	Mobile	Internet
2	37	3	61	9

- Official Language: **Portuguese**
- Visa: The government easily gives working and residence visas to missionaries. After 15 years of uninterrupted stay in the country, a permanent residence is granted.

## 1. Intercultural Setting

Although Portuguese is the official language of Mozambique, it is spoken as *lingua franca* only by some two-fifths of the country's inhabitants concentrated in the capital city and other urban areas. The vast majority of Mozambicans speak Bantu languages

–of which the most widespread is Makua (25.3%). The numerous local languages are the initial clues to understanding the diversity of ethnic affinities and cultural differences among the people.

Mozambique had been a Portuguese colony from 1498 to 1975. The colonial economy was designed to promote capital accumulation of Portuguese-based commerce and industry. Understandably, after independence, the socialist government reacted by nationalizing ownership of major properties. This policy led Portuguese and South Asian settlers to

What the local Church of Mozambique expects most from us is propagating the biblical apostolate at the grassroots.

Parallel to the government efforts that led to an economic collapse was a ‘cultural revolution’ that clashed with native Mozambican traditions. To reshape national culture in line with a political ideology of ‘scientific materialism’, a concerted campaign through mass media tried uprooting customs such as herbal healing, rites of passage, polygamy, open critique of leadership through poetic performance, the local authority of *regulos* based on lineage chieftainship.

At present, however, the Mozambican regime has been opened out beyond a rigid socialist model of society. The economy has been reoriented in line with policies of the International Monetary Fund: to allow privatization and decentralization, and to

sustain family-owned farming. It also has dropped laws against polygamy and initiation rites, and has granted *regulos* a participative role once again in local governance.

## 2. Ecclesial Setting

The Muslims constitute 17.9% of the Mozambican population. About 26% more remains a fluid group of people who either identify with no religion or remain faithful to the ancestral religiosity native to the country.

Since the arrival of Catholic missionaries in 1498, evangelization in Mozambique had been neither massive nor continuous. The patronage system made the Church dependent on colonial leadership for its activities that integrated preaching the Gospel with building and running schools, hospitals and farms. Several times when Masonic governors gained political power, missionaries were expelled. Later, political independence led to the massive departure –often forced– of Catholic missionaries most of whom were Portuguese.

During the 17 years of civil war, the Church was notably present through its institutions of social charity. It also played a major mediatory role in making warlords reach a final peace agreement. Yet today the Church in Mozambique seems to look more inwards (to building and maintaining its structures) than outwards –to the people’s integral needs. A multitude of those baptized soon disappear from the ecclesial horizon; there are those who move from one church to another as fast as changing shirts; expressions of faith mix with an-



cestral beliefs and rituals incoherent with the spirit of the Gospel; marital and familial ties that are disintegrating in urban zones ... all these make it widely clear that the Church needs to place less emphasis on sacramental ministry and focus on an evangelization that experiences the Gospel as liberating Good News and entails an integral and radical conversion of one's life.

### 3. Sharing Intercultural Mission

#### Those in final vows

#### IN ACTIVE MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Parish	37.5	34.6	56.1
Education	12.5	0	6.3
SVD Vocation/Formation	12.5	3.8	6.3
Administration/Support	12.5	7.7	6.3
Other Apostolates	12.5	23.1	0

#### Those in final vows

#### NOT IN MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Studies /Orientation	12.5	30.8	25.0
Retired/Sick	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0

### PLATFORMS FOR PROPHETIC DIALOGUE

Divine Word Missionaries arrived in Mozambique for the first time in 1911—to help replace Jesuits expelled by the Portuguese colonial regime. But neither did our missionary presence manage to plant roots in a political situation hostile to religious activity. Our confreres, too, were deported back to Por-

tugal in 1917-1918 and were repeatedly denied re-entry to the colony. Only in 1997, two years after the new nation declared independence from Portugal did a contingent of our Society manage to re-enter the country at the verge of a civil war.

At present the missionary commitment of our Society in Mozambique unfolds mainly in parishes. We have four communities: two northern ones in the Nacala Diocese and two others in the capital city.

Our preferential dialogue partners are the Catholic faithful whose simple faith at times finds cultural expressions mixed with native ancestral religiosity, whose familial or neighborhood setting is often shared with others of different religious convictions or ecclesial belonging, and whose life situation is marked by poverty and illiteracy.

### THE SVD CHARACTERISTIC DIMENSIONS

**Mission Animation.** Mindful of our missionary identity wherever we work, we promote solidarity for worldwide mission and recruit vocations for missionary and religious life. In a special way we instill mission-mindedness among the youth through groups of the Missionary Childhood.

**Biblical Apostolate.** What the local Church of Mozambique expects most from us is propagating the biblical apostolate at the grassroots. At parish level we form biblical reflection groups and nourish them through intermittent biblical seminars. Our parishes also make the Bible and related spiritual literature available at prices affordable to the common people.

**JPIC.** Lastly, our parish-based projects of social charity draw guiding light from the Christian principles of integral justice and peace. Our Center for Pastoral Ministry and Promotion of Human Rights in Liupo sustains a program to help malnourished children.

#### 4. Sharing Intercultural Life

*“Aware of our limitations, we remain convinced that we need to plan and work in teams as an active way of witnessing to our intercultural brotherhood. Committed to the Divine Word and his mission, we strive after unity in the Spirit.”*

–MOZ Action Plan ad Intra

MEMBERSHIP	2000	2005	2012
Clerics	6	11	14
Brothers (final vows)	0	2	3
Scholastics	2	4	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>19</b>

AGE and COUNTRY	2000	2005	2012
Average Age	40	37.7	37.1
Nationalities	7	11	10*

#### \* ZONAL ORIGIN of province members

AFRAM	3	2gha, 1zam
ASPAC	13	7isa, 2tls, 2vie, 1ind, 1phi
EUROPE	1	1pol
PANAM	2	1mex, 1usa

**Community.** Youth and multiculturalism are what characterize our SVD Mozambique Mission. On the one hand, we value both characterizing traits of our membership as a double gift. On the other hand, we recognize the shadow they cast behind us as the instability of our personnel. Of special challenge for us is the low perseverance of our newly arrived missionaries. Because of it our missionary presence and service in Mozambique cannot grow and expand as we envision it to be.

Our mission teams living in the north are more than 2000 km away from those in the south. Thus, arranging regular meetings among us is costly in time, money and energy. Our way of resolving this difficulty is to reduce our plenary assembly to a yearly occurrence while encouraging frequent district meetings.

**Formation.** The other main challenge for our Mission is the ethnic and linguistic diversity of the people among whom we serve as international mission teams. Furthermore, the northern zone of the country is rural, whereas the southern one is urban. In response to this intercultural challenge, we take advantage of inculturation courses at times offered.

A growing number of Mozambican youth is expressing the desire to join our Society as religious and missionary. For this reason, before doubling our efforts at vocation promotion, we are planning to set up an initial formation program. We also had good experience with young confreres coming to Mozambique for OTP/PFT. So we intend to keep on welcoming such candidates among us. ♦

# CHAD MISSION



(July 2011 est.)

Population	Religious Profile %		
	Christian	Catholics	Others
10,975,648	34.0	9.68	66

Age Structure %			Fertility Rate
0-14	15-64	65	(babies per woman)
46	51	2.9	5.05

Median Age	Life Expectancy	Below Poverty Line
16.8	48.33	80%

GDP Output %			Labor Force %		
1	2	3	1	2	3
52	7	41.1	80	20	13

1=Agriculture, 2=Industry, 3=Services

Urban Population	Urban Rate of Change	Migrant(s) per 1000
28%	4.6%	-3.84

Total Literacy: 25.7%		Youth Literacy: 37.56%	
male	female	male	female
40.8	12.8	55.7	23.2

Mass Media per 1000 persons			Interactive Media per 1000 persons	
Newspaper	Radio	TV	Mobile	Internet
0.26	173	1	21.5	6

- Official Languages: **French, Arabic**
- Visa: A missionary can easily enter the country with a 3-month or 1-year visa, after which –with the help of the diocese– one can have it renewed annually.

## 1. Intercultural Setting

The multiple ethnic groupings within the Chadian nation are reflected in the more than 120 different languages and dialects spoken by its native citizens. Added to this wide variety is Arabic –also spoken in various forms, though a simplified one is spoken in towns and markets.

Chad is a landlocked country sharing borders with Niger, Libya, Sudan, Cameroon and Central African Republic. Long years of civil war and corruption in government have impoverished its people marked with ill health and high rate of illiteracy. Of late, Chad has found a place among the oil-producing nations of the world. But exploiting this natural resource has become a source of social conflict and grave injustices.

A sociocultural gulf divides the northern and southern regions of Chad. Most in the North are Muslim animal herders, whereas most in the South are farmers who identify with the Christian faith or the native ancestral religiosity. The northerners are the wielders of economic, political and military power in the country. The nomadic Arabs of the north are now encroaching more and more into the south with their livestock. Damages done to the farmers' fields often provoke violence.

Chad offers refuge to people from Sudan and the Central African Republic. But still beyond its government's control is human trafficking – especially of children. Many of them end up as ill-treated serfs, beggars, or victims of sexual commerce. For the same cruel purposes, a smaller number of victim children are even smuggled and sold in Cameroon, the Central African Republic, and Nigeria.

## 2. Ecclesial Setting

In the absence of recent statistics, only rough estimates can be offered as overview of the religious situation of Chad. Most of the Christians live in the south, whereas the north and east of the

country remains firm in the Sunni Muslim faith held by a little more than 50% of the population. The rest remain faithful devotees to African ancestral beliefs and rituals. Despite the dominance of Christianity and Islam, native African religiosity still serves as a basis for cohesion in the rural areas where they are practiced.

## 3. Sharing Intercultural Mission

*"To continue the mission of the Incarnate Word, we commit ourselves to primary evangelization. In collaboration with the local clergy and the laity we reach out in dialogue to people of other faiths – especially Islam and traditional Religions. We stand by the poor and the marginalized to help them rise to dignified human life in a just and peaceful society."*

–TCD Mission Statement

### Those in final vows

IN ACTIVE MINISTRY (%)	2005	2012
Parish	62.5	42.8
SVD Vocation/Formation	0	14.3
Administration/Support	12.5	14.3

### Those in final vows

NOT IN MINISTRY (%)	2005	2012
Studies /Orientation	25.0	28.6
Retired/Sick or Other	0	0

## PLATFORMS FOR PROPHETIC DIALOGUE

The SVD mission in Chad began in September 2004 at the persistent cordial request of the

bishop of the newly-erected diocese of Gore. Our Society accepted the newly-created parish of Laramanaye, named in honor of St Arnold Janssen who was then newly canonized. In September 2010, the SVD mission accepted another parish in the same diocese, that of St. Francis of Assisi in Boro. At the bishop's request, one among us helps as formator in the diocesan minor seminary.

Relying on the Lord of the harvest to send us more workers in the Chadian vineyard, we look forward to extending our services to other dioceses –such as those of Moundou and Doba.

## THE SVD CHARACTERISTIC DIMENSIONS

**Mission Animation.** The ongoing formation of our catechists and lay leaders is top priority in our parishes. For we believe that, in our still non-viable ecclesial setting, mission animation must begin with empowering our Catholic faithful –especially the lay leaders– to become our proactive partners in mission. We inculcate in their periodic formation program the call to open out to their Muslim neighbors mainly by being friendly and helpful. On the other hand, we reach out to our Protestant neighbors through common prayer services for peace and unity, bible sharing in groups, and collaboration in projects of socio-economic development.

**Biblical Apostolate.** Through homilies, bible reflection groups and biblical workshops, we en-

courage the Catholic faithful to live and share the Word of God where they are.

**Communication.** We started a small studio for group media in Laramanaye. Its initial productions consist of (1) promoting native religious hymns for liturgical use and (2) audiovisual rendering of biblical stories for catechetics.

**JPIC.** Our various forms of proclaiming the Word of God and ongoing lay formation integrate themes on integral justice and peace –especially (1) civic rights and duties for citizens to promote social harmony in their country, (2) respect and protection of their natural resources and environment.

## 4. Sharing Intercultural Life

*“We commit ourselves to work among a people eager to welcome Jesus as their Savior, to proclaim his Word of Life to them. In an ethnically divided society, our harmonious international community life strives to stand as a signpost of unity.”*

–TCD Vision Statement

MEMBERSHIP	2000	2012
Clerics	3	7
Brothers (final vows)	1	0
TOTAL	4	7

AGE and COUNTRY	2000	2012
Average Age	43.5	40.0
Nationalities	4	5*

## \* ZONAL ORIGIN of province members

AFRAM	3	2tog, 1cng
ASPAC	4	2isa, 1phi, 1vie

**Spirituality.** Efforts are made to witness to our missionary and religious spirituality in serving our parishioners. Our faithfulness in celebrating the Eucharist and other sacraments serves as a good witness for the people who are growing in faith. Aside from our personal prayers, we also try to pray the office regularly in our communities believing that a community that prays together stays together.

**Community.** Our efforts to live within an international community make the people realize that it is possible to live in peaceful unity in a multi-ethnic setting. We have a regular meeting and fraternal encounter as SVDs once a month to evaluate our activities and promote camaraderie among us.

**Finances.** To lead a simple lifestyle in solidarity with our poor parishioners is our objective. We try to live not expecting so much financial support from our generalate, but through the support of our bishop and our parishioners. We have some small projects in our communities (like gardening, cattle-raising, fruit trees plantation, etc.) which help us partially attain this goal. Our diocese tries to form the people to know their duties and responsibilities to support their clergy and the local Church.

**Formation.** Some young men have started asking to join our Society. . In 2011, our first candidate from Chad was accepted for postulancy and will join our confreres in Lome, Togo for initial formation.

As to our own need for ongoing formation, the diocese responds by way of periodic seminars and annual retreats –which we faithfully attend as often as we can. ♦



# TOGO PROVINCE

Togo and Benin



- Official Language in Togo and Benin: **French**
- Visa: For a minimal fee one can obtain an entry visa for either Togo or Benin on arrival at the border or airport. The entry visa is easily extended to one year for the equivalent of US\$50 in Benin, and to three years for free in Togo.

(July 2011 est.) **Religious Profile %**

	Population	Christian	Catholics	Others
Benin	9,325,032	42.8	25.58	57.2
Togo	6,771,993	29	25	71

**Fertility Rate** (babies per woman) **Age Structure %**

		0-14	15-64	65
Benin	5.31	44.7	52.6	2.7
Togo	4.69	40.9	56	3.1

	Median Age	Life Expectancy	Below Poverty Line
Benin	17.4	59.8	37.4%
Togo	19.3	62.7	32%

	GDP Output %			Labor Force %		
	1	2	3	1	2	3
Benin	33.2	14.5	52.3	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Togo	47.4	25.4	27.2	65	5	30

1=Agriculture, 2=Industry, 3=Services

	Urban Population	Urban Rate of Change	Migrant(s) per 1000
Benin	42%	4%	0
Togo	43%	3.9%	0

	Total Literacy%		Youth Literacy %	
	male	female	male	female
Benin	47.9	23.3	59.2	33.2
Togo	75.4	46.9	83.6	63.5

	Mass Media per 1000 persons			Interactive Media per 1000 persons	
	Newspaper	Radio	TV	Mobile	Internet
Benin	6.3	86.3	8.6	88.8	18.5
Togo	1.8	174	13.5	72	51



## 1. Intercultural Setting

From the 11th to the 16th century, various African tribes came from all directions into the region of what is now Togo and Benin. This explains why today this region is home to about 40 ethnic groups in Togo, and some 55 in Benin. From the 16th century to the 18th century, the same region became known as "The Slave Coast" because it served as a major trading center for European slave-hunting.

In 1884, Germany declared Togoland a protectorate, whereas France claimed Benin as its colony in 1892. In 1922 the League of Nations assigned eastern Togoland to France and the western portion to Britain. Both European powers granted independence to both small nations in 1960. Since then, despite attempts at greater national unity by successive shifts from dictatorship to democracy, hostile rivalry among ethnic groups still survives to a marked degree. At least, one colonial imprint serves as a cultural unifier of both young multi-ethnic nations: the French language as their common official language.

## 2. Ecclesial Setting

The Muslims comprise 24.4% in Benin, and 20% in Togo. The ancestral religiosity native to both countries remains traditionally strong. It includes vodun (voodoo), which Africans enslaved during the Atlantic slave trade in the 17th–19th centuries brought to the Caribbean and the Americas.

In both countries there are now more than 1000 diocesan priests and nearly 1,300 religious men

and women –many among whom are of native birth. The seven dioceses in Togo are by now headed by native bishops. The Catholic hierarchy has helped in making both young nations shift from repressive regimes to an initial democracy. Till now the bishops serve as credible mediators for national peace and solidarity, as exemplified by one Togolese bishop who heads the National Truth and Reconciliation Committee.

## 3. Sharing Intercultural Mission

*"Inspired by the Word and guided by the Spirit, we commit ourselves to witnessing to the Peace of God's Reign amid the multi-ethnic people of Togo and Benin –by helping them become a viable Local Church and a mature civil society."*

– TOG Mission Statement

### Those in final vows

#### IN ACTIVE MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Parish	63.1	58.0	60.5
Education	4.8	0	0
Vocation/Formation	4.8	4.9	4.9
Administration/Support	4.8	4.9	4.9
Other Apostolates	8.3	14.6	13.3

### Those in final vows

#### NOT IN MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Studies/Orientation	9.5	12.2	13.0
Retired/Sick	0	0	0
Other	4.8	4.9	3.4

## PLATFORMS FOR PROPHETIC DIALOGUE

Protestant missionaries preceded Catholic ones in Togo and Benin. In August 1892, at the request of Leo XIII, St Arnold Janssen sent German confreres –three brothers and two priests– to Togo as the first Catholic missionaries. More confreres, along with the SSPS, later arrived to reinforce their presence and diversify its service. The end of World War I in 1918, however, saw Togo turn from a country of German protectorate to a French-colony. Thus, our pioneering confreres –along with other German missionaries– were deported, while French ones of the SMA came to carry on the nurture of the Local Church there.

The SVD came back to Togo in 1974, some 14 years after its national independence. Later in 1987 we further extended our missionary presence to Benin.

Of the seven dioceses in Togo, we are present in five. Of the 10 dioceses in Benin, we are only in two northern ones. The main thrust of the local Church in both countries is primary evangelization, which is our mission charism as well. Our nine parishes in Togo and four others in northern Benin lie in rapidly urbanizing zones.

Four other SVD communities in the Province consist of confreres engaged in specialized apostolates that support and enhance our pastoral ministry by way of the four SVD characteristic dimensions.

## THE SVD CHARACTERISTIC DIMENSIONS

**Mission Animation.** Mission awareness is fostered through forming lay groups in parishes known as Les Amis de la SVD (SVD Friends). A group of volunteers helps diffuse our mission calendars, biblical diaries, and other SVD publications. Presently, we are at the initial stage of forming a network of local donors.

**Biblical Apostolate.** Our parishes serve as bases for forming people for biblical pastoral ministry. They also serve as centers for diffusing bibles at affordable prices, together with related spiritual literature produced by our own publishing houses such as the Verbum Bible, Edi Verbum and CE-BILO.

**Communication.** Some confreres publish books and brochures, produce CDs/DVDs as audiovisual aids for catechesis, as well as for promoting mission awareness and popular concern for JPIC issues. Other confreres also help in reaching out to seekers of meaning through radio broadcasts and the Internet ([svdafram.org](http://svdafram.org)).

**JPIC.** District JPIC coordinators regularly gather to reflect on sociocultural problems or issues that need collective action for promoting integral justice and charity at the grassroots. A confrere is pursuing a university degree in civil law to be of more competent help to victims of injustice among the poor and marginalized. Another confrere serves as high-ranking supervisor in an African region at Jesuit Refugee Services. Together with the SSPS, we engage in popular education (1) that instills

responsible civil consciousness among the youth, and (2) that combats ignorance of the endemic HIV/AIDS as well as assistance of its victims and their families.

#### 4. Sharing Intercultural Life

*"Called by God from various nations to the SVD Family, and inspired by the Trinitarian spirituality of our saintly and blessed predecessors, we form international and intercultural communities whose members strive to support one another in creative fidelity to our religious and missionary vocation."*

– TOG Vision Statement

MEMBERSHIP	2000	2005	2012
Bishop	0	0	1
Clerics	35	38	45
Brothers (final vows)	3	3	3
Scholastics	4	8	4
TOTAL	42	49	53

AGE and COUNTRY	2000	2005	2012
Average Age	38.2	40.5	43.7
Nationalities	13	13	15*

#### \* ZONAL ORIGIN of province members

AFRAM	23	16tog, 3gha, 2ben, 1cng, 1rwa
ASPAC	17	8isa, 5ind, 2phi, 2vie
EUROPE	9	8pol, 1ger
PANAM	4	1arg, 1brz, 1mex, 1usa

**Spirituality.** The Togo Province is privileged with the full representation of the Arnoldus Family: SSps, SSpsAP and SVD. For this reason, initial steps –though slow– are taken to form a provincial Arnold Janssen Spirituality Team. Meantime we sustain spiritual fellowship among us through daily Eucharist and frequent lectio divina. We further have periodic recollections and annual retreats organized at district and diocesan levels.

**Formation.** Vocation promotion is a recent initiative in the Province. Presently the Province runs an initial formation program spanning the stages from aspirancy, through postulancy, to three-year philosophate. Ongoing formation of our confreres in final vows takes place informally through intermittent workshops and seminars of pastoral or missionary relevance.

**Leadership.** To foster teamwork among us we hold weekly or bi-monthly meetings in every community, monthly or quarterly gathering in districts, and an annual gathering of all confreres for a provincial assembly, at times preceded by our annual retreat.

**Finances.** The Province still heavily relies on the mission funding of the generalate. In view of self-reliance, therefore, the Province is still planning investments on farming projects and sustaining a fundraising campaign among local benefactors. We also strive to live a simple lifestyle in solidarity with the people whom we serve. ♦

# ZIMBABWE MISSION



(July 2011 est.)

**Population****12,084,304****Religious Profile %**

Christian	Catholics	Others
85.0	10.56	15

**Age Structure %****0-14 15-64 65**

41.9	54.3	3.8
------	------	-----

**Fertility Rate**

(babies per woman)

3.63

**Median Age**

18.3

**Life Expectancy**

49.64

**Below Poverty Line**

80%

**GDP Output %****1 2 3**

19.5	24	56.5
------	----	------

**Labor Force %****1 2 3**

66	10	24
----	----	----

1=Agriculture, 2=Industry, 3=Services

**Urban Population**

38%

**Urban Rate of Change**

3.4%

**Migrant(s) per 1000**

-24.83

**Total Literacy: 90.7%****male female**

94.2	87.2
------	------

**Youth Literacy: 93.95%****male female**

96.6	91.3
------	------

**Mass Media**

per 1000 persons

Newspaper	Radio	TV
0	93.7	30.4

**Interactive Media**

per 1000 persons

Mobile	Internet
53.7	109.7

- Official Language: **English**
- Visa: The present government easily grants temporary residence visas to missionaries –and permanent ones after five years.

## 1. Intercultural Setting

For more than ten centuries Bantu-speaking tribes migrated southwards to what is Zimbabwe today. Now more than two-thirds of its citizens speak Shona, while about one-fifth speak Ndebele. During the British colonial era European immigrants (mainly British) and their

offspring formed less than 1%. Later, however, Afrikaners from South Africa came to reinforce the white population whose mother tongue is English.

The political history of Zimbabwe since the last century coursed through the fault lines of these racial and ethno-linguistic divides. What began as promising independence from the colonial rule of a white minority has led to the present precarious ‘power-sharing’ between the long ruling party of Robert Mugabe (ZANUPF) and the opposition parties (MDC-T and MDC-M).

Because of the ongoing economic and political turmoil in Zimbabwe, almost all sectors of public service have collapsed.

The Christian churches of large membership next to the Catholic one are those of the Anglicans, Seventh-day Adventists, and Methodists.

Unemployment in the country stands at 80%, and health services are beyond the reach of ordinary people. 35% of the population suffers from HIV/AIDS.

Understandably, therefore, many in this landlocked nation have fled and sought refuge in the neighboring countries, especially in South Africa and Botswana. Human trafficking is thriving beyond the control of the presently crippled government. Men, women and children alike are kidnapped or lured with false promises. Then they are sold mainly within the country –for forced labor in farmlands, or for domestic servitude and sexual exploi-

tation in cities. Apart from these victims are about a million internally displaced persons.

## 2. Ecclesial Setting

The Christian churches of large membership next to the Catholic one are those of the Anglicans, Seventh-day Adventists, and Methodists. As in other African countries, Christianity is mixed with lingering traditional ancestral beliefs and rituals. A recent development is the mushrooming of divisive African Pentecostal churches.

Since the second half of the last century Christian mission schools have exercised much influence in the country. Most of the members of the first Cabinet of independent Zimbabwe were their graduates. Because the Catholic Church supported the nationalist movement, it has gained influential esteem in this post-independence era.

## 3. Sharing Intercultural Mission

*“Reading the signs of the time and responding to them, we strive to bear witness to the Kingdom of God and its values by promoting:*

- *Human dignity and respect to the youth and the marginalized*
- *Hope to the displaced and those infected and affected by the HIV/AIDS pandemic*
- *Unity and reconciliation to dysfunctional families and divided society on the basis of ethnic and political affiliation*
- *Openness and tolerance for other cultures and religions.”*

*–ZIM Mission Statement*

**those in final vows**

<b>IN ACTIVE MINISTRY (%)</b>	<b>2012</b>
Parish	63.7
Education	0
SVD Vocation/Formation	4.5
Administration/Support	9.0
Other Apostolates	9.0

**those in final vows**

<b>NOT IN MINISTRY (%)</b>	<b>2012</b>
Studies /Orientation	4.5
Retired/Sick	0
Other	9.3

**PLATFORMS FOR PROPHETIC DIALOGUE**

The Divine Word Missionaries started working in Zimbabwe in 1987. The contingent of confreres there formed a district of the SVD Botswana Province until its inauguration on 01 June 2008 as an autonomous mission. During the last twenty four years most of us have been serving the Bulawayo Archdiocese and the Hwange Diocese. In 2011 we assumed the administration of a new parish in the Harare Archdiocese.

In the four rural missions and three town parishes where we work, primary evangelization is our main goal. We approach it in light of a major thrust of the recent Synod of Africa: the family as 'domestic church' and basic cell of society. We find this focus of timely relevance as

marital and familial ties too easily disintegrate because of unwed parenthood and divorces. Besides, in cases where parents die prematurely because of AIDS, grandmothers or elder children often end up as breadwinners for the bereaved orphans.

**THE SVD CHARACTERISTIC DIMENSIONS**

**Mission Animation.** Our missionary presence in the local Church as an international religious congregation awakens people's awareness of the universal Church to which they belong by baptism in Jesus Christ. This is attracting many young people to become missionaries outside their own country and culture. In this spontaneous way we consider ourselves as mission animators and vocation promoters.

**Biblical Apostolate.** ILizwi Biblical Centre in Plumtree organizes many activities in the biblical apostolate with the collaboration of trained lay leaders.

**Communication.** Effective pastoral presence at the mission grassroots demands familiarity with the native cultures. And initiation into them begins with learning the local languages well. We are doing our best to grow in such intercultural and linguistic competence. Furthermore, our efforts at inculturating the Gospel in the Zimbabwean context take place in a plural religious setting. We therefore also strive to reach out in ecumenical fellowship with our Protestant brethren.



JPIC. Networking under the leadership of the Catholic Commission of Justice and Peace, we take part in the national campaign against violations of human rights, violence and corruption in the public sphere and vote-rigging during national elections. And wherever ethnic conflicts exist, we try to serve as mediators of communal pardon and reconciliation.

#### 4. Sharing Intercultural Life

*“Taking the Holy Triune God as the model of our community Life:*

- *we love and respect the people to whom we are sent by learning their language and culture;*
- *we foster community life by mutual respect and acceptance among ourselves;*
- *we deepen our spiritual lives by prayer, Bible reading and sharing, times of recollection and retreats;*
- *we work towards self-sufficiency through sharing our talents and our personal and common resources.”*

– ZIM Action Plan ad Intra

MEMBERSHIP	2012
Bishop	1
Clerics	20
Brothers (final vows)	1
Scholastics	1
TOTAL	23

#### AGE and COUNTRY

Average Age	40.5
Nationalities	10*

#### \* ZONAL ORIGIN of province members

AFRAM	5	2zim, 1gha, 1ken, 1zam,
ASPAC	11	6isa, 4ind, 1png
EUROPE	7	4pol, 2slo, 1bye

**Community.** Being a new SVD mission, our primary internal need is a central house that can offer decent shelter and fraternal welcome to our growing membership.

**Finance.** We still depend solely on the generalate for financial support, and raising local funds for our missionary needs is still at a planning stage. For a modest start, our Catholic Bookshop in Bulawayo has possibilities of generating some income as an outlet for the ILizwi Publications.

**Formation.** We look forward to the increase in the number of vocations in Zimbabwe. In view of it we have set up a formation house in Ndolwane for a pre-philosophy program.

As for ongoing formation among us, our confreres do not yet feel a strong need for it; meantime, we take part in whatever our respective dioceses can offer from time to time. ♦





# ASPAC ZONE

<b>AUS</b>	Australia, New Zealand, Thailand
<b>IDE</b>	Indonesia
<b>IDJ</b>	Indonesia
<b>IDR</b>	Indonesia
<b>IDT</b>	Indonesia
<b>INC</b>	India
<b>INE</b>	India
<b>ING</b>	India
<b>INH</b>	India
<b>INM</b>	India
<b>JPN</b>	Japan
<b>KOR</b>	South Korea
<b>PHC</b>	Philippines
<b>PHN</b>	Philippines
<b>PHS</b>	Philippines
<b>PNG</b>	Papua New Guinea
<b>SIN</b>	China (+Hong Kong & Macau) , Taiwan
<b>TLS</b>	Timor Leste
<b>VIE</b>	Vietnam



# A NEW CHAPTER IN MISSION

A Circular Letter to all Confreres in ASPAC  
After the General Visitations of 2009-2011

Dear Confreres,

In March of this year we completed the present round of visitations of the provinces and regions of the ASPAC zone. The visitations began with the provinces of Indonesia in late 2009-early 2010, and ended with the countries of East and Southeast Asia in Feb-Mar 2011. We discussed the

visitations at our “caucus” meetings in June 2011. The size and diversity of SVD presence in the zone makes it difficult to speak of commonalities or trends that would apply across the whole zone. Nevertheless, we would like to share with you some of our impressions of our life and service in the zone as a whole, and what it means to the Society, and to our mission, throughout the world.

## RELIGIOUS PROFILE

Christian %	Catholic %	Other %
63.9	27.5	36.1
55.3	12.4	44.7
0.7	0.51	99.3
12.3	3.05	87.7
98.4	88.8	1.6
2.3	1.64	97.7
2.0	0.42	98
29	10.9	71
92.5	80.9	7.5
96.4	31.9	3.6
5.0	n. a.	95
10.1	5.1	89.9
15	5.31	85
4.5	1.32	1.5
8.0	7.15	92

## COUNTRIES

Australia
New Zealand
Thailand
Indonesia
Timor Leste
India
Japan
South Korea
Philippines
Papua New Guinea
China
Hong Kong
Macau
Taiwan
Vietnam

## DEMOGRAPHIC FEATURES

POPULATION	Fertility Rate	Median Age	Life Expect.
21,766,711	1.78	37.7	81.8
4,290,347	2.08	37.0	80.6
66,720,153	1.66	34.2	73.6
245,613,043	2.25	28.2	71.3
1,066,582	3.13	22.5	67.9
1,189,172,906	2.62	26.2	66.8
126,475,664	1.2	44.8	82.2
48,754,657	1.23	38.4	79.0
101,833,938	3.19	22.9	71.6
6,187,591	3.46	21.8	66.2
1,336,718,015	1.54	35.5	74.6
7,122,508	1.07	43.4	82.0
578,025	0.92	36.2	84.4
23,224,912	1.15	37.6	78.3
90,549,390	1.91	27.8	72.1

It is hard to underestimate the impact of the Asia-Pacific zone on the world today. More than four billion people live in the Asia-Pacific region, more than 60% of the total population of the world. Although there has been significant economic growth in some areas, it is estimated that about 800 million people in the world today are chronically malnourished, and two-thirds of these are in the Asia-Pacific zone. 2.6 million people in the zone leave their home country every year in search of work. In addition, there is a massive movement within countries as well, with estimates in India alone of more than 100 million internal immigrants, and perhaps more than 150 million in China. By 2015, 16 of the world's 24 megacities, that is, cities with a population of more than

10 million, will be in the Asia-Pacific region. The region is the birthplace of all the major world religions. Although two countries, the Philippines and Timor-Leste, are majority Catholic, and two others, Australia and PNG, are majority Christian, in the region as a whole Christianity is a small minority. Although only 3% of the population of the area is Catholic, they make up almost 11% of the total number of Catholics worldwide.

We have chosen as a title for this letter "A New Chapter in Mission in ASPAC." By that we mean to indicate that the visitations have left us with the feeling that in significant parts of the zone one chapter in our history is ending, and a new one beginning. Some provinces and subzones

### LABOR FORCE

1 Agriculture	2 Industry	3 Services
3.6%	21.1%	75%
7%	19%	74%
42.4%	19.7%	37.9%
38.3%	12.8%	48.9%
90%	10%	
52%	14%	34%
3.9%	26.2%	69.8%
7.3%	24.3%	68.4%
33%	15%	52%
85%	15%	
38.1%	27.8%	34.1%
0%	4.7%	95.3%
0.1%	4.3%	95.6%
5.2%	35.9%	58.8%
53.9%	20.3%	25.8%

### COUNTRIES

Australia
New Zealand
Thailand
Indonesia
Timor Leste
India
Japan
South Korea
Philippines
Papua New Guinea
China
Hong Kong
Macau
Taiwan
Vietnam

### SOCIAL INDICES

Below Pov. Line	Urban Population	Migration Rate
n.a.	89%	6.03
n. a.	86%	2.28
9.6%	34%	0
13.33%	44%	-1.15
42%	28.6%	0
25%	30%	-0.05
15.7%	67%	0
15%	83%	0
32.9%	49%	-1.29
37%	13%	0
2.8%	47%	-0.33
n.a.	100%	4.06
n.a.	100%	3.46
n. a.	75%	0.03
10.6%	30%	-0.35

have already celebrated, or will soon celebrate, the centennial of SVD presence (SIN 1979, PNG 1996, JPN 2007, Philippines 2009, Indonesia 2013). We can look back with pride and gratitude that in some of these places, in Ende and Timor, in PNG, in the Philippines, our mission has been a success—the local church has been largely established and the local clergy has already taken over or is in the process of doing so. The provinces in Indonesia have begun to place more resources on some of the other islands in the country where the church is not yet sufficiently established, and in the Philippines and PNG we continue to move into more difficult areas. Although our mission in India is more recent (1932), in some of the traditional areas of our mission in the country the local

clergy is also taking over, and we continue to move into new areas where there is still a need to build up local Christian communities. Indeed, new mission situations can be identified throughout the zone: work with Aborigine groups in AUS, work with immigrants in KOR and JPN, a new establishment in Macau in SIN, new initiatives in Thailand, a movement into minority tribal areas in VIE, the newest region in the Society in TLS. All of these indicate a new chapter in mission in ASPAC.

In addition, this new chapter in mission is marked by the fact that ASPAC has, in a certain sense, taken up the burden for mission throughout the world. An area that in the past was seen as the “object” of mission has now become a primary source

#### MASS MEDIA per 1000

Daily	Radio	TV
141.6	1171.5	466.3
319.1	874.1	448.9
176.2	209.2	227.7
49.6	97.5	52.9
n .a.	15.3	n .a.
49.6	97.5	52.9
568.5	952.8	683.9
n .a.	974.3	326.1
66	130.9	51.8
n .a.	66.3	6.8
77.3	332	299.2
207.9	624.7	258.3
289.4	276.8	84.7
n .a.	693.5	381.4
4.97	90.6	39.4

#### COUNTRIES

Australia
New Zealand
Thailand
Indonesia
Timor Leste
India
Japan
South Korea
Philippines
Papua New Guinea
China
Hong Kong
Macau
Taiwan
Vietnam

#### LITERACY RATE %

Total	Youth
99.0	99.0
99.0	99.0
92.7	97.8
90.4	98.71
58.6	73
61.0	76.4
99.0	99.0
97.9	99.8
92.6	95
66.6	57.3
92.3	98.7
94.0	97.0
91.3	99.6
n .a.	n .a.
94	93.9

#### INTERACTIVE MEDIA per 1000

Mobile	Internet
1033.7	613.8
1212	792.5
1044	262
895.7	81.4
51	1.8
632.3	51.5
956.7	784.2
1041.2	808.1
418.7	58.2
308.5	20.2
642.6	291
1,883	684.2
1,941	467.4
1174	700
388	258.2

of missionaries. More than two-thirds of those receiving first assignments in the Society in recent years have come from the ASPAC zone. The visitations have renewed our sense of gratitude for the many missionaries from abroad who have contributed to the establishment of Christian communities throughout the zone.

We are also grateful to God that he has blessed our work in so many of the countries in ASPAC, and that he has provided us with so many vocations from the ASPAC zone. We are aware that with this blessing also comes a great responsibility on our part. We recall the words of Jesus, "From everyone to whom much has been given, much will be required" (Luke 12:48), and ask for the grace to fulfill our greater responsibilities to mission in the zone and throughout the world today. In light of this new chapter in our mission, and of the responsibilities that it entails, we would like to offer some of our reflections from the visitations, in the hope that they will enrich your own efforts to respond to the new chapter being written for mission in ASPAC today. Our reflections are organized in light of the common focus for the visitations in the zone: Our missionary life and service in light of prophetic dialogue in the ASPAC zone.

## **1. Our missionary life—His life is our life**

We are called to follow the Divine Word, to have a personal relationship with him, so that we can participate in his mission. We are acutely aware that unless his life is our life, his mission cannot be our mission.

## **1.1 Spirituality**

If we are to speak God's word in our missionary service, we need to be open to hearing that word ourselves. We need to move beyond mere traditional, routine prayers and develop habits of truly listening to and discerning that word as it is presented to us in prayer and in our apostolic service, through our encounter with the poor and marginalized, different cultures and religions. In many places in the zone we noticed that perhaps we need to renew our commitment to daily prayer, as individuals and communities, and to regular reflection on how we are experiencing God's word in our apostolic endeavors.

It is in ASPAC that we encounter many of the great religious traditions of the world. Although in a minority of provinces we work in a predominantly Christian environment, in the vast majority of the provinces and regions in ASPAC Christians are a small minority. We are called to ponder the question of God's presence in other religious traditions, and God's role for other religious traditions in the mystery of His mission, of *Missio Dei*. We contemplate the face of God as seen in these other traditions, and reflect on how they can enrich our own experience of the Divine Word.

On the other hand, we are also faced with the reality of religious intolerance and violence towards our Christian communities. We are faced with the dilemma of how to appreciate "all that is good and valuable" in these religious traditions, while rejecting the distortions that emphasize division and ethnic superiority. And we are faced

with the distortions that we have allowed to creep into our own religious tradition.

### 1.2 Community

We were impressed by the vitality and youth of our communities in general in the ASPAC zone, and the welcoming atmosphere that is so much a part of the cultures of the region. However, we also could not help but notice a growing individualism throughout the zone. For too many of us, our own work, our own projects, our own area of mission have become the focus of our lives, and our life together suffers. Community prayers and meals, meetings and celebrations, if held at all, become perfunctory and are seen as a distraction from what we really want to do. This is especially disappointing, because the traditional emphasis on family and community seen in so many of the cultures of the zone should be a real gift to the Society and to our mission throughout the world. We have been called to follow the Divine Word not as individuals, but as a “community of brothers from different nations and languages” (c. Prologue).

Our communities in many of the places where we work have become noted for their internationality, their interculturality. When people in Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, or Hong Kong, for example, think of the SVD, they think of a group of men from many different countries working together. The hope and expectation to which our intercultural witness gives rise, calls us to make greater efforts that our communities might be a true expression of

unity in diversity. We are also acutely aware that political considerations have limited our internationality, if not always our interculturality, in Indonesia, India, and Vietnam, which are some of the largest sources of growth in the Society. We need to take whatever steps we can, no matter how small, to enhance our internationality in these provinces.

### 1.3 Finances

Although many of our provinces and regions in the ASPAC zone are rich in personnel, it is no secret that many remain poor in financial resources. The global financial crisis of the past years, along with the continued aging of our traditional benefactors in Europe and North America, have served to heighten the need for financial self-reliance that we have already been aware of for many years. We can no longer finance our mission as we have done in the past, and we need to look for local donations and remuneration from our apostolates. We are reminded of the exhortation of the 16th General Chapter: “Our principal contribution to the local Church and to our partners in dialogue is ourselves” (IDW6, 73).

As part of the increased individualism noted above, there is also a noticeable increase in the number of confreres who see finances as a personal affair. Sometimes this is done for the best of reasons, to help family members in need, or to help the poor among whom they work or in other areas of personal concern and interest. However, this damages the morale of the community, and the witness of our vow of poverty. We need to recommit ourselves to the promises we made



when we first entered the Society, that everything we own or will acquire belongs not to me individually but to the community (c. 213.2), and with the community we need to work out how we can contribute to the needs of family and the poor in a realistic way. Not only our vows, but increasingly the social environments in which we work are demanding transparency, accountability, and an authentic witness to what we profess to be.

The need for well-qualified, trained confreres for the administration of temporal goods is apparent

throughout the zone, and indeed in every area where we work. In addition, all confreres should receive some training in the proper rendering of accounts.

Finally, we would like to make special mention, with gratitude, to the provinces in the zone who have made the choice to share from their surplus to the annual distribution, to help supply the needs of mission in provinces throughout the world. Their example of solidarity can be an inspiration for other provinces or local communities

IN PERPETUAL VOWS			INITIAL FORMATION			Average
BIS	CLE	BRO	CLE	BRO	NOV	Age
0	69	7	14	0	0	55.4
1	206	47	270	27	0	52.0
1	130	21	44	9	18	48.6
0	91	19	3	0	64	52.0
1	85	29	2	6	63	50.8
4	114	22	84	0	38	54.1
3	124	12	17	0	0	54.2
0	30	1	0	2	0	44.0
0	90	5	1	1	0	50.4
1	102	1	53	1	0	51.1
1	122	4	11	0	1	53.1
0	18	2	1	0	0	43.6
2	182	8	36	0	17	55.1
1	69	4	0	0	0	52.7
0	103	11	2	5	0	52.7
5	87	32	9	0	0	54.5
3	104	13	30	2	1	47.7
0	30	2	0	2	0	44.8
0	52	9	69	3	11	47.4

Nation- alities	ORIGIN BY ZONES				
	AFRAM	ASPAC	EUROPE	PANAM	
AUS	20	3	68	13	6
IDE	12	0	528	21	2
IDJ	4	0	213	10	0
IDR	6	0	168	9	0
IDT	4	0	179	5	0
INC	2	0	261	1	0
INE	1	0	156	0	0
ING	1	0	33	0	0
INH	1	0	97	0	0
INM	1	0	158	0	0
JPN	24	4	103	23	9
KOR	7	0	18	1	1
PHC	13	3	227	14	1
PHN	6	0	71	3	0
PHS	10	1	113	4	3
PNG	22	5	60	59	9
SIN	19	0	62	23	9
TLS	4	0	33	0	1
VIE	2	0	144	0	0

to share the blessings that they have received from the Lord for mission (c. 210.1).

#### 1.4 Leadership

Statistically the zone is the youngest, and so we can assume that it will also increasingly be asked to take up the ministry of leadership in the Society. Indeed, we can already see an increasing number of provincial, regional, and local leaders throughout the Society who come from the ASPAC zone. We can

be justly proud of the fact that these confreres have gained the trust of the members who have chosen them for leadership positions. Here too, however, the greater gift also implies a greater responsibility. We are called to prepare young confreres to take up the service of leadership in intercultural communities, within the zone as well as abroad.

In some provinces and regions of the zone ethnic or national background seems to play a role in how leaders are chosen. While humanly speaking

#### MINISTRY AD EXTRA %

Parish	Education	Other
32.2	6.4	12.5
21.7	10.5	4.9
45.7	3.4	19.9
25.3	25.9	8.7
20.3	23.0	11.5
24.8	15.2	25.5
37.5	20.5	15.9
50.0	14.0	5.5
29.9	22.8	19.0
15.2	7.7	34.6
30.3	26.8	3.3
10.0	5.0	55.0
28.2	11.0	13.9
30.7	23.5	14.7
20.0	30.8	12.5
40.5	10.0	22.0
36.4	12.7	5.9
41.3	34.4	10.6
35.3	1.5	15.3

#### MINISTRY AD INTRA %

Leadership	Formation
18.0	8.0
19.9	16.8
8.4	6.6
9.6	9.6
15.5	8.1
2.5	21.1
7.0	10.0
16.6	8.4
5.5	14.3
7.7	25.2
1.6	3.2
15.0	10.0
10.0	15.7
11.0	3.9
3.3	8.3
4.0	6.4
9.5	4.2
10.3	0
12.5	16.9

#### NOT IN MINISTRY %

	Studies	Retired	Other
AUS	10.4	9.3	3.2
IDE	7.5	11.5	7.2
IDJ	7.8	4.2	4.0
IDR	7.7	8.6	4.6
IDT	7.4	6.1	8.1
INC	3.2	5.7	2
INE	4.1	5.0	0
ING	5.5	0	0
INH	7.1	0	1.4
INM	7.7	1.9	0
JPN	14.6	17.0	3.2
KOR	5.0	0	0
PHC	7.0	13.0	1.2
PHN	1.9	3.9	10.4
PHS	10.8	7.5	6.8
PNG	4.0	13.1	0
SIN	18.0	5.9	7.6
TLS	0	3.4	0
VIE	12.5	6.0	0

we may conclude that this is, to a certain extent, inevitable, we should demand a higher standard from ourselves and move beyond ethnic or national considerations. Where present, this issue must be faced honestly, and greater efforts must be made to give effective witness in our communities to “the universal inclusiveness and openness to diversity” of the Kingdom of God (IDW1, 48).

In addition, in the visitation of almost all the provinces and regions in the zone, we noticed that more attention could be placed on the preparation and training of local leaders, of rectors, praeses, and district superiors. We endorse the suggestion of the 16th General Chapter (IDW6, 63) that all

provinces and regions prepare a workshop for local leaders, similar to the workshop for new provincials held in Nemi every three years, to introduce them to their service of animation, coordination, and administration in their local communities, for it is in local communities “that our religious apostolic living becomes a reality” (c. 636).

Fraternally in the Divine Word,

Antonio M. Pernia, SVD  
Superior General

Emmanuel Kofi Fianu, SVD  
Secretary General

# AUSTRALIA PROVINCE

Australia, New Zealand, Thailand



- Official Languages: THAILAND — **Thai**  
AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND — **English**
- Visa: In Australia the SVD province usually succeeds with visa applications –although it always entails a complex and prolonged process.  
In New Zealand acquiring a visa is less complex and further facilitated by the archdiocese of Wellington where confreres are at work.  
In Thailand acquiring a residence visa for missionaries is also complex, but until now possible.

(July 2011 est.)

	Population	Religious Profile %		
		Christian	Catholics	Others
Australia	21,766,711	63.9	27.5	36.1
New Zealand	4,290,347	55.3	12.4	44.7
Thailand	66,720,153	0.7	0.51	99.3

	Fertility Rate (babies per woman)	Age Structure %		
		0-14	15-64	65
Australia	1.78	18.3	67.7	14.0
New Zealand	2.08	20.4	66.4	13.3
Thailand	1.66	19.9	70.9	9.2

	Median Age	Life Expectancy	Below Poverty Line
Australia	37.7	81.81	n.a.
New Zealand	37	80.59	n.a.
Thailand	34.2	73.6	9.6%

	GDP Output %			Labor Force %		
	1	2	3	1	2	3
Australia	3.9	25.6	70.5	3.6	21.1	75
New Zealand	4.6	24.4	71	7	19	74
Thailand	12.4	44.7	43	42.4	19.7	37.9

1=Agriculture, 2=Industry, 3=Services

	Urban Population	Urban Rate of Change	Migrant(s) per 1000
Australia	89%	1.2%	6.03
New Zealand	86%	0.9%	2.28
Thailand	34%	1.8%	0

	Total Literacy %		Youth Literacy %	
	male	female	male	female
Australia	99	99	99	99
New Zealand	99	99	99	99
Thailand	94.9	90.5	98.1	97.8

	Mass Media			Interactive Media	
	per 1000 persons			per 1000 persons	
	Newspaper	Radio	TV	Mobile	Internet
<b>Australia</b>	141.6	1171.5	466.3	1033.7	613.8
<b>NZ</b>	319.1	874.1	448.9	1212	792.5
<b>Thailand</b>	176.2	209.2	227.7	1044	262

## 1. Intercultural Setting

**AUSTRALIA.** Aboriginal settlers from Southeast Asia arrived on this subcontinent about 40,000 years, long before Captain James Cook took possession of the east coast in the name of Great Britain in 1770. Australia was claimed as British territory in 1829. It was divided into six colonies that federated in 1901 into what is today the Commonwealth of Australia. After World War II, it has become an advanced and competitive economy in the world market.

Australia is often portrayed internationally as an Anglo-Celtic society. Until the mid-20th century that national image was fairly accurate. It resulted from immigration laws that preferred white and English-speaking people to enter the subcontinent, especially from Britain and Ireland. After World War II, however, major world crises had been sending waves of refugees and immigrants into the subcontinent. Partly in humanitarian response to these, the “White Australia policy” was relaxed and officially abandoned in favor of a more open policy of “multiculturalism”. Thereafter non-European immigrants also grew in number –particularly from Asia (China, Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, and the Philippines) and even the Balkans.

Today only about 2% of the Australian population consists of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people. This ethnic sector of the population has a higher birthrate than do the others, but also has a higher mortality rate and lower life expectancy. As for the greater rest of the population, almost half was estimated at the dawn of the 21st century as either foreign-born or had at least one overseas-born parent. Public debates on immigration focus mainly on cultural and economic issues and only marginally on ethnicity. If Australian society has been spared of interracial conflict (except for the complex Aboriginal issues), it is partly because the national leadership is committed to the vision that Australia is a young society with an intercultural promise of peace and progress.

**NEW ZEALAND.** The national culture of New Zealand is most closely related to Australia. In fact, the two nations cooperate closely in international policies and relations. Migrations flow to and fro between these neighboring countries, as their citizens have mutual entry rights one to another. As in Australia, the great majority is of European origin while Asian immigrants are fast growing in number.

However, the most significant minority remains the Maori, whose ancestors came to settle in New Zealand about 800 AD. Europeans arrived only much later, after Captain James Cook’s voyage in 1769. They brought diseases to which the Maori had no resistance, thus causing the rapid decline of the Maori population. Warfare among tribes and against Europeans further reduced their number. Since the 20th century, however, the Maori population has begun to increase.

**THAILAND.** Thailand is often portrayed as a culturally homogeneous country, but there are about 75 distinct ethno-linguistic groups. The dominant Thai ethnic group accounts for 36% of the population. The Thai-Lao and Lanna Tai, who together account for about 40 % of the population, were not assimilated into the national culture until the twentieth century.

Two other noteworthy ethnic groups in Thailand are the Chinese and the Malays. In the 19th century, the Chinese presence in the country already constituted about 10% of the population. Along with Westerners, the Chinese dominate the economy and have their own schools –resulting in ongoing antipathy toward them. On the other hand, the Muslim Malays, in the south of the country, began clamoring for separation since the 1960s and even formed guerrilla forces. Only in the late 1980s the political climate changed as the civilian government began showing greater deference to the Muslim religion and Malay culture.

## 2. Ecclesial Setting

**AUSTRALIA/NEW ZEALAND.** After World War II, the governments of Australia and New Zealand did their best to attract migrants from the war-torn Europe. Thus, many white migrants of Catholic background arrived. More recently there has been a significant inflow of migrants from Asia. This has made the Catholic population the largest single religious group in both nations. The Churches in both countries are self-supporting.

Catholic life in both countries has been rather conservative, with some distinctive Irish features.

The conservative stance of Church leaders and a tight rein from Rome on local practices and expressions is not generally welcome. There is, however, a well-educated laity that contributes positively in the secular more than in the ecclesial sphere. Priests are aging with little hope of this trend being reversed, since Catholic families are now averaging only two or three children.

**THAILAND.** In a predominantly Buddhist society, the minor Christian presence is well accepted. There is a small but steady flow of young people joining the religious life and the priesthood. The local church is fairly self-reliant in large cities, but struggles for survival in rural regions.

## 3. Sharing Intercultural Mission

*“Like John the Baptist, we the Divine Word Missionaries of AUS Province seek to discover the light which is already shining among the people we are working with and to give witness to it. We do this in union with Jesus, the Word made flesh (Jn 1:14) who came not to crush the smoldering wick but to make it burn brighter.*

*The Spirit of the Land of Smiles, the Land of the Long White Cloud and the Wide, Brown Land of drought and flooding rains calls us:*

- *to give witness in multicultural cities and remote communities,*
- *to collaborate with the local Church in their prophetic promotion of lay ecclesial leaders,*
- *to minister in works of justice, education and interfaith dialogue.”*

–AUS Mission Statement

**Those in final vows****IN ACTIVE MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2011**

Parish	16.7	14.8	32.2
School/Education	4.2	13.9	6.4
Other Apostolates	25.0	17.6	12.5
SVD Vocation/Formation	11.7	5.6	8.0
Administration/Support	14.2	15.7	18.0

**Those in final vows****NOT IN MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2011**

Studies / Orientation	8.3	5.6	10.4
Retired/Sick	16.7	13.9	9.3
Other	3.3	13.0	3.2

**PLATFORM FOR PROPHETIC DIALOGUE**

**Parishes.** Our confreres are involved in multi-cultural and multi-ethnic parish ministry in nine locations. Our confreres are well esteemed within the diocese of Darwin. The rapidly decreasing number of locally born priests means that many dioceses in Australia and New Zealand are amalgamating parishes and reducing ministries in which priests and religious are engaged. The majority of dioceses are now seeking the assistance of overseas-trained priests who begin their ministries with minimal preparation in matters of culture and transition. Our confreres work with other religious in devising and running programs to train such pastoral agents. We have recently begun ministry in a Brisbane parish with a divided ethnic community. Our mission with the bishop in this parish is to work on bridge-building and

reconciliation. We have multi-cultural parishes in the urban areas of Australia and New Zealand, and also remote parishes in northern and central Australia. We are engaged in schools and parishes in Udon Thani Province in Thailand among indigenous communities.

**Other Apostolates.** *The Janssen Spirituality Center* for Inter-Religious and Cross-Cultural Relations was established in 2008 in Melbourne as a joint initiative of the SVD and SSpS provinces in Australia. It is “dedicated to mutual understanding and enrichment, respect and collaboration, between the followers of various cultures and faith traditions”. We have the theological and missiological education center at Yarra, Melbourne. We work among the aboriginal people of Central Australia, urban poor and multicultural communities in Australia and New Zealand.

In Thailand, we have initiated a ministry among victims of HIV/AIDS virus in the northeast and poorest region of Thailand. Its services include HIV/AIDS education in all government schools of the region.

**THE SVD CHARACTERISTIC DIMENSIONS**

**Mission Animation.** Adult Education Programs have been developed to educate and motivate Christians and other faith community leaders to participate actively in interreligious dialog and cross-cultural activities. We are actively engaged in devising and running programs (with other missionary religious) for overseas-trained priests



and religious for ministry in the dioceses across Australia. The Wellington Archdiocese (New Zealand) is preparing lay people for senior administration roles in parish clusters in response to the declining number of local clergy. The SVD collaborates with lay pastoral leaders in these roles and promotes this ecclesial model.

**Biblical Apostolate.** A confrere serves as a full-time biblical coordinator for the province, while another confrere has a half-time role promoting the Bible in the Diocese of Darwin among the remote and indigenous communities.

**Communication.** Our Communications Office works closely with the mission secretary and is responsible for producing the quarterly magazine *Society Matters* that treats a variety of mission-related themes. An annual Mission Calendar is also produced. These publications are responsible for raising significant funds that are made available to the generalate for distribution for mission projects across the SVD world.

**JPIC.** We helped in developing a strategic pastoral plan for the diocese of Darwin for the indigenous Catholics. We are instrumental in gathering the local bishop and the provincials of religious to plan programs for the aboriginals in Central Australia. The Mother of Perpetual Help (MPH) Center in Udon Thani Diocese in Thailand is a base for ministry to individuals and families living with HIV/AIDS. An orphanage has been established at the Center and is staffed by the Missionaries of Charity. A hospice caters for the critically ill and/or dying patients. Teams of lay people move out

from MPH to rural areas attending to the needs of patients living at home. These teams are also active in HIV/Aids education programs in government schools across the local province.

#### 4. Sharing Intercultural Life

*"We give witness to our missionary charism through living in international / multicultural fraternal communities. From this experience we reach out to the poor and marginalized, to faith seekers and to people of varied faiths and cultures. We do this with a desire to discern the will of God in a spirit of prophetic dialogue."*

—AUS Vision Statement

MEMBERSHIP	2000	2005	2012
Clerics	44	44	69
Brothers (final vows)	13	10	7
Scholastics	16	14	13
Novices	2	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>89</b>

AGE and COUNTRY	2000	2005	2012
Average Age	47.1	50.7	55.4
Nationalities	23	21	19*

#### \* ZONAL ORIGIN of province members

AFRAM	1	1ang
ASPAC	69	16aus, 16isa, 15vie, 9phil, 6ind, 3chn, 2fiji, 1kor, 1nzl
EUROPE	13	4pol, 3ger, 2ita, 2ned, 1ire, 1slo
PANAM	6	4usa, 1arg, 1col

**Spirituality.** In the past, due to pastoral commitments and geographical distances, only 30% of the province used to gather at any one time for retreats

Our mission with the bishop in this parish is to work on bridge-building and reconciliation.

85% of confreres are able to take advantage of these province initiatives.

**Community.** During the previous triennium, all our communities and districts undertook workshops on interpersonal communication. These were facilitated by professionals from Centa Care, the Catholic social services provider.

**Leadership.** With few confreres in the province in the middle-aged bracket, younger confreres are given structured support in taking on important

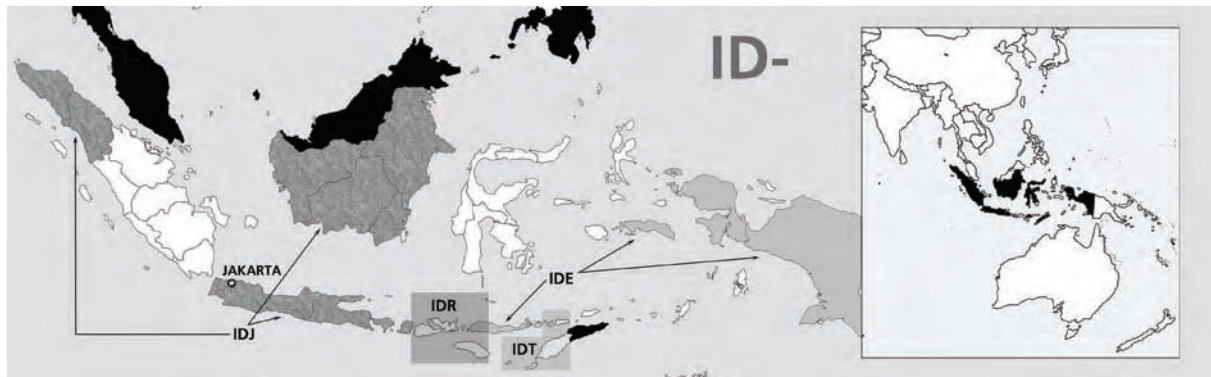
positions. Leadership courses are conducted every second year. Acculturation programs are available for new and returning SVD confreres.

**Finances.** Recently a finance council was appointed to review the assets of the province and consider their optimal usage. A legal company, whose membership consists of SVD, SSpS and lay people, manages finances collected for use by the generalate. Local leaders and their councils are offered professional assistance in the creation of district and community budgets. The province employs a professional lay person specifically to advise the provincial bursar and the council in all matters pertaining to financial management, employment relations and other legal matters.

**Formation.** Over the past 15 years, the province has made the transition to having overseas born SVD staff in our initial formation program. We include a female religious on our formation board as an observer. Ongoing formation and province retreats are offered in alternate years. ♦

# THE INDONESIAN PROVINCES

ENDE, JAVA, RUTENG, TIMOR



- Official Language: **Bahasa Indonesia**
- Visa: Indonesian immigration laws discriminate against foreign Christian missionaries applying for residence visa. The application entails a long, complex and costly process. Once granted, its validity lasts only 6 months –after which one must apply for its renewal.

## 1. Intercultural Setting

The Republic of Indonesia is the fourth most populous nation in the world and home of some 300 ethnic groups with their respective languages or dialects. Despite the fact that most of the latter are of Austronesian origins, Bahasa Indonesia –of Malay base– was declared as national language with hardly any popular resistance. Its success may be explained by two main facts: first, that it

had already been the commercial *lingua franca* in the major islands; second, that it was not associated with any dominant ethnic group or social class. In fact, it served the new republic as a strong cultural force for national unification. In 1972, to encourage social communications and cultural interchanges as neighboring nations, Indonesia and Malaysia agreed to adopt a uniform spelling of their common national language.

In the nineteenth century the Dutch formed the Netherlands Indies government that made alliances with native rulers in the archipelago. Only at the beginning of the twentieth century did the Netherlands Indies government extend its authority by military means to all of present Indonesia. After a period of Japanese occupation (1942–1945) during World War II, Indonesia declared its independence from The Netherlands in 1945; but the Dutch officially recognized Indonesian sovereignty only in 1949.

ID-

(July 2011 est.)

	Religious Profile %		
Population	Christian	Catholics	Others
245,613,043	12.3	3.05	87.7

Age Structure %			Fertility Rate
0-14	15-64	65	(babies per woman)
27.3	66.5	6.1	2.25

Median Age	Life Expectancy	Below Poverty Line
28.2	71.33	13.33%

GDP Output %			Labor Force %		
1	2	3	1	2	3
15.3	47	37.6	38.3	12.8	48.9

1=Agriculture, 2=Industry, 3=Services

Urban Population	Urban Rate of Change	Migrant(s) per 1000
44%	1.7%	-1.15

Total Literacy: 90.4%		Youth Literacy: 98.71%	
male	female	male	female
94	86.8	98.87	98.54

Mass Media per 1000 persons			Interactive Media per 1000 persons	
Newspaper	Radio	TV	Mobile	Internet
49.6	97.5	52.9	895.7	81.4

Inter-ethnic harmony in the archipelago has long been a post-independence concern. Since the founding of the new republic, the government has been intermittently waging war against separatist movements in Aceh, Sumatra, and Sulawesi. Only Timor Leste succeeded to break away and gain international recognition as an independent state in 2002.

Just as noteworthy is the sociocultural tension between the native Indonesians and the migrant Chinese. The latter constitute only 3% of the population, but are said to control as much as 60% of the nation's wealth. This explains the antipathy of native Indonesians against the Chinese –even the naturalized citizens. Periodic violence against them occurred in the past. During the colonial era, mixed marriages between Chinese men and native women produced half-castes (peranakan) –who formed their own groups with distinct dress and art forms, and even newspapers. The same was true for people of mixed Indonesian-European descent (nicknamed as *indos*).

## 2. Ecclesial Setting

Indonesia has the largest Muslim population of any country in the world: 86.1% professes Islam. Although Hinduism is the main religion in Bali and has many adherents in Lombok, Hindus account for only less than 5% of the Indonesian people. Native ancestral religions still persist in remote rural areas.

The Christian minority consists mainly of Protestants and Evangelicals. Together with the Catholics, they form social pockets dispersed throughout the country –particularly in Flores, Timor, northern Celebes, inland Kalimantan, and the Moluccas. Many urban Chinese are Christian, though some blend Buddhist or Confucian rites and symbols with their faith expression.

Among Indonesians ethnic identity and religious belonging tend to reinforce each other. Thus, for instance, many ethnic groups are exclusively Mus-

lim. And social conflicts arise when groups of one religion migrate to a region where some other religion is dominant. Political and economic power is further linked to ethnic and religious belonging as kinship and ethnic ties become informal norms for acceptance in work places, residential areas and other social benefits.

One can then understand why, in a country of Muslim majority, Catholics experience a strong sense of ecclesial unity. On the other hand, perhaps more unconsciously than consciously, parishes and dioceses tend to be inward-looking and sectarian as other religious groups.

There are, however, two promising mission trends emerging today. The first is the rise of proactive lay leadership in the Indonesian Church. As basic ecclesial communities grow roots and spread out, more and more lay people critically and creatively take part in the ministries and apostolates such as running schools, clinics, orphanages, and other charitable projects. The other trend is interfaith dialogue. The main form it takes is the “dialogue of life” by compassionate solidarity with victims of economic poverty, environmental destruction, or violation of human rights –regardless of one’s creedal or ethnic belonging. ♦

## INDONESIAN ENDE PROVINCE



The missionary service of the Ende Province is carried out in the eastern part of Indonesia where many Christians reside. More than 95% of the population in Flores and the neighboring islands (Lembata, Adonara and Solor) are Catholic. West Papua, though lightly populated, is nearly 90% Christian though only 9.8% Catholic. The Maluku Islands are approximately 45% Christian and 6.6% Catholic. This part of Indonesia lies at the margins of national politics. Thus, government attention to the social and economic needs of the people here is scarce. In this light our missionary presence is a struggle for freedom and against oppression by way of prophetic dialogue with the poor and marginalized.

### 3. Sharing Intercultural Mission

*“Open to all our dialogue partners whom we encounter in various areas of our work, we the members of SVD Ende Province resolve ... to give priority over the coming three years*

- to those who are poor and marginalized,*
- to the created world threatened by destruction*
- and to the followers of other religions.”*

–IDE Mission Statement

#### Those in final vows

##### IN ACTIVE MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Parish Apostolate	24.4	20.4	21.7
School/Education	9.6	9.4	10.5
Other Apostolates	7.4	10	4.9
SVD Vocation/Formation	18.8	12.3	16.8
Administration/Support	18.6	24.3	19.9

#### Those in final vows

##### NOT IN MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Studies / Orientation	5.4	6.4	7.5
Retired/Sick	10.3	7.9	11.5
Other	5.4	9.4	7.2

### PLATFORMS FOR PROPHETIC DIALOGUE

Parishes. Ende Province offers missionary service in seven dioceses of Eastern Indonesia: those of Ende, Maumere and Larantuka (Flores Island), Amboina (Maluku Islands), Sorong-Manokwari, and Jayapura and Merauke (West Papua). Over the years most of the SVD-run parishes in the dioceses



of Ende and Larantuka have been handed over to the care of the diocesan clergy. As we want to form intercultural parish communities, we give primary attention to mission-oriented formation of the laity.

**Family Apostolate.** Under the legal umbrella of the St. Paul Foundation for School Affairs (*Yayasan Persekolahan Santo Paulus*), we run three schools: the college of philosophy and theology in Ledalero, the Syuradikara Catholic Senior High School in Ende, and the Bina Karya Senior Technical School in Larantuka. Our schools for the youth are welcoming to non-Catholics. By offering an academic program oriented toward interfaith openness and involvement in JPIC issues, the students are educated in the hope of maturing as persons who will work for the intercultural welfare of Church and country. Thirteen confreres are currently assigned to the high school and 8 to the technical school. At the high school there is an English-language laboratory and a center for computer training. These facilities are also open for young men and women from other schools. The technical school offers a certificate course in building construction and carpentry for young men lacking formal education. At the Catholic College of Philosophy in Ledalero our students and teaching staff take part actively in dialogue with other religions and with the poor and marginalized through seminars, advocacy, and various activities to rehabilitate natural environment.

## THE SVD CHARACTERISTIC DIMENSIONS

To help animate, coordinate, and research our missionary activities, the province has formed a

number of commissions and institutes. Among these are: the Commission on Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC), the Center for the Bible Apostolate, the Secretariat for Mission Animation, the Communication Commission, the Commission for Mission Education and Research and Arnold Janssen Ongoing Formation Institute. There are also two research institutes: the Candraditya Institute for the Study of Religion and Culture in Maumere, and the Arnold Janssen Music Studio in Ledalero.

**Communication Commission.** The Province publishes the Flores Pos –a daily newspaper, and *Kunang-Kunang*, a monthly magazine for children. In addition there is the Nusa Indah Publishing House, and a series of professional journals produced by Ledalero Publications, Candraditya Publications, and the editors of the STFK Ledalero scientific journal. In Maumere we are cooperating with Radio Sonia. A provincial website has also been opened. Lack of funds results in lack of personnel with professional training in journalism and management. This then limits the quality of journalistic research and critical reporting.

**JPIC.** Of special concern in our Province are social issues involving women, farmers, refugees, victims of natural disasters and human trafficking. To respond to so many diverse challenges, we have established a number of sub-committees within the JPIC commission of the Province. Confreres play an active role through Flores Volunteers for Humanity (*Tim Relawan untuk Kemanusiaan Flores*), in close collaboration with SSps Sisters and lay activists. The staff at Candraditya



(Center for Study of Religion and Culture) and the teaching staff and our students at Ledalero also take active part in lobbying and advocacy for JPIC current issues.

#### 4. Sharing Intercultural Life

- *“Stirred by the vision of the inner dialogue of the Trinity and the divine dialogue with the whole of humanity so as to establish God’s Reign which frees and saves,*
- *inspired by the life example of Jesus Christ, the incarnate Word who was open to dialogue with everybody,*
- *stimulated by the Holy Spirit who is present and works universally to build up communion and acknowledge difference*
- *we the members of SVD Ende Province resolve to carry out prophetic dialogue in our life and work.”*

–IDE Vision Statement

MEMBERSHIP	2000	2005	2012
Bishops	1	1	1
Clerics	179	186	206
Brothers (final vows)	42	48	47
Brothers (temporal vows)	17	18	27
Scholastics	290	302	270
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>529</b>	<b>555</b>	<b>551</b>

AGE and COUNTRY	2000	2005	2012
Average Age	35.7	36.0	52.0
Nationalities	10	11	12*

#### \* ZONAL ORIGIN of province members

ASPAC	528	506isa, 21tis, 1phi
EUROPE	21	8ger, 6pol, 2esp, 1eng, 1ire, 1ned, 1oes, 1swi
PANAM	2	2usa

**Spirituality.** Symptomatic of shallow spirituality are a number of young confreres who leave soon after perpetual vows or priestly ordination, as well as the “early return” from first assignments for foreign missions. For this reason, the formators and leaders of the Province are urged to find ways of animating prayer life and apostolic zeal in and as missionary communities.

**Community.** Confreres running parishes are encouraged to live and work in teams of two or more. Furthermore, they periodically meet as districts for business, pleasure and prayer. A few, however, still prefer to go on their own despite efforts of leaders to welcome them to open fraternal dialogue. There is also a problem of “nesting” or enclosing oneself in comfortable life. As fewer and fewer confreres in our Province come from other parts of the world, we keep on trying to foster international and intercultural fraternity among us by inviting candidates for OTP program and guest professors to teach in our formation houses.

**Leadership.** In recent years the leadership of the province has been carried out in collegial team work and in a dialogical way. Province and community leaders have to dialogue not only with our confreres but also with government in response to the complexity of human and environmental

problems. The leadership of the province is also confronted with the problems of confreres who have difficulties in living out their religious vows.

**Finance.** Though some schools, retreat houses and parishes have achieved some degree of financial self-reliance, the Ende Province still depends heavily on subsidies from the Generalate. Provincial planning is on the way to progressively attain self-reliance in our finances. Meantime, confreres and communities are constantly reminded to live a simple lifestyle and dedicated work in our diverse apostolates.

**Formation.** Because the Province is blessed with a very large number of vocations, initial formation is its prime priority. It runs two formation centers: St Paul Major Seminary in Ledalero for clerical candidates, and St Konradus House in Ende for Brother candidates. The Formation and Education Commission takes charge of ongoing planning, evaluation and coordination of the both formation programs.

Adjunct to St Paul Major Seminary is the Catholic College of Philosophy and Theology (STFK) open to other religious and lay people, men and women, and even to non-Catholics. In 2002 the

STFK started offering an MA program for theology, and an English-language laboratory. Two years later the college also began a computer school.

On the other hand, St Konradus House serves as the main center for Brother formation. After a first year there, a juniorate program follows in Ende. Before the final vows, all candidates from Java, Timor, Ruteng and Ende Provinces come back to St Konradus House in preparation for perpetual vows.

The Ende Province runs two institutions to promote ongoing formation among our confreres: Arnold Janssen Ongoing Formation Institute, and Arnold Janssen Spirituality Center. In addition, the mission secretary coordinates short courses for missionaries who are newly assigned to foreign missions and for those who are on home leave. There are two problems that we face continually in our formation ministry. First, it is very difficult to find enough well-prepared formators, secondly, education is getting more costly while the financial capability of the province is still very limited. ♦

The leadership of the province is also confronted with the problems of confreres who have difficulties in living out their religious vows.

## INDONESIAN JAVA PROVINCE



### 3. Sharing Intercultural Mission

*"The liberating Word of God that lives in the hearts of all people and that inspires the whole creation inspires us to reach out in dialogue, with love and solidarity to those who travel with us in the pilgrimage toward the Kingdom of God. In this way we commit ourselves to help build a new and just civil society where faith and moral values flourish."*

–IDJ Mission Statement

#### Those in final vows

##### IN ACTIVE MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Parish Ministry	46.9	41.7	45.7
School/Education	3.9	4.9	3.4
Other Apostolates	14.0	10.4	19.9
SVD Vocation/Formation	8.9	6.6	6.6
Administration/Support	13.6	17.0	8.4

#### Those in final vows

##### NOT IN MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Studies / Orientation	3.1	5.6	7.8
Retired/Sick	5.0	4.9	4.2
Other	4.6	9.0	4.0

### PLATFORMS FOR PROPHETIC DIALOGUE

The SVD Java Province was established in 1978. Despite its recent foundation, it has spread its missionary wings over a vast area encompassing the central and western part of Indonesia.

**Parishes.** Our confreres work in 11 dioceses, both in rural and urban settings. Being at the service of the local Church, they minister in keeping with the pastoral vision and policies of their respective dioceses.

Besides parish ministry, we also have confreres working in categorical ministries such as formation for future missionaries, education, retreat, and so on. Some confreres are engaged in various commissions and schools run by the dioceses. In general, we have developed a good missionary collaboration with the bishops.

**Family Apostolate.** This special ministry creates programs to address the many problems that threaten family life. Now, we have a family center in Ledug, East-Java, to accommodate these programs. This apostolate prepares and offers programs to address the needs of the people in the parish and other categorical groups. Through these programs, we try to reach out not just to Catholics but also to couples of other faiths.

## THE SVD CHARACTERISTIC DIMENSIONS

To promote prophetic dialogue in a systematic way, the Province has established 4 commissions:

**The Mission Animation Commission** is assigned:

- ad intra – to inspire our SVD confreres and friends (Soverdia) to live out the spirit of prophetic dialogue;
- ad extra – to spread the spirit of prophetic dialogue to people outside our communities, for instance by organizing retreat for students, teachers, nurses, etc.

**The Biblical Apostolate Commission** offers various programs, such as bible study, bible sharing and retreat, for children, students, lay leaders, and other groups of people. Through these programs, the commission seeks to instill the values of the Kingdom and invite people to share with us the commitment of prophetic dialogue.

**The Communication Commission** promotes prophetic dialogue through its various programs,

such as publishing its one-year-long biblical reflection book entitled *Berjalan Bersama Sang Sabda* (Walking with the Word) and Berita IDJ (IDJ news), organizing seminars, and setting up a music ministry.

The JPIC Commission has set up a wide social network enabling them to organize workshops and trainings for JPIC promoters, human-rights advocacies, tree-planting and other green movements, post-disaster assistance programs, and many other activities to promote justice, peace and integrity of creation.

## 4. Sharing Intercultural Life

*“The Word of God that comes from love of the Holy Trinity, that fosters genuine brotherhood, inspires us ... to give witness –by our lifestyle as SVD religious missionaries– to loving and serving communion*

- *inclusive of peoples of other creeds and cultures,*
- *based on the Truth, Justice and Peace of God’s Reign.”*

–IDJ Vision Statement

MEMBERSHIP	2000	2005	2012
Bishops	1	1	1
Clerics	108	123	145
Brothers (final vows)	18	20	21
Brothers (temporal vows)	15	14	9
Scholastics	59	47	44
Novices	26	22	18
TOTAL	227	227	238

**AGE and COUNTRY 2000 2005 2012**

Average Age	37.6	39.6	48.64
Nationalities	6	4	4*

**\* ZONAL ORIGIN of province members**

ASPAC	228	227 isa, 1 tls
EUROPE	10	7ger, 3pol

**Spirituality and Community.** The 2009 Provincial Chapter stressed that professing love for Christ and living with communal divisions undermined our credibility as heralds of the Gospel. The pluri-ethnic origin of our confreres is often a source of interpersonal tension and misunderstanding in our communities. On the one hand, if owned as a gift of the Spirit, it leads to enriching intercultural brotherhood within our communities.

**Finance.** In dioceses where confreres serve as parish priests, the Province is persuading bishops to formalize mutual duties and rights by way of legal contract. Integral to it is providing financial recompense equal to what they grant to the diocesan clergy. Some bishops, however, remain unwilling to do so. For this reason, the Province still has to provide financial support to its districts – except for those of Jakarta, Surabaya and Bali-Lombok. Though parishes outside Java gain low income, they are encouraged to search for modest steps to-

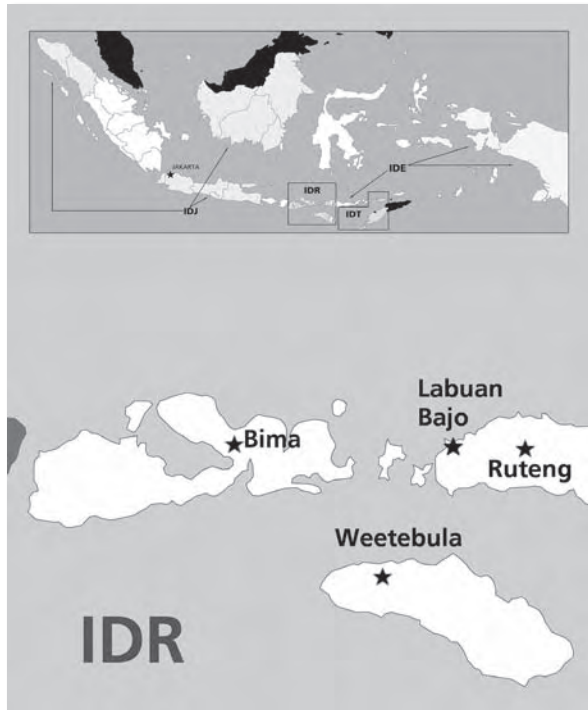
ward financial self-reliance. The future is not bleak because these areas do have economic potential for agriculture, mining, industry and tourism.

We understand that fostering solidarity among confreres, communities and districts is crucial for our struggle toward achieving financial self-reliance. We expect all confreres to be productive and generous to the society by giving their best. We need also to develop the habit of giving honest financial reports. We are blessed to have capable and trustworthy confreres to take care of our financial treasury. Having a trusted financial system is crucial to keep up the spirit of solidarity.

**Initial Formation.** Initial formation in the Province ranges from postulancy, through novitiate till scholasticate. It is designed to address seven major dimensions: psycho-spiritual, psycho-emotional, consecrated life through vows, community life, academics, pastoral-missionary, and physical-mental health. We are fortunate to have candidates come from different cultural settings. Special stress is given to intercultural living and learning.

Able and willing confreres are sent for further studies in disciplines useful for the diverse ministries in the Province. Extensive renewal courses abroad (e.g., Nemi) offers veteran members the challenging yet opportune experience of SVD internationality and interculturality. ♦

## INDONESIAN RUTENG PROVINCE



### 3. Sharing Intercultural Mission

*“Guided by the Holy Spirit as followers of the Divine Word, we live out our intercultural witness to the values of the Kingdom of God in the challenging situations of poverty, injustice, and divisions...”*

*By journeying with the poor, the youth, the victims of the injustice, and faith seekers, we grow in our identity and mission.”*

#### Those in final vows

##### IN ACTIVE MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Parish Ministry	37.5	38.7	25.3
School/Education	17.9	15.2	25.9
Other Apostolates	10.3	10.3	8.7
SVD Vocation/Formation	4.9	6.9	9.6
Administration/Support	14.7	16.2	9.6

#### Those in final vows

##### NOT IN MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Studies/Orientation	3.2	3.9	7.7
Retired/Sick	4.9	3.9	8.6
Other	6.5	4.9	4.6

### PLATFORMS FOR PROPHETIC DIALOGUE

SVD Missionaries of the Ruteng province work on the islands of Sumba, Sumbawa, and Manggarai in the western part of the Flores Island. We are present in the dioceses of Ruteng, Denpasar, and Weetebula. Our missionary service to the local churches consists of working in parishes, schools and specialized apostolates.

**Parishes.** The number of confreres working in parishes is declining. In the last 5 years the percentage of personnel dropped from 38.7% in 2005 to 25% . It is because of the new paradigm of mission, new mission statement of the Province. And also the situation of the local churches is changing a lot. Vocation for Diocesan Priest is increasing in



a significant way in the three local churches where we serve.

Only in Ruteng Diocese that we have five (5) parishes so called “SVD Parishes”. In these places we

have much more opportunities for promoting our characteristic dimensions, our community living, our SVD personnel. Except students at local schools and local boarding houses (in the context of Province as a whole), our SVD Parish Priests have elaborated their own Mission Statement. They dedicate themselves for the sake of families in serious crisis and value clarification of a catholic family.

SVD-SSpS Mission Partnership. One noteworthy feature of our approach to missionary work in the province is sustained collaboration with our SSpS Sisters

- in promoting JPIC issues,
- in joint vocation campaign and some programs during initial formation,
- in the education apostolate,
- and in nurturing and sustaining our missionary calling with the help of an interprovincial AJS (Arnold Janssen Spirituality) team.

We still look forward to extend our missionary partnership in parish-based ministries.

## THE SVD CHARACTERISTIC DIMENSIONS

**Mission Animation.** Our mission secretary promotes mission awareness among the laity and in

the local Church with the help of our SVD Mission Partners Group (*Persaudaraan Misioner Sang Sabda* / PMSS). The first PMSS group was formed in Ruteng in 1990, and the second in 2007 in Pota, north-east Manggarai. The groups feel a call to strengthen each basic ecclesial community in the parish and to engage in fruitful ‘dialogue of life’ with neighbors who profess other faiths or belong to other churches. The groups have their weekly ministry among students at schools.

**Biblical Apostolate.** Loving the Word of God and following the Word are the animation themes of our Bible apostolate. The main animator of this apostolate is our Bible Commission which consists of six confreres. In collaboration with the local leadership team, the commission implements its yearly program for parishes, students, children, and families. The Commission networks with delegates of all dioceses in Nusa Tenggara, with the Indonesia Biblical Institution, and with ASPAC Biblical Coordinators.

**Communication.** We run our own FM Radio station named Radio LUMEN 2003. It is the only Radio station in the region operating legally. The main listeners to which LUMEN tailors and directs its diverse broadcasts are parents, youth and children. It engages pastoral agents, politicians, and business people in dialogue.

**JPIC.** A confrere competent as civil lawyer serves as provincial coordinator of the province’s JPIC apostolates. These apostolates involve mainly the rural poor and try to reach out to all regardless of creedal or ethnic belonging. In empowering



the people to claim or defend their human rights, confreres maintain dialogue with the local government. These apostolates cover diverse issues such as protecting the environment from destructive mining, forming credit unions, and mediating to reconcile conflicting tribes.

#### 4. Sharing Intercultural Life

*“United with the Incarnate Word of the Father, and rooted in the communion with the Triune God, we dedicate ourselves to support and animate one another as builders of loving communities open to all peoples from every nation, tribe, and language.”*

–IDR Vision Statement

MEMBERSHIP	2000	2005	2012
Clerics	75	86	91
Brothers (final vows)	10	13	19
Scholastics	3	3	3
Novices	106	95	64
TOTAL	203	203	177

AGE and COUNTRY	2000	2005	2012
Average Age	34.0	36.1	52.0
Nationalities	6	6	8*

#### \* ZONAL ORIGIN of province members

ASPAC	166	165isa, 1tls
EUROPE	10	4pol, 3ger, 1hun, 1ned, 1swi
PANAM	1	1usa

**Community.** Because our communities in the province are multicultural, we promote ongoing formation that fosters maturation in interpersonal and intercultural competence. It is, of course, the transition from theoretical learning to communal living that remains a daily challenge.

**Leadership.** Regular yearly meetings of the four provincials of the SVD Indonesian provinces help us to develop common approaches to programs, policy and personnel questions. We are in the process of elaborating the statutes for the Indonesian Sub-Zone, which includes the new region of Timor Leste.

**Finance.** We are grateful to the other member provinces that show their financial solidarity with us –in particular, to the SVD provinces in Germany, Netherlands, Slovakia, Poland, China, Australia, Spain, Switzerland and the USA.

**Formation.** We have a novitiate founded in 1993 at Kuwu. It welcomes and houses an average of 40 clerical and brother candidates yearly.

We remind each confrere of his responsibility for his own ongoing formation. To support personal efforts, we also provide periodic programs at the provincial level for growing in pastoral skills and theological update. An orientation program for new missionaries is regularly offered. Furthermore, the director of Brother formation organizes formative sessions in which Brothers and clerics take part as confreres. ♦

## INDONESIAN TIMOR PROVINCE



### 3. Sharing Intercultural Mission

*"We commit ourselves to help people be more rooted in the Word of God and thereby animate them to create human conditions where everyone values the dignity of the poor and the marginalized, protects the rights of the oppressed and promotes peace and the common good so we can experience communion among people and with God."*

*Our mission focuses on dialogue*

- with indigenous people,
- with Muslims
- with members of other Christian churches
- with street children
- with migrant workers and refugees."

*–IDT Mission Statement*

### Those in final vows

#### IN ACTIVE MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Parish Ministry	32.1	22.1	20.3
School/Education	22.1	21	23.0
Other Apostolates	17.5	11.1	11.5
SVD Vocation/Formation	4.2	4.6	8.1
Administration/Support	10.0	23.3	15.5

### Those in final vows

#### NOT IN MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Studies / Orientation	9.2	7.2	7.4
Retired/Sick	0.8	4.6	6.1
Other	4.2	6.1	8.1

### PLATFORMS FOR PROPHETIC DIALOGUE

With the viable and solid growth of the local churches in Timor, and the fact that most of the parishes are being administered by diocesan priests now, it is time that we re-think and formulate again our SVD mission in this territory. Given the changing ecclesial and social situation in Timor, we think that our option for preferential mission partners with indigenous people, Muslims, members of other Christian Churches, street children and migrant workers and refugees should be re-evaluated and re-defined in order to respond better and more accurately to the present missionary situation in the province.

**Parishes.** Our confreres do pastoral care based on the policy and guidelines of a particular diocese. They try to insert the spirit of SVD cha-

racteristic dimensions in various parochial programmes and activities in line with the policies of the local church. They work together with the diocesan priests in the respective parishes entrusted to them. Our presence and pastoral services at the parishes are well appreciated by the bishops, diocesan priests and the faithful. The lives and witnessing of our confreres at many parishes still bring us closer to the local people and attract young men to become missionaries of the Divine Word.

**Education Apostolate.** Besides primary and secondary schools, the province further runs Widya Mandira Catholic University. It is owned corporately by the four SVD Indonesian provinces and the bishops of Nusa-Tenggara. It has seven faculties and more than 4500 students. At present there are 16 confreres working in the university as managers, lecturers, administrator, and campus ministers.

The province also owns and runs St. Joseph Technical High School of Nenuk, founded in 1970. Since then it has produced 1,875 graduates – many of whom are now working as professional men and women, and even some as SVD Brothers.

**Other Apostolates.** Three confreres are engaged as formators at archdiocesan minor seminaries – one in Kupang, and two in Atambua. Their presence and service there attract some vocations to our Society.

Other confreres based in parishes especially work among the youth. The one who heads the youth

ministry in the diocese of Atambua offers retreats and promotes the formation of biblical reflection groups for the spiritual guidance of young people.

## THE SVD CHARACTERISTIC DIMENSIONS

**Mission Animation.** Our confreres in parishes maintain the devotional prayers of the Society and actively involve the parishioners in the celebrations of the feasts of Sts. Arnold Janssen and Josef Freinademetz. They also visit family and basic ecclesial communities regularly.

**Biblical Apostolate.** In the past 6 years, there have been special efforts to promote the Word of God, though its results are not significant yet. Biblical apostolate commission of the province has offered basic Biblical courses in parishes, and it promotes Bible reading in families and basic ecclesial communities. Our bookstores in Nenuk, Noemeto and Kupang are still providing people with the Bible and other spiritual nourishment related books. Our engagement in Bible apostolate however is not fully effective, yet some bishops have expressed their desire that the SVDs give more contribution in this ministry. So far we don't have yet a confrere who has expertise in Biblical studies and Exegesis. However, we have one center in Noemeto which is intended for special ministry including Bible apostolate.

In the past 6 years, there have been special efforts to promote the Word of God, though its results are not significant yet.

**Communication.** The SVD-owned radio station *Verbum Tirilolok* in Kupang is the only Catholic radio station in the city. It daily broadcasts biblical reflections, prayers, Sunday Masses and current news. Furthermore, since 2008, some confreres have been producing the Sunday missal leaflets widely circulated in the dioceses of Kupang and Atambua.

**JPIC.** Four centers (in Nenuk, Lebur, Oenopu and Maliana) have been established to train rural youth in trades as carpentry, agriculture, and handicraft. To further promote employment among the poor, some confreres help people in setting up small home industries. Our JPIC team is into promoting concern and defense for human rights in many parishes within its reach.

#### 4. Sharing Intercultural Life

*"We, Divine Word Missionaries of the Timor Province, in union with the Most Holy Triune God, rooted in the local cultures, live the values of God's Kingdom in the Spirit of Prophetic Dialogue."*

–IDT Vision Statement

MEMBERSHIP	2000	2005	2012
Bishops	1	1	1
Clerics	98	104	85
Brothers (final vows)	20	26	29
Brothers (temporal vows)	19	11	6
Scholastics	3	7	2
Novices	96	89	63
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>186</b>

#### AGE and COUNTRY

	2000	2005	2012
Average Age	35.8	37.5	50.8
Nationalities	9	9	5*

#### \* ZONAL ORIGIN of province members

ASPAC	180	171isa, 8tls, 1mal
EUROPE	6	4ger, 2oes

**Spirituality.** Individually and communally our confreres are aware of the need to nurture prayer life. Thus, all our houses offer a schedule for daily masses and common prayers. Some communities have regular Bible sharing. As a province, we also gather for periodic recollections and retreats.

**Community.** Most of our confreres –among whom intercultural ties are relatively fraternal– hail from Timor and Flores. But because laws in the country narrowly restrict the influx of foreign missionaries, the province's membership has little experience of international fellowship. As a consequence, it also limits our challenges and opportunities for further transcending the ethnic tensions and insular outlook among us.

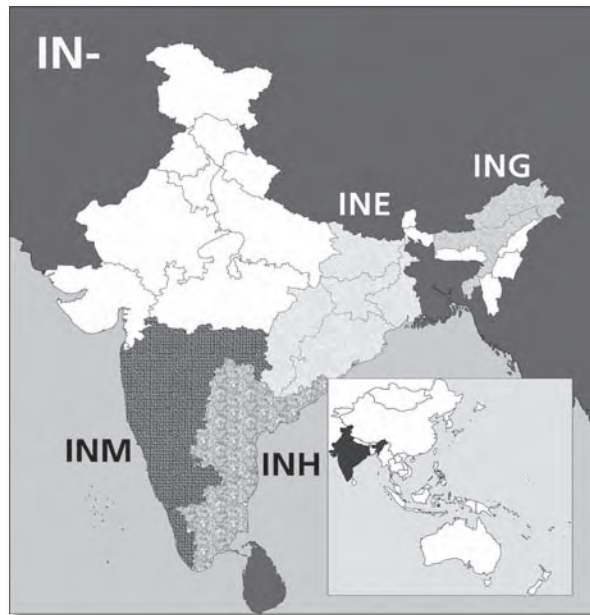
**Leadership.** At provincial and local levels ways are tried to animate participative leadership among confreres –through regular meetings, personal talks and correspondences. The challenge to achieve this is to break out from own narrow cultural viewpoints and to treat each other equally and compassionately.

**Finance.** Our communities still depend much on subsidies from the generalate. In our present efforts at achieving self-reliance, confreres are becoming more and more conscientious in living simply and in keeping with their limited resources. All are encouraged to submit what they earn to their respective communal funds.

**Initial Formation.** In Nenuk seven confreres of the province run the common novitiate for candidates hailing from Flores, Timor-Indonesia and Timor-Leste. Since 2007 brother candidates in temporary vows have been living together at the Biara Bruder Gregorius Kupang while going for studies at differing universities in the city. ♦



# THE INDIAN PROVINCES



- Official Languages: Each Indian state has its own official language. English serves as the subsidiary official language nationwide. Hindi is the most widely spoken language and primary tongue of 41% of the people.
- Visa: For those going to India for religious purposes a single entry visa can be granted –but valid only for 6 months. Applying for a missionary visa may take up to 3 months. Once granted, its validity of just 6 months begins on its day of issue.

(July 2011 est.)

Population	Religious Profile %		
	Christian	Catholics	Others
1,189,172,906	2.3	1.64	97.7

Age Structure %			Fertility Rate
0-14	15-64	65	(babies per woman)
29.7	64.9	5.5	2.62

Median Age	Life Expectancy	Below Poverty Line
26.2	66.8	25%

GDP Output %			Labor Force %		
1	2	3	1	2	3
18.5	26.3	55.2	52	14	34

1=Agriculture, 2=Industry, 3=Services

Urban Population	Urban Rate of Change	Migrant(s) per 1000
30%	2.4%	-0.05

Total Literacy: 61%		Youth Literacy: 76.4%	
male	female	male	female
74.4	47.8	84.19	67.75

Mass Media per 1000 persons			Interactive Media per 1000 persons	
Newspaper	Radio	TV	Mobile	Internet
49.6	97.5	52.9	632.3	51.5

## 1. Intercultural Setting

India is a vast country that is home to thousands of small ethnic and tribal groups, to innumerable castes and tribes, as well as to more than a dozen major and hundreds of minor linguistic groups from several language families unrelated to one another. The castes and subcastes in each region



relate to each other within a hierarchy -with each caste having its own name, traditional occupation, rank, and distinctive subculture. Agrarian tribes usually do not have a caste hierarchy but often have their own internal hierarchical organization. To the contrary, the pastoral and foraging tribes tend to be egalitarian in their internal organization.

The multicultural character of Indian society traces its roots back to the Indus Valley whose ancient culture spread into northwestern India and flourished during the third and second millennia before the Christian era. Aryan tribes from the northwest crept into the subcontinent about 1500 B.C. Their merger with the earlier Dravidian inha-

Because Indians are culturally spiritual, much of India's history can be understood through the interplay among its diverse religious groups.

bitants created the classical Indian culture that reached its 'golden age' under the long rule of the Gupta dynasty from 4th to 6th centuries A.D. Throughout the centuries since then, a rich intellectual life in such fields as mathematics, astronomy, and architecture began to flourish.

Since the 10th century Islam began spreading across the subcontinent over a period of 700 years. By the 13th century much of the subcontinent was under Muslim rule, and the number of Muslims steadily increased. Only the establishment of European maritime supremacy in South Asia - marked by the arrival of the Portuguese navigator Vasco da Gama in 1498- eventually exposed India to major external influences arriving by sea. Since

then, Muslim rule declined as the subcontinent became progressively part of the British Empire.

Nonviolent resistance to British rule, led by Mohandas Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru, eventually brought about independence in 1947. Social violence led to the subcontinent's bloody partition, which resulted in the creation of two separate states-India and Pakistan. The two countries continued warring against each other, until in 1971 East Pakistan became the separate nation of Bangladesh.

Despite intermittent ethnic conflicts and religious wars, social peace somehow reigns in most parts of the country-thanks to an inter-caste and inter-tribal economy that well manages supply and demand of daily vital goods at the grassroots. Also, despite widespread poverty, corruption in public life, overpopulation and environmental destruction, India has been rapidly rising on the world economic stage. More than half of the work force is still at work in agriculture, but services are now the major source of economic growth - accounting for more than half of India's output, with only one-third of its labor force. Though the population remains largely rural, India has three of the most populous cities in the world: Mumbai, Kolkata, and Delhi. Three other Indian cities - Bangalore, Chennai, and Hyderabad- are among the world's fastest growing centers of advanced information technology.

## 2. Ecclesial Setting

Because Indians are culturally spiritual, much of India's history can be understood through the interplay among its diverse religious groups. One

of the many religions born in India is Hinduism, a collection of diverse doctrines, sects, and ways of life followed by the great majority. Other religions –notably Buddhism and Jainism– began in India, though their presence there is now quite small. Buddhists living near the Chinese border generally follow Tibetan Buddhism, while those living near the border with Myanmar adhere to the Theravada ("Way of the Elders").

In 1947, with the partition of the subcontinent and loss of Pakistan's largely Muslim population, India became even more predominantly Hindu. The concomitant emigration of perhaps 10 million Muslims to Pakistan and the immigration of nearly as many Hindus and Sikhs from Pakistan further emphasized this change. Hindus now make up about three-fourths of India's population.

Muslims, however, are still the largest single minority faith (more than one-ninth of the total population), with large concentrations in many areas of the country, including Jammu and Kashmir, western Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Kerala, and many cities. India's Muslim population is greater than that found in any country of the Middle East and is only exceeded by that of Indonesia and, slightly, by that of Pakistan or Bangladesh. Sunni Muslims are the majority sect almost everywhere.

Other important religious minorities in India include Sikhs (mostly in Punjab and some adjacent areas), Buddhists (mainly in Maharashtra, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, and Jammu and Kashmir), and Jains (prominent in Maharashtra, Gujarat, and Rajasthan). Those practicing the Bahai faith,

formerly too few to be treated by the census, have dramatically increased in number as a result of active proselytization. Zoroastrians (the Parsis), largely concentrated in Mumbai and in coastal Gujarat, wield influence out of all proportion to their small numbers because of their prominence during the colonial period. India's tribal peoples live mostly in the northeast; they practice various forms of animism, which is perhaps the country's oldest religious tradition.

Tradition holds that in 52 A.D. St Thomas the Apostle came to introduce Christianity in India. Yet Christians remain a minority concentrated in the northeast, Mumbai, and the far south. Converts to Christianity, especially since the mid- 19th century, have come largely from the lower castes and tribal groups.

Roman Catholics form the largest single Christian group, especially on the western coast and in southern India. The Catholic Church in India is a communion of Churches of three rites. Two of these rites, with roots in Kerala State, are believed to have descended from the original St Thomas Christians. They constitute nearly 25% of the Indian Church. In

1653 the St Thomas Christians resisted the imposition of Latin Rite bishops appointed by the Portuguese crown. The unity of the ancient church in India was broken as some sought bishops in Syria. Those who remained in union with Rome became

The Church is still heavily associated with the past colonial powers and projects an image of being Western.

known as the Syro-Malabar Rite. The struggle for bishops of their own rite continued until 1896 when indigenous vicars apostolic were appointed. Those who broke away from European domination of their church came into contact with the Jacobite Patriarch and eventually became Jacobites. A part of this community was eventually reunited to the Catholic communion in 1930. They were recognized as the Syro-Malankara Rite.

The Latin Rite Church in India traces its origin to Western missionaries who first arrived in the 13th century. The Latin rite took firm root in the 16th century with the arrival of St. Francis Xavier in 1542. From the middle of the 19th century, with the help of Propaganda Fide, missionary outreach flourished among the Tribals and Dalits resulting in mass conversions. Two thirds of all Indian Christians belong to these poor and marginalized communities.

The Church is still heavily associated with the past colonial powers and projects an image of being Western. A few years after independence, the Indian government made it a policy to make

the entry of foreign missionaries more and more difficult. Hence the recruitment of indigenous vocations was taken seriously. This has borne good results. There is a steady growth of vocations in all the major congregations of India, both men and women. Today, many Indian missionaries are already at work in foreign countries. The SVDs alone have sent out around 190 missionaries, who are working in more than 25 countries.

The majority of Indians appreciate the various services the Church offers in the fields of education, medical service, and developmental activities, especially among the poor, the Dalits and the tribal people. But in spite of these works of social charity among the people, militant Hindu fundamentalism has emerged in recent years to impede and oppose such church activities. Any work done among the Tribals and Dalits is looked upon as suspect. Fundamentalist Hindu ideology has been arousing hatred toward minorities who convert, attacks on Christian institutions and properties, the murder of Church members and leaders, and the discrimination against Christians in assuming public offices. ♦

## INDIAN CENTRAL PROVINCE



In 1932 the SVD began work in Central India, where several missionary congregations had previously been working. In 1936 the SVD Indore Region was officially established. At that time the mission territory entrusted to the SVD had a population of nearly 5.5 million. The Catholics were a little over 10,000. At present, the members of the province work in four states: Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Rajasthan, and Delhi, whose combined population is close to 175 million inhabitants.

### 3. Sharing Intercultural Mission

*"We share God's love in our multi-cultural and multi-religious scenario through dialogue of life and action with all people, and become builders of peace and universal harmony.*

*We strive to involve all sections of people in planning, decision-making and implementation of projects and promotion of apostolates to make the poor and the marginalised communities, such as Tribals and Dalits, to be self-reliant, self-affirming and peace-loving."*

—INC Mission Statement

#### Those in final vows

##### IN ACTIVE MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Parish Apostolate	34.2	24.2	24.8
School/Education	3.6	10.0	15.2
SVD Vocation/Formation	12.2	6.7	21.1
Administration/Support	18.1	12.7	2.5
Other Apostolates	18.4	31.2	25.5

#### Those in final vows

##### NOT IN MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Studies / Orientation	8.2	3.7	3.2
Retired/Sick	4.6	10.4	5.7
Other	0.7	0.8	2

### PLATFORMS FOR PROPHETIC DIALOGUE

**Parishes.** The greater majority of our confreres are engaged in parish ministry. More recently we have assumed rural missions in Ambadochar in

Khandwa and Ogha in Udaipur dioceses. Both in SVD parishes or diocesan parishes, where we are, we try to imprint our SVD identity by following the fourfold prophetic dialogue and our characteristic dimensions.

**Schools.** The educational apostolate in the Province came rather late. Since 1974 we have raised 7 schools. All of them use either the local language or English as medium of instruction. Through this apostolate we are directly in touch with several thousands of children and their parents –variedly differing in ethnic identities and belonging mostly to non-Christian religions.

**Spirituality Centers.** Masih Vidhya Bhavan in Indore and Maitri Sadan in Udaipur are centers directly engaged in inter-religious activities. Two other centers –Snehalay in Indore and Pachmarhi in Bhopal– welcome lay people, religious and priests for spiritual guidance and counseling.

## THE SVD CHARACTERISTIC DIMENSIONS

**Mission Animation.** Periodic workshops and seminars are organized to offer confreres and their pastoral collaborators ongoing formation. Word India, the national mission magazine, continues to serve as a channel for promoting mission awareness among the laity and the local churches.

**Biblical Apostolate.** Situated in Bhopal, Biblical center Divya Vani promotes many Bible-related activities. Two confreres offer biblical courses

to apostolate groups and formation houses. This center has produced audio recordings of the New Testament and some parts of the Old Testament.

**Communication.** Among the provinces and region in India, INC has the highest number of centers and confreres engaged in communication ministry. Many confreres are at the service of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India for public relations and media activities.

- *Sat Prachar Press* in Indore is one of the oldest printing presses in the city.
- *Word Among Us* magazine helps the Word of God spread all over the country.
- *Pradeepti*, *Maitri Sadan* and *Sat Prakashan Sanchar Kendra* are centers for audio and video productions. The third one will soon release a film entitled *Khristaayan*.

**JPIC.** Along with the diocesan pastoral plans, our confreres undertake many socio-developmental activities in the Province. Some confreres are active in urban ministries, especially among rural migrants. The Jan Vikas Center in Indore and the Samman Center in Bhopal are working with the slum dwellers, street children and rag pickers. Some confreres trained in social work animate and coordinate JPIC activities in the Province.

## 4. Sharing Intercultural Life

*"Sharing God's Love with all in Dialogue towards Harmony."*

—INC Vision Statement

MEMBERSHIP	2000	2005	2012
Bishops	2	3	4
Clerics	121	110	114
Brothers (final vows)	24	21	22
Brothers (temporal vows)	4	2	0
Scholastics	23	67	84
Novices	32	27	38
TOTAL	206	230	262

AGE and COUNTRY	2000	2005	2012
Average Age	41.8	40.8	54.1
Nationalities	5	3	2*

**\* ZONAL ORIGIN of province members**

ASPAC	261	261ind
EUROPE	1	1oes

Noteworthy in the Province is the large number of Brothers. Our Brother candidates go through initial formation in Indore. Our Brothers work mainly in the press, formation houses and in the school apostolate. Most of our Brothers are render professional services in keeping with their diversified technical training.

**Spirituality.** Confreres come together for common prayer and meditation. Recollections are organized from local (house and district) to provincial levels. Bible sharing is frequently held and in our communities.

**Community.** Our community life is enhanced with spiritual activities such as morning and eve-

ning prayers together, Bible reading, adoration of the Eucharist, etc. We come together to share our ministries and organize community meetings once a month. We promote a fraternal, sharing and caring community. We are a multicultural brotherhood comprising of various cultures, languages etc. From time to time, we organize sessions of ongoing formation to learn how to appreciate one another's culture and to live harmoniously.

**Leadership.** Leaders are encouraged to be animators and coordinators, rather than mere administrators. There are regular community meetings held by the head of each institution or community in the Province. Minutes of meetings are kept and reviewed regularly. Leadership courses are conducted once a year at a provincial level.

**Finance.** We profess to adapt a simple life style and spend money responsibly. Accounts are maintained well and reports submitted quarterly to the provincial's office. Confreres contribute their salaries and other forms of income to the community. Attempts are made to tap local resources towards self-sufficiency and for our ministries and projects.

**Formation.** There are several formation houses in the Province: initial formation, juniorate, novitiate, philosophy and theology. There are 3 diocesan seminaries under our administration in the province. In our formation houses, along with the academic training, we provide opportunities to our students to come in contact with the poor, the marginalized. They are encouraged to live simply in accordance with the living situations of the people around them. ♦



## INDIAN EAST PROVINCE



The SVD began working in the eastern part of India in 1948. The Sambalpur Mission, as it was known at that time, covered about one third of the state of Orissa. The SVD pioneers, headed by Fr. Stanislaus Wald, were all trained first in Indore, in central India. The SVD mission in Orissa was separated from Indore and was made a region in 1954. The SVD superiors set up their headquarters at Jharsuguda. By 1978 the operations here had matured sufficiently that we became a province.

The people in this region fields are multicultural, multi-racial, multi-linguistic and multi-religious. Because the poorest and most marginalized are the Tribals and Dalits, the INE Province makes a preferential missionary option for them.

### 3. Sharing Intercultural Mission

*“As followers of the Divine Word, we live a life of prophetic dialogue with*

- *the poor and the marginalized,*
- *followers of other faiths,*
- *people of other cultures,*
- *those without confessional belonging.”*

*–INE Mission Statement*

#### Those in final vows

##### IN ACTIVE MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Parish Ministry	40.8	36.7	37.5
School/Education	19.5	16.7	20.5
SVD Vocation/Formation	8.5	8.3	10.0
Administration/Support	7.0	9.8	7.0
Other Apostolates	19.1	22.0	15.9

#### Those in final vows

##### NOT IN MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Studies / Orientation	2.9	4.9	4.1
Retired/Sick	1.5	0.8	5.0
Other	0.7	0.8	0

### PLATFORMS FOR PROPHETIC DIALOGUE

**Parishes.** Pastoral ministry in the Province extends to 9 parishes in Rourkela diocese, 10 in



Sambalpur diocese, 3 in Cuttack-Bhubaneswar Archdiocese and 2 in Kolkata. The Catholics in Orissa constitute a tiny 0.87% of the state's population. Consequently, it has to assert itself in the face of the hostility from some religious fundamentalists. In some areas the Christian tribal and Dalit communities are harassed and ostracized. Our parish ministry is much more demanding and challenging than ever before. Especially among the youth, the hold of religious values over against secular ones is diminishing, leadership is challenged, and some traditions in the Church are becoming outdated. Thus, faith formation is not able to take deep roots.

**Schools.** What the Divine Word Missionaries have done in the educational field of Orissa was a silent social revolution –especially among the tribal and Dalit communities. Our SVD parishes run five high schools, an undergraduate college, and several boarding schools for children of tribal and dalit families. To name just a few, there are:

- the New Orissa High School in Gaibira,
- an undergraduate college in Babudih,
- the Naba Jyoti High School in Kerjenga,
- St. Arnold's High School in Turbunga.

The poor children are subsidized for their hostel fees. We have upper primary schools and a school for the children of leprosy-affected parents at Puri. We own and administer four English medium schools:

- St Paul's School in Hamirpur,
- St Lawrence School in Tentoloi,
- St Arnold's school in Bhubaneswar,
- St. Arnold's School in Jhartarang.

**Specialized Centers.** We run centers that take care of the social outcasts in Puri, Bargarh, Burla, Jharsuguda, and Belpahar. Rehabilitation and medication are the major issues addressed for them. An example is Vikas Deepti at Bargarh, a house welcoming physically challenged persons and lepers abandoned by their families. Through orthopedic and prosthetic workshops and physiotherapy, physically challenged children are taught to move about independently through self-help appliances.

Many awareness programs are conducted on mutual aid, community health and surgery, home-based education, etc. The Province is also engaged in various charitable projects in different parts of Orissa – such as a vocational training center for school dropouts at Jharsuguda and Ramabahal, and a non governmental organization (Community Welfare Society) promoting welfare services among slum dwellers in Rourkela.

As members of the Society of the Divine Word, proclaiming the Word of God to all is our priority.

## THE SVD CHARACTERISTIC DIMENSIONS

**Mission Animation.** An area of special attention for the SVD is the promotion of local vocations, both for the Society and for the local Church. In fact, this is a most important aspect of our commitment to mission animation. Though the Catholic community in Orissa is relatively small, it has a very large number of religious vocations. In the past the SVD looked after the vocation needs

of both the dioceses and our own Society by running diocesan minor seminaries.

**Biblical Apostolate.** As members of the Society of the Divine Word, proclaiming the Word of God to all is our priority. The Biblical co-coordinator conducts bible seminars and retreats in the parishes to popularize the Word of God. Our full time biblical co-coordinator, in collaboration with the communication center, has revised the Sadri version of New Testament and has made it available for popular readership. It was published in 2004. A book entitled *Power of the Word* published in 2007 presents homilies in a creative way for the three-year liturgical cycle. To place ourselves at the service of the local church, the book is translated in Sadri for the benefit of the laity.

**Communication.** St. Arnold's Vikas Sanchar, the communication center of the Province, primarily supports the pastors, religious and lay leaders in spreading the good news through media related activities. The center lends audiovisual aids like CDs, DVDs, books and charts for parishes and institutions. The center reaches out to at least 12 to 15 parishes a year with its dance-drama group and conducts media awareness seminars and talks in various institutions and parishes. It further conducts training sessions on mass media, low cost media, journalism, and computer literacy for the laity and religious of Orissa. The center also archives documents of events and news from the mission/region through photos, videos and text files.

**JPIC.** In the process of peace-building, the province has set up a peace cell in each parish. They

are trained to build rapport with the neighbors of other faiths. Their task is also to disseminate the right information. A conscious effort is made to bring together the people of all religions. For this purpose an inter-religious prayer service is organized. Outreach program through cultural activities is another platform to come together. Inter-denominational meetings are also conducted at regular intervals. Public awareness campaigns are conducted in villages to make the people aware of human trafficking and beware of exploitation of would-be migrants.

#### 4. Sharing Intercultural Life

*"As followers of the Divine Word, we seek:*

- *to 'pass-over' into the dynamic life of the Triune God by living an incarnate spirituality,*
- *to live in authentic community inclusive of all and accepting the uniqueness of each one,*
- *to be leaders who animate, coordinate and administer in humility and courage after the model of our Lord,*
- *to live a life of simplicity in solidarity with our partners in dialogue and grow as integral and Spirit-filled persons."*

*—INE Vision Statement*

MEMBERSHIP	2000	2005	2012
Bishops	3	3	3
Clerics	122	117	124
Brothers (final vows)	10	12	12
Scholastics	6	6	17
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>156</b>

**AGE and COUNTRY    2000    2005    2012**

Average Age	46.6	49.6	54.2
Nationalities	2	2	1

**Initial Formation.** An area of special attention of the province is the promotion of local

vocations. Though the catholic community in Orissa is rather small, it has a very large number of religious vocations. For the formation of local clergy for the five dioceses of Orissa, SVDs administer the regional theologate in Sason and some of our formandi study their theology there. ♦

## INDIAN GUWAHATI REGION



The North- Eastern region of India (known as the "seven sister states") is populated by ethnically diverse peoples relatively cut off from the rest of the country. Though Indian by nationality, they are Mongolian in racial and cultural features. About 500 distinct ethnic groups –closely related yet often opposing one another– comprise the great majority of the population. They live at one with their ancestors. They believe that the forests surrounding them are inhabited by spirits, and that

animals have magic powers. They have an intuitive knowledge about an all-encompassing harmony in Nature, and that breaking it spells mortal danger and disaster. They pray, dance and sacrifice for the fertility of their fields by invoking the benevolent cosmic forces of earth, sky, water, wind and stars.

### 3. Sharing Intercultural Mission

*"Living an authentic religious missionary life in intercultural communities, we bind ourselves to establish harmony and fraternal communion among ourselves and with our people. We accompany them in their search for human dignity and cultural identity, and strive to work for their integral development. We will join hands with all people of good will to preserve the integrity and sanctity of creation."*

–ING Mission Statement

#### Those in final vows

IN ACTIVE MINISTRY (%)	2005	2012
Parish	45.2	50.0
School/Education	14.3	14.0
SVD Vocation/Formation	0	8.4
Administration/Support	7.1	16.6
Other Apostolates	23.8	5.5

#### Those in final vows

NOT IN MINISTRY (%)	2005	2012
Studies / Orientation	9.5	5.5
Retired/Sick	0	0
Other	0	0

Divine Word Missionaries in India discussed the possibilities of working in the North-Eastern region of India as early as in 1975. Fr Engelbert Zeidler visited the North-East and in 1978/79 sent two SVDs to Nagaland and Manipur. In 1991 the Indian SVD provincials jointly began a mission in the diocese of Silchar, Tripura. Over the last 20 years, our missionary presence and service spread out within the four northeastern Indian states of Tripura, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam and Meghalaya. To better coordinate the SVD missionary activities in these states, Fr General Antonio Pernia decided to establish the Guwahati Region that came into official existence on January 1, 2006.

## PLATFORMS FOR PROPHETIC DIALOGUE

**Parishes.** Our Pastoral Ministry gives priority to primary evangelization and faith formation. Direct contact with the people through regular visits to the villages and the training of catechists and lay leaders are indispensable for evangelization. In Arunachal Pradesh, there are 12 SVDs working in five interior mission stations. Our confreres in Tripura are ministering in four parishes which were opened by the SVD. They also run a diocesan catechetical and the Catholic information centers. Our Ecumenical Dialogue activities help us collaborate with the many Protestant churches and sects present in this part of India, and hence ecumenism is one of the main concerns of our mission.

**Schools.** Our Education Apostolate is held with high esteem in the region. Our schools and hostels

help the poor and the marginalized with adequate educational facilities. In the context of the schools and hostels, at the village levels, various educational programs are organized for the youth.

## THE SVD CHARACTERISTIC DIMENSIONS

**Mission Animation.** In our missionary endeavors we pay special attention to the well being of each confrere and foster our religious missionary life in our communities. In moving towards our mission, we will focus on primary evangelization and pastoral ministry, involving a variety of ministries. Strengthening the existing ministries will be important and immediate concerns for us. But we also hope to open a few more missions in the states of Assam, Mizoram, and Meghalaya.

Raising civic awareness and popular empowerment are integral to our diverse ministries.

**Biblical Apostolate.** We strengthen the local church in North-East through pastoral care of our people, catechesis with special emphasis on the Word of God, training of catechists and promotion of local clergy and lay leadership.

**JPIC.** Our pastoral ministry puts us in living contact with the poor and the marginalized – especially the tribal peoples who are exploited by the wider Indian society as well as defenseless against major natural calamities. Hence, raising civic awareness and popular empowerment are integral features of our diverse ministries.

We join the network with other NGOs, and seek the cooperation of religious and civil agencies to promote socio-economic development of the people in the region, and work for peace and communion among all in the context of conflicts of today's society. In collaboration with the above said agencies, we strive for protection of nature and integrity of creation.

#### 4. Sharing Intercultural Life

*"Impelled by the Triune God, we, the members of ING Region seek to deepen the experience of the Divine in us and in our people. Sharing in the religious aspirations of our people, we seek to remain united to Christ, to one another and to all."*

–ING Vision Statement

MEMBERSHIP	2005	2012
Clerics	20	30
Brothers (final vows)	1	1
Brothers (temporal vows)	1	2
TOTAL	22	33

AGE and COUNTRY	2005	2012
Average Age	43.9	44.0
Nationalities	1	1

**Community.** We are grateful to the Lord for calling us to be part of the people of North-East and to be at the service of the Divine Word. In intercultural communities we are striving to live an authentic religious missionary life together. Thus, through fraternal communion among ourselves as the "Body of Christ", we hope to be credible and effective mediators of social harmony and reconciliation among the people whom we serve.

**Finance.** At this budding stage of the Region, financial self-reliance still remains a plan –the start of which are assuming a simple life style personally and communally, and striving to make our ministries self-supporting in the long run.

**Initial Formation.** The North-East is relatively rich in religious vocations. There are four students who have joined us and are pursuing studies. We have a minor seminary with 9 students and some five are expected to join this academic year. We intend to intensify the promotion of vocations once the house for initial formation is ready in Tezpur where we have already purchased a land for this purpose. We will pay special attention to the ongoing formation of our confreres. ♦



## INDIAN HYDERABAD PROVINCE



The SVD Hyderabad Province renders missionary service in the states of Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. It collaborates with the local bishops and diocesan clergy in all the missionary activities in building its local church in terms of spirituality, personnel, vocations and finances. The Province is engaged in missionary activities in six dioceses in Andhra Pradesh and five dioceses in Tamil Nadu. In all these dioceses, the works are among people of different religions, castes, tribes, language

and cultures through various pastoral, educational, health, and social ministries. In the last two decades, after developing and finding enough resources and personnel and having given faith formation, the Province has handed over a good number parishes to the dioceses.

### 3. Sharing Intercultural Mission

*“Rooted in the Word Incarnate, we Divine Word Missionaries of the Indian Hyderabad Province commit ourselves to fostering integral development of persons through the fourfold prophetic dialogue. In this endeavor we strive to evolve ways and means to empower people to be fully human, with special preference for the poorest of the poor and the marginalized.”*

—INH Mission Statement

#### Those in final vows

IN ACTIVE MINISTRY (%)	2005	2012
Parish	28.1	29.9
School/Education	20.0	22.8
SVD Vocation/Formation	16.9	14.3
Administration/Support	8.1	5.5
Other Apostolates	14.4	19.0

#### Those in final vows

NOT IN MINISTRY (%)	2005	2012
Studies/Orientation	6.2	7.1
Retired/Sick	0	0
Other	6.2	1.4



## PLATFORMS FOR PROPHETIC DIALOGUE

**Parishes.** Through our pastoral ministry we come into living dialogue with people of different castes, languages and religions. We conduct ongoing catechesis programs for our parishioners, formation in pastoral animation to empower our lay leaders, and organize Bible conventions for Christians and non-Christians alike once in two years. Our SVD-run parishes are pioneering the building of basic Christian communities.

**Youth Education.** Among the preferential dialogue partners for which the Province has opted are the Indian youth of today –especially those of poor and marginalized families.

We take the school as a privileged platform for prophetic dialogue –not only with the youth, but

Through our pastoral ministry we come into living dialogue with people of different castes, languages and religions.

also with their parents and teachers. The Province runs 16 primary and high schools situated in rural or semi-urban context. Thus, they reach out to some 10,000 families especially of the poorer castes regardless of creed or ethnic belonging.

We also reach out to out-of-school youth. An example is *Janssen Bala Vidya Bhavan*, a ‘school-home’ for children deprived of formal schooling either because their parents cannot afford it or because they have been left on their own in the streets to survive on their own as beggars or child

laborers. Still another children’s center is *Jeevodaya* that offers shelter and training to physically challenged children so that they can daily fend for themselves and even find future employment to the extent possible.

## THE SVD CHARACTERISTIC DIMENSIONS

**Biblical Apostolate.** The biblical apostolate in the Province is mainly based in prayer and retreat centers. Every weekend, thousands of people of different faiths come together at the Arockia Annai Shrine in Vadipatti (Tamil Nadu) and at the Divine Word Center in Muthangi (Andhra Pradesh) to listen to the Word of God and to experience healing and conversion. These centers also produce printed and audiovisual resources for proclaiming the Word of God through magazines, radio and TV broadcasts. Lastly, they also engage in social charity such as providing food, shelter and scholarship funds for children of poor families.

**Communication.** Through print materials (*Yesuvin Arul Mozhi* in Tamil, *Living Word* in English, and *Sajeewa Vakku* in Telugu) the Province is engaged in proclaiming the Word to faith-seekers. The communication department of the Province also engages in producing devotional audiovisual materials.

The center *Jana Chaitanya Yuva Sangham* pioneers a special form of communication apostolate: it produces and presents street theater. Its main aim is to foster civic awareness and moral responsi-

lity especially in promoting peace, justice and the integrity of creation.

**JPIC.** Asha Jyothi is the center that propagates awareness at the grassroots about HIV/AIDS, its modes of transmission and means of prevention among men and women, youth and children. It is also a center that takes care of victims of the disease. Furthermore, it saves babies from acquiring HIV through their infected parents. Children of adult AIDS victims are provided with board and lodging in a modest yet healthful environment, and are helped to enter nearby schools. The center receives maximum help from the government and local donors.

*St. Antony Leprosy Health Centre* in Jogipet conducts rehabilitation programs for lepers. It also reaches out to sick people in poor distant villages by organizing medical mission camps. Many specialized doctors and nurses from Hyderabad City volunteer for this mission camps.

*The Divine Word Social Service Society* helps men and women in rural areas to form self-help groups to generate income for their families as well as for community development. This center is partly sustained by generous funding agencies.

#### 4. Sharing Intercultural Life

*“In your Light we see Light leading to Life through fourfold prophetic dialogue.”*

–INH Vision Statement

#### MEMBERSHIP 2000 2005 2012

Clerics	65	74	90
Brothers (final vows)	4	6	5
Brothers (temporal vows)	0	0	1
Scholastics	2	0	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>97</b>

#### AGE and COUNTRY 2000 2005 2012

Average Age	45.2	47.9	50.4
Nationalities	1	1	1

**Spirituality.** All our communities often come together for common prayers, Eucharistic celebrations, and Bible sharing. Because many confreres are engaged in direct evangelization, what is given emphasis is taking time for personal prayer and meditation and to respond with compassion to the people of today.

**Community.** Our provincial chapters affirm that, as far as possible, every new mission should have at least two confreres living together. Confreres willingly take part in workshops and recollections on self-awareness and interpersonal relationships to foster nourishing communal life.

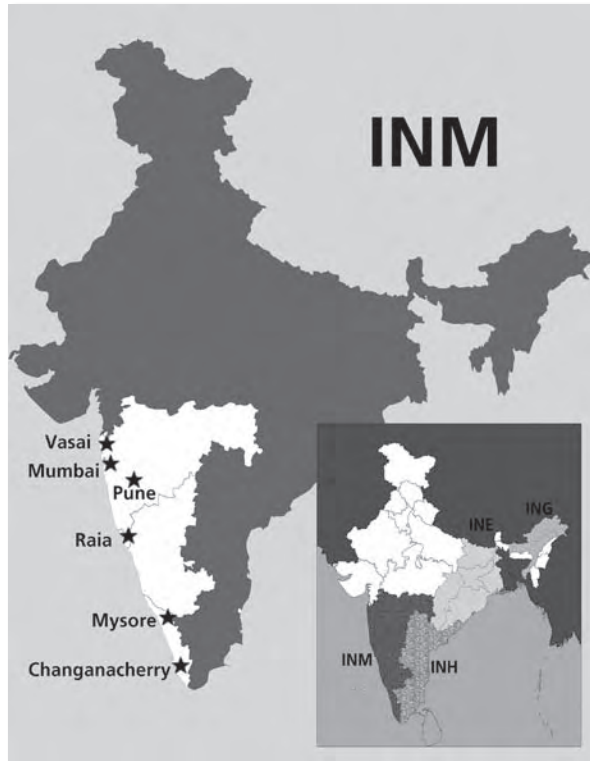
**Leadership.** All confreres in schools, parishes and other institutions try to provide inspiring and supportive leadership. They strive to help build communities that foster fraternal relationships, openness to cultural diversity, and generous ser-

vice to people. Live-in seminars are organized to develop skills and leadership, motivation and personal development.

**Finance.** The provincial leadership strives to foster financial transparency in all communities. Some institutions give financial contributions to the provincial treasury while other confreres at work in non-SVD institutions contribute their salaries, as is expected of all. On the other hand, as the Province works mostly among the poor and the marginalized, it still remains largely dependent on foreign funding to sustain itself and its mission enterprise. However, we are in the process of planning for progressive financial self-reliance. A humble start is raising local funds to maintain our seminaries.

**Formation.** The common action plan for the initial formation program of our Province states that: “Following the footsteps of our Divine Master, we strive to prepare the seminarians, fit for the challenges of the time with spiritual and human development, spiritual growth and academic excellence, to respond to the demands of our time as Divine Word Missionaries.” Keeping this in mind, we have 12 confreres rendering their valuable services to about 125 young men in the formation houses. It is a challenge to get qualified and experienced formators. Living Prophetic dialogue will play an important role in animating young seminarians to consider a life with God as religious missionaries. The quality and quantity of religious vocations is also a concern. ♦

## INDIAN MUMBAI PROVINCE



At the turn of the new century the former South Indian Province (founded in 1963) had spread out geographically, diversified institutionally, and increased in membership. So, for more efficient administration and coordination, it was divided officially on 02 April 2002 into the two current provinces of Mumbai (INM) and Hyderabad (INH).

The members of the Mumbai Province are active in four states on the southwestern coast of India, namely: Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka and Kerala. Maharashtra is the second most populous Indian state –3% of whose population is Christian. Goa is India's fourth smallest state –26% of whose population is Christian. Finally, Kerala's population is 19% Christian, while Karnataka is only 4%.

### 3. Sharing Intercultural Mission

*“Moved by the Spirit of God into the Mission of Christ, we Divine Word Missionaries of the INM Province pledge to give witness to the Reign of God through prophetic dialogue –with the poor, with followers of other religious traditions, with people of other cultures and with faith seekers– in all our ministries.”*

–INM Mission Statement

#### Those in final vows

IN ACTIVE MINISTRY (%)	2005	2012
Parish	12.5	15.2
School/Education	4.8	7.7
SVD Vocation/Formation	24.4	25.2
Administration/Support	20.2	7.7
Other Apostolates	29.8	34.6

#### Those in final vows

NOT IN MINISTRY (%)	2005	2012
Studies / Orientation	6.0	7.7
Retired/Sick	0	1.9
Other	0	0

## PLATFORMS FOR PROPHETIC DIALOGUE

**Parishes.** Our pastoral ministry embraces the whole range from affluent urban parishes to poor rural missions. SVD presence in Mumbai began with our involvement in St. Theresa's parish, Bandra, as early as 1949. Another parish in Mumbai (Sacred Heart Church, Andheri) began in 1987. We have two parishes in Karnataka and one each in Kerala and Goa.

**Schools.** Our educational apostolate in the Province aims at forming students capable of critical and creative thinking, professional-skilled and civic-minded. We have four schools in the Province: two in Mumbai, and one each in Pune and Mysore.

**Specialized Research Centers.** The Province runs centers specialized in the disciplines of missiology, anthropology, and social communication. Their

Our pastoral ministry embraces the whole range from affluent urban parishes to poor rural missions.

common service consists of sharing studies and resources of timely value for missionary and pastoral work. These centers also provide workshops and seminars for basic and ongoing formation of lay leaders, religious and clergy alike.

## THE SVD CHARACTERISTIC DIMENSIONS

**Mission Animation.** Through our pastoral ministry we aim at forming the Church as a com-

munity of communities by adopting the vision of the Church as the family of God. We strive to project this image with our dialogue partners who are mainly the parishners by sharing the Word of God, caring for others through financial contributions, solidarity, and warmth in human relationships, acceptance, dialogue and trust. Through our education ministry, we strive to impart value based education to the students, the majority of whom come from other faiths than our own. An experience of personal conversion is imparted most explicitly through a wide range of retreats/seminars given by the SVDs working in the retreat centers of the province to different groups of people, adapted specially to the various circumstances and needs of their way of life. All the beneficiaries and partners of dialogue of our apostolate and ministry are multi-ethnic and cultural communities without favoring or prejudice to any particular one.

**Biblical Apostolate.** Through our ministries in the forms of counseling sessions and biblical reflection groups, retreats and seminars, our confreres reach out to people of differing faiths, cultures and languages. These apostolates are based mainly in these four retreat centers:

- Prarthana Niketan in Kerala,
- SVD Vachana Jyothi in Pilathara,
- Divine Call Center in Mulky,
- Atma Darshan in Andheri.

**Communication.** Our province operates many reputed specialized institutes where several of our confreres are engaged in diverse communication apostolates mainly based on the following centers:

- Gyan Ashram in Andheri, Mumbai is a pioneer in the use of Indian music, dance and drama as a way of evangelization in harmony with Indian religious tradition. Because of its reputation for creative inculturation and interreligious dialogue, the Archdiocese of Mumbai relies on our center for the ongoing formation of its clergy on dialogue and inculturation.
- Ishvani Kendra in Pune is known as an institute of missiology and communications, research and publication, mission animation, mission planning and experimentation –at the service of both the Arnoldus family and the Indian Church. The center issues the Ishvani Documentation and Mission Digest to update its readers about publications on mission-related topics. The institute also produces audio-visual materials for prayer, worship and mission animation that are used extensively throughout the country.

**JPIC.** Many confreres are actively involved in the empowerment and educational programs for the urban and rural poor and marginalized groups like street children, HIV/AIDS affected and infected children, migrants, spastic children, rag-pickers, substance addicts and semi-nomadic persons. We care for the poor, sick, marginalized and mentally or physically challenged people. Our centers such as Urban Community Development Center in Bandra, Mumbai (1971), Sarva Seva Sangh Pune (1979), Sarva Seva Sangh Andheri, Mumbai (2003), SVD House Aduvasery (2003), Sarva Vikas Deep Mangaon (2006), work for human dignity, justice and peace and integral human development.

#### 4. Sharing Intercultural Life

*“As followers of the Divine Word, deeply committed to God’s mission and to ongoing spiritual renewal, and growing in fellowship, love and concern, we commit ourselves:*

- *to cultivate a deeper awareness of the need to move to a more God-centered life.*
- *to persevere in personal and community prayer and activities as means for ongoing conversion and transformation;*
- *to contribute in transforming our community into a home of mutual respect, friendship and caring.”*

–INM Vision Statement

#### MEMBERSHIP 2000 2005 2012

Bishops	0	0	1
Clerics	76	83	102
Brothers (final vows)	1	1	1
Brothers (temporal vows)	1	0	1
Scholastics	28	55	53
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>158</b>

#### AGE and COUNTRY 2000 2005 2012

Average Age	43.1	40.7	51.1
Nationalities	1	2	1

**Community.** There are five local communities forum in the province, and they come together on regular basis for prayer, recollection, discussion, sharing and also for picnic to enhance the inter-



cultural life and also to share the concerns of the missionary endeavors. Almost all our communities in the Province are inter-cultural communities as all of us are exposed to a wide variety of cultures across India that broaden and challenge perspectives even from the time of initial formation.

**Formation.** INM province has four minor seminaries with a total of 90 students and a seminary for college education with 72 students. The Province runs and sustains the full range of initial formation from vocation promotion to perpetual vows and priestly ordination. Our major seminarians pursue their theological studies at the Pontifical Athenaeum (*Jnana Deepa Vidya Peeth*).

**Leadership.** The provincial leadership helps build relationships through communal reflection and discussion for ongoing evaluation and plan-

ning of their missionary presence and service. One fruit of such efforts at communal and structural growth is the publication of the *Manual for India Mumbai Province*. It makes available to each confrere a compendium of decisions, recommendations and resolutions of past chapters –as well as policies and practices currently in force in the Province. At the beginning of each academic year submitting an action plan is required of every confrere, community and district. And at the end of the year a local report is required for submission to the office of the provincial.

**Finance.** Optimum use of our human and material resources is made to support the missionary enterprise of the Province. To foster financial self-reliance, our property in Andheri, Mumbai is further developed and our newly opened schools in Mysore and Pune contribute towards it. ♦



# JAPAN PROVINCE



(July 2011 est.)

Population	Religious Profile %		
	Christian	Catholics	Others
126,475,664	2.0	0.42	98

Age Structure %			Fertility Rate
0-14	15-64	65	(babies per woman)
13.1	64	22.9	1.2

Median Age	Life Expectancy	Below Poverty Line
44.8	82.25	15.7%

GDP Output %			Labor Force %		
1	2	3	1	2	3
1.4	24.9	73.8	3.9	26.2	69.8

1=Agriculture, 2=Industry, 3=Services

Urban Population	Urban Rate of Change	Migrant(s) per 1000
67%	0.2%	0

Total Literacy: 99%		Youth Literacy: 99%	
male	female	male	female
99	99	99	99

Mass Media per 1000 persons			Interactive Media per 1000 persons	
Newspaper	Radio	TV	Mobile	Internet
568.5	952.8	683.9	956.7	784.2

- Official Language: **Japanese (Nihongo)**
- Visa: The government readily and easily grants residence visas to foreign Catholic missionaries.

## 1. Intercultural Setting

The Japanese people who constitute most of the country's population are ethnically akin to the other eastern Asian peoples. During the Tokugawa period (1603–1867), the populace used to be stratified into four classes: warrior, farmer, craftsman, and merchant —with an outcast group belittled as

burakumin (literally, “people of the hamlet”). This caste system has by now almost disappeared, since it has no multiracial basis as in India. Instead, the Japanese regard themselves as belonging to a single ethnic group –in contrast now to the minor number of natives from Ainu and Okinawa, and other resident East-Asians such as Koreans and Chinese.

In the latter half of the 19th century, the Meiji rule ushered in the modern era in Japan. After two centuries of insular isolation, the country finally opened its ports to worldwide trade while launching a plan of intensive industrialization. At the same time, the government enforced political and edu-

————— cational policies aimed at  
 “Japanese are born Shinto, marry as Christians, and die Buddhists.” forging a national identity that would transcend ethnic loyalties and regional cultures. The subsequent expansion of an efficient system of mass transport and communication later reinforced efforts at national homogenization. Hence, Japanese daily life now reflects more differences between rural and urban lifestyles than diversity of local cultures.

More than a century of modern industrialization and economic development has resulted in massive urbanization in Japan. The demographic impact of these trends is the drastic drop in fertility rate along with the rapid rise in longevity. In turn, the aging and decline of the Japanese population cause the vast economy of the country to suffer from periodic labor shortages. When labor is scarce, foreign workers are employed to take up low-skilled jobs; during economic downturns such jobs are withdrawn.

The current economic slowdown in Japan has worsened because of the unforeseen tragedy on 11 March 2011: a devastating earthquake of 9.0-magnitude, followed by a gigantic tsunami. Their joint impact shattered the country’s energy infrastructure, and strained its capacity to cope with the massive humanitarian emergency.

## 2. Ecclesial Setting

Countries in Europe and North America generally register high levels of nominal religious affiliation and low levels of religious participation. The contrary is noteworthy in Japan where many take part in public rituals and holy feasts, although very few profess to belong exclusively to a church or religion. Thus, it is commonly said that “Japanese are born Shinto, marry as Christians, and die Buddhists.” These three great religious traditions have been combined with elements of Chinese Taoism and Confucianism, resulting in a popular piety not easy to classify. Though many Japanese seem indifferent or even distrustful toward religious institutions, the search for inner healing and spirituality seems to be in popular increase.

Catholic missionaries came to Japan for the first time in the 16<sup>th</sup> century as companions to Spanish and Portuguese explorers. Converts to Christianity were persecuted from the very start. But small groups of “hidden Christians” secretly persisted in the faith through more than two centuries. Reintroduced in the modern period, Christianity has had little success in attracting new converts. However, what is currently increasing the number of Catholics in Japan is the immigration of people from South America and the Philippines.

### 3. Sharing Intercultural Mission

*“We, Divine Word Missionaries of the Japan Province, strive to meet the present-day task of our missionary service by living in prophetic dialog with those whom we*

*We especially reach out to those whose plight in present-day Japanese society is socially, economically, and spiritually weak.*

*We commit ourselves anew to the educational ministry as a means of proclaiming the Word of God to our students and their families, our faculty and staff.*

*We explore new missionary approaches to promote the growth and spread of a “Church without nationality” in response to the rapid increase of foreign Catholics living in Japan.*

*We strive to contribute to the development of an Asian theology and missiology, Asian spirituality, the enculturation of the Gospel, and dialog among religions.”*

–JPN Mission Statement

#### Those in final vows

#### IN ACTIVE MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Parish	28.3	32.3	30.3
School/Education	36.3	31.4	26.8
Other Apostolates	3.8	4.4	3.3
SVD Vocation/Formation	4.2	4.0	3.2
Administration/Support	4.7	4.9	1.6

#### Those in final vows

#### NOT IN MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Studies/Orientation	11.3	9.7	14.6
Retired/Sick	8.5	11.5	17.0
Other	2.8	1.8	3.2

The Japan Province, whose foundations were laid by three missionaries who arrived in Japan in 1907, now has 127 members. Of these, 122 are priests, 4 are Brothers. Fifty are Japanese.

In response to requests from the bishops, one confrere has been assigned on loan to the Diocese of Niigata, and three confreres to the Diocese of Fukuoka, one of whom is working in the diocesan ministry to the Filipinos.

### PLATFORMS FOR PROPHETIC DIALOGUE

**Parishes.** Divine Word Missionaries in Japan currently staff twenty parishes in four dioceses: 7 parishes in Niigata, 11 in Nagoya, one in Tokyo and another in Nagasaki. In response to requests from the bishops, one confrere has been assigned on loan to the Diocese of Niigata, and three confreres to the Diocese of Fukuoka, one of whom is working in the diocesan ministry to the Filipinos.

Our parish ministries strive to respond to social and cultural trends affecting Japanese society today. First, religious education in the family is weakening. Second, the number of children is fast dropping while that of the elderly is on a brisk rise. Third, the immigrant population –e.g., South Ame-

rican workers and Filipinas married to Japanese men— offer an increasingly important field for pastoral outreach.

**Schools.** Most of our SVD-run parishes have kindergartens and/or primary schools attached to them. Besides these, the Society cooperates in the administration of a university, five high schools for junior and senior students, and a primary school. The total enrollment in these schools amounts to more than 15,000 students.

Although the schools, especially the university, have grown rapidly in recent years, the number of confreres working in this apostolate has remained constant. As a result we must rely more and more on others to help staff and manage the schools. The province has begun a process of reviewing its priorities and policy for the education apostolate, with a view to better addressing the spiritual and emotional needs of our students. We want our schools to be places of dialogue with the staff and students, most of whom do not belong to any faith community and who often are faith-seekers.

## THE SVD CHARACTERISTIC DIMENSIONS

Our parishes and schools serve best as bases for mission animation and biblical apostolate. In addition to this, the province's engagement in formal dialogue with people of different religious traditions can best be seen as missionary communication. Such is promoted by the Nanzan Institute for Religion and Culture and other members working at Nanzan University.

As for fostering integral justice and peace, the province is engaged in two centers for social charity: the Mikawa Catholic Center and the Fukushinkan. The first one is SVD-run and offers welcome space to foreign migrants and assists them in their material, legal, and spiritual needs to the best it can. In the other, which is diocesan-run, confreres—in collaboration with the SSps and lay volunteers— give food and shelter to the homeless, as well as offer some informal education and spiritual counseling.

## 4. Sharing Intercultural Life

*“In keeping with the international character of the Society of the Divine Word, we make the best use of our internationality in our missionary service within Japan and at the same time strive positively to cooperate in missionary service outside of the country.*

*In order to participate in the mission of proclaiming the “Word of God” that calls new communities into life among God’s people, we ourselves strive to grow as a community that shares the “Word of God”.*

—JPN Vision Statement

MEMBERSHIP	2000	2005	2012
Bishops	0	1	1
Clerics	101	108	122
Brothers (final vows)	3	4	4
Brothers (temporal vows)	2	1	0
Scholastics	22	17	11
Novices	0	0	1
TOTAL	128	131	139

**AGE and COUNTRY 2000 2005 2012**

Average Age	47.9	49.1	53.1
Nationalities	20	22	24*

**\* ZONAL ORIGIN of province members**

AFRAM	4	3cng, 1gha
ASPAC	102	48jpn, 17isa, 13ind, 11phi, 7vie, 2kor, 3chn, 1aus
EUROPE	23	8pol, 5ger, 2ita, 2slo, 1ire, 1wal, 1swi, 1ned, 1por, 1rus
PANAM	9	6usa, 1arg, 1brz, 1chi

**Spirituality and Community.** In the work-oriented Japanese culture, hectic schedules and heavy workloads often make it difficult to reserve time and energy for community life. Yet confreres feel a real need for a full experience of community.

As members coming from different nations and cultures into one province, we are convinced that our international and intercultural community –when lived well–is a fundamental witness to the Kingdom that we proclaim. For this reason, we strive to promote intercultural brotherhood among ourselves, enlivened by our sharing the Word of God. Above all, we need to pray together in our communities.

**Finance.** Attached to most of our parishes are schools for children –sources for the personal

upkeep of the confreres and their pastoral ministries. But with falling birthrates, the future of these schools is uncertain. On the other hand, the confreres working in secondary schools and the university are making a great contribution to the financial self-reliance of the province through their salaries.

**Formation.** With the small number of Catholics and the falling birthrate, vocation recruitment has become a central concern for the province. Over the years we have done well at attracting Japanese members, who now make up about half the province. In recent years we have been able to send a number of young Japanese members to work in other provinces. However, while in the past we largely relied on the minor seminary for candidates, we now have to look for other ways of vocation recruitment, including recruitment from the immigrant populations in Japan.

Having formally trained formators is a perennial problem. Another is that the formators often hold two positions for lack of personnel in other apostolates. Furthermore, ongoing formation –especially for the junior members of the province or of recent arrival in Japan as missionaries– has been neglected for several years. The Mission Secretary and the Formation Director of the seminary have presently teamed up to find ways of reviving and running workshops and retreats for ongoing formation. ♦



# SOUTH KOREA REGION



(July 2011 est.)

**Religious Profile %**

Population	Christian	Catholics	Others
48,754,657	29	10.9	71

**Age Structure %**

0-14	15-64	65	Fertility Rate (babies per woman)
15.7	72.9	11.4	1.23

**Median Age****Life Expectancy****Below Poverty Line**

38.4	79.05	15%
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**GDP Output %**

1	2	3	1	2	3
2.6	39.3	58.2	7.3	24.3	68.4

1=Agriculture, 2=Industry, 3=Services

**Labor Force %****Urban Population****Urban Rate of Change****Migrant(s) per 1000**

83%	0.6%	0
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**Total Literacy: 97.9%****male****female****Youth Literacy: 99.8%****male****female**

99.2	96.6	99.8	99.8
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**Mass Media**

per 1000 persons

**Interactive Media**

per 1000 persons

Newspaper	Radio	TV	Mobile	Internet
n.a.	974.3	326.1	1041.2	808.1

- Official Language: **Korean**
- Visa: There is no difficulty obtaining a "religion visa" to Korea, provided that the requested documentation is completed and submitted through the Regional Superior.

South Korea is one of the few countries in the world in which ethnicity and nationality coincide. Rather than ethnicity, regionalism –mainly between easterners and westerners– is a source of social tension among South Koreans.

As one of Asia's economic tigers, South Korea



takes pride in being the 12th strongest economy in the world. For this reason, since the early 1990s, workers from neighboring Asian countries (China, Mongolia, the Philippines, Vietnam, Thailand, Indonesia, Pakistan and Bangladesh) have come in search of jobs.

Among the migrants, the most significant ethnic minority consists of the Chinese, of whom a small contingent arrived and settled in Seoul as early as in the late 19th century. In the recent decades this group is now reinforced by workers from the mainland, so that the overall presence of Chinese residents in Korea amount to about a million.

## 2. Ecclesial Setting

It was not foreign missionaries who brought the Christian faith to Korea! In the late 18th century

In this early period of the Church in Korea, thousands of Christians were martyred. Korean scholars in China came to learn about Christianity and some eventually asked to be baptized. These scholars brought Christian books into Korea and formed study groups. These Christian Korean scholars faced initial resistance and eventual oppression from the social elite and government leaders, who viewed this new movement as a threat to Confucian society.

In 1794 when Fr Ju Mun Mo arrived as the first priest in Korea from Beijing, he already found some 4,000 practicing Catholics in the country.

Father Ju died a martyr of the faith in 1801. Only in 1836, on the persistent request for priests by the Korean faithful, the Paris Evangelical Mission Society sent Fr Philippe Maubant and his companions to formally establish the Church in Korea. In this early period of the Church in Korea, thousands of Christians were martyred. Among them were St Maubant himself and the 26-year-old St. Andrea Kim Taegun, the first Korean priest ordained in Shanghai in 1845.

To this day, the Church continues to grow because, in the tradition of its ancestors in faith, it serves as an instrument for social change and justice. It is closely associated with traditional social services and is also at the forefront of national movements promoting human development, justice, peace and protection of the environment. The local Church shows pastoral concern not only to the Korean people but also to foreign migrants to the country.

Furthermore, the Church in Korea is growing in awareness of its missionary calling. In early 2011 the Church in Korea formally established Caritas Korea International. Statistics in 2007, published by the Korean Catholic Foreign Missionary Education Association, stated 477 religious women from South Korea were by then at work in foreign missions. In early 2011, the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Korea rounded up the picture by further statistics showing that 330 Korean priests were by then serving abroad as missionaries. This represents a 126% increase of Korean presence in ad gentes mission over just a period of three years (2007-2010).

### 3. Sharing Intercultural Mission

*“Open to the prompting of the Holy Spirit and attentive to the signs of the times, we strive to serve and cooperate with the Korean church in its endeavor to understand and accomplish its local mission and to develop a wider vision of its universal calling. In the spirit of dialogue with people of different religions and cultures, we commit ourselves to promote justice and peace especially the well-being of migrant workers and the marginalized of society.”*

–KOR Mission Statement

#### Those in final vows

#### IN ACTIVE MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Parish Ministry	0	15.4	10.0
School/Education	0	3.8	5.0
Other Apostolates	25	30.8	55.0
SVD Vocation/Formation	25	11.5	10.0
Administration/Support	9.4	15.4	15.0

#### Those in final vows

#### NOT IN MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Studies/Orientation	4	0	5
Retired/Sick	0	0	0
Other	0	23.1	0

The SVD presence in Korea has a relatively brief history. The SVD came to the country in 1984 at the invitation of the bishop of Suwon. As in every beginning, we have had our share of challenges,

both internal and external. As a result, it took a long time for us to establish a clear focus for our missionary service. In the last few years, we have experienced greater stability and healing as regards personnel. Through the years, we have fine-tuned our vision based on the missionary challenges that we face in Korea. There are indeed plenty of reasons to thank the Lord, who brought us here, and who through the challenges and successes has blessed us as witnesses to the ever-abiding love of the Father.

### PLATFORMS FOR PROPHETIC DIALOGUE

**Migrant Ministry.** The Korea Region is involved with service to migrant workers in three dioceses. In the Archdiocese of Seoul, a confrere is working with the Vietnamese Migrant Workers. In the Diocese of Suwon, a confrere is working in a Diocesan Center for Vietnamese Migrant Workers. Also, in the same Diocese, the SVD operates a Pastoral Center for Migrant Workers called “Galilea.” Through our various activities in this Center, confreres from Indonesia, the Philippines and Korea serve the needs of migrants from all parts of Asia and Africa. In the Archdiocese of Gwangju, a confrere from Indonesia operates for the Archdiocese a shelter for migrant workers in need. On any given Sunday, it would not be unusual for a confrere from Indonesia to say Mass in Korean, English and Tagalog.

**HIV/AIDS Outreach.** The Region operates the “Bread of Life” Center in the Archdiocese of Gwangju that provides various services for victims of HIV/AIDS and their families. It also pro-

vides general education for the public on matters related to HIV/AIDS. This ministry started under the direction of a confrere from India with the help of a confrere from Indonesia. It continues today under the care of two Korean confreres.

**Parish Ministry.** Although the Region is not in charge of any parish in Korea, nearly all of the members of the Region are involved in the life of parish communities in one way or another. Naturally, for us, the primary tool of this apostolate is sacred scripture.

Two confreres are working as assistants in two different parishes with Korean pastors. Other confreres help during weekends and at times when there are special needs. Under the direction of the local church, we are looking for ways to engage in the development of faith communities that can eventually grow into parish communities.

**Other Apostolates.** Confreres provide retreats, recollections, conferences and psycho-spiritual counseling for a wide variety of groups and individuals. The focus of this ministry has been to meet the various needs of families. Some of our confreres have been in various other apostolates such as work for homeless people, and teaching in institutes of higher learning and a seminary.

#### 4. Sharing Intercultural Life

*“Following the example of the Divine Word, who was sent into the world by the Father, our mission in Korea, as a religious missionary*

*Society, is to incarnate ourselves into the lives of the people with respect and openness.*

*As a religious missionary Society, we seek to foster and promote the formation of all confreres to live and witness to the internationality of the SVD and the universality of the Church.”*

–KOR Vision Statement

#### MEMBERSHIP 2000 2005 2012

Clerics	13	13	18
Brothers (final vows)	0	0	2
Brothers (temporal vows)	1	0	0
Scholastics	2	4	1
Novices	2	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>21</b>

#### AGE and COUNTRY 2000 2005 2012

Average Age	36.6	38.2	43.6
Nationalities	8	8	7*

#### \* ZONAL ORIGIN of province members

ASPAC	19	7kor, 5isa, 4ind, 2vie, 1phi
EUROPE	1	1pol
PANAM	1	1usa

**Community.** Because of the international makeup of the community, the Korean language is the language used in prayers and meals in common. English and Korean are mixed during meetings

due the varying language ability of the individual missionaries. The wonderful and healthy Korean culinary diet is the norm within the Region.

The need to adapt to Korean society and culture on the part of the foreign confreres, and the need to grow in intercultural understanding on the part of the Korean confreres, are a source of tension within the Korea Region. However, we welcome the struggle as mutually enriching.

**Formation.** The region started recruiting vocations for the Society in 1992. Today we have 3 Korean priests and 2 Brothers in final vows. This year we there are two scholastics (one Ghana for OTP), but no novices. This means that 50% of our Korean confreres in perpetual vows, and 50% of our scholastics, are serving overseas are serving overseas ... a generous sacrifice of the region for the whole Society.

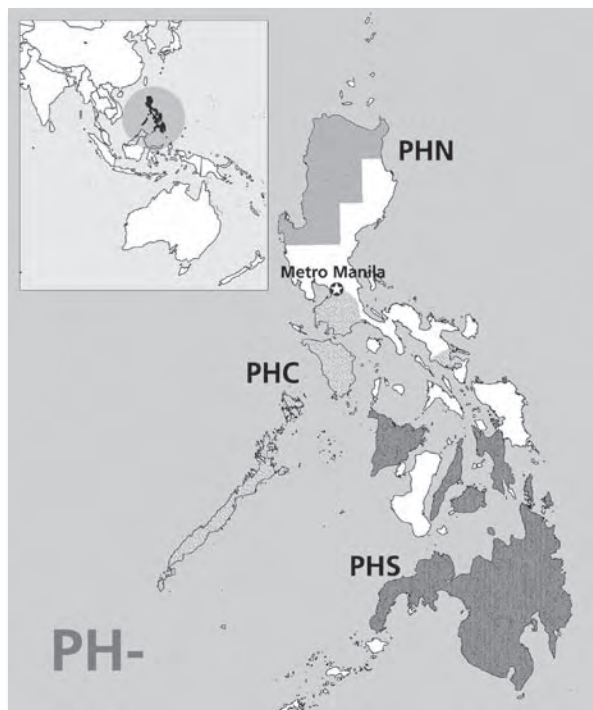
Language learning for our Korean confreres is problematic given our limited resources and lack of a suitable environment to learn English or Spa-

nish within Korea. Yet the region makes it a norm to enable them to express themselves fluently enough in an official language of the Society, as this ability helps them grow in their identity as religious missionaries of the Divine Word. On the other hand, our Korean candidates and confreres help those among us from overseas to learn Korean well by preferring to converse with them in their native tongue.

As for ongoing formation, the process of learning a language is closely related to empathetic entry into a people's culture. Most foreign confreres show initial enthusiasm for learning the Korean language. Similarly they take interest in cultural orientation programs such as "temple-stay" and taking part in activities organized by The Royal Asiatic Society. But in the course of time, the growing demands of our various ministries tend to make us neglect opportunities for further growth in learning Korean language and culture. For those who fall into this temptation, ministry—even among migrant workers—dwindles in efficacy. ♦



# THE PHILIPPINE PROVINCES



- Official Languages: **English, Pilipino**
- Visa: For citizens of many countries, a tourist visa is easily granted upon official entry in the country. Soon after arrival one can next apply for a missionary visa that takes several months to obtain, but can later be more easily renewed every two years. After 10 years one can apply for an immigrant visa renewable every five years.

(July 2011 est.)

## Religious Profile %

Population	Christian	Catholics	Others
101,833,938	92.5	80.9	7.5

## Age Structure %

0-14	15-64	65
34.6	61.1	4.3

## Fertility Rate

(babies per woman)

3.19

## Median Age

22.9 years

## Life Expectancy

71.6 years

## Below Poverty Line

32.9%

## GDP Output %

1	2	3
13.9	31.3	54.8

1=Agriculture, 2=Industry, 3=Services

## Labor Force %

1	2	3
33	15	52

## Urban Population

49%

## Urban Rate of Change

2.3%

## Migrant(s) per 1000

-1.29

## Total Literacy: 92.6%

male	female
92.5	92.7

## Youth Literacy: 95%

male	female
93.6	95.7

## Mass Media per 1000 persons

Newspaper	Radio	TV
66	130.9	51.8

## Interactive Media per 1000 persons

Mobile	Internet
418.7	58.2

## 1. Intercultural Setting

The Philippines is an archipelago consisting of some 7,100 islands and islets. The Malay ancestry of the vast majority of its people today came from the Southeast Asian mainland and what today is Indonesia. The major languages of the country

generally correspond to ethnic groupings –among which the most widespread are the Tagalog (28.1%) in central Luzon, the Bisaya (22.7%) in the Visayan Islands and Mindanao, and the Ilocano (9%) in northern Luzon.

The Filipino sense of a national identity is fragile, with greater allegiance given to kinship, province, or linguistic group. The manifest western influence on the Filipino people is due to the fact that the country had been a Spanish colony for some four centuries, followed by half a century of tutelage under USA.

The country was rocked by political turmoil in the late 1970s and ended in 1986 with a non-violent uprising popularly dubbed as ‘People Power Revolution’. The subsequent ouster and exile of Marcos led to the restoration of a fragile democracy –left with the grand task of pacifying militant Muslim unrest in the south and the Maoist-inspired guerilla forces in Luzon.

Contemporary Philippine society continues to grapple with contradictions –among which is the thin social stratum of extreme wealthy families atop nation-wide poverty. Rapid industrialization spurred by massive commercial investment (domestic and foreign alike) has caused severe environmental destruction. Lastly, since the 1960s, this highly literate nation has been a main source of international migrants bound for North America, Australia, the Middle East, Western Europe, and the affluent Asian ‘tiger nations’ (Japan, Singapore, Taiwan, South Korea).

## 2. Ecclesial Setting

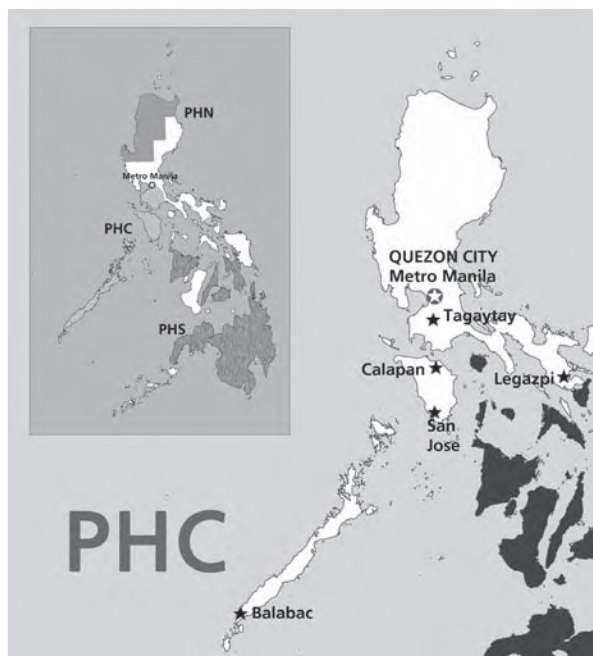
The Philippines and the new Republic of Timor Leste are the only Asian nations where Christianity is dominant. Among the fast-growing religious minorities in the country are the 5% Muslim population –formerly concentrated mainly in the southern island of Mindanao just two or three decades ago, but now in nation-wide diaspora northwards. Just as significant is the spread of Christian sects –many among which are of native neo-Pentecostal origination.

The Catholic Church exercises a weighty influence on Philippine politics. A prominent example was in 1986, when Cardinal Jaime Sin of the Archdiocese of Manila called on the radio public to a peaceful march to force Ferdinand Marcos to step down from the presidency. Seven million people then rallied to what became known as ‘People Power Revolution’. In 2001, Cardinal Sin denounced the alleged corruption of then president Joseph Estrada. The five-day peaceful protest that followed did make Estrada resign from power.

Even at present the rift between the government and the Catholic hierarchy persists as the latter strives to serve as prophetic guardian of public morality and committed advocate of the most deprived. The Church’s influence mainly depends on its numerous institutions of charitable services at the grassroots, Catholic schools and universities of nation-wide diffusion, and active lay Catholic movements that are self-sustaining and self-propagating. ♦



## PHILIPPINE CENTRAL PROVINCE



### 3. Sharing Intercultural Mission

*“We, Divine Word Missionary Priests and Brothers of the Philippine Central Province, witness to the Word and to the universality and openness of the reign of God –by engaging in Prophetic Dialogue marked by the four Characteristic Dimensions of our Society in our areas of mission, in collaboration with the local Church.”*

*–PHC Mission Statement*

#### those in final vows

##### IN ACTIVE MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Parish	25.5	21.8	28.2
School/Education	9.0	12.6	11.0
SVD Vocation/Formation	18.6	16.4	15.7
Administration/Support	10.2	10.1	10.0
Other Apostolates	9.9	19.0	13.9

#### those in final vows

##### NOT IN MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Studies / Orientation	5.6	3.4	7.0
Retired/Sick	10.6	5.8	13.0
Other	10.6	10.9	1.2

### PLATFORMS FOR PROPHETIC DIALOGUE

**Parishes.** Many confreres in the Province serve in parishes of three dioceses within the Metro-Manila area (Manila, Cubao, Caloocan) and four others in nearby islands (Mindoro, Palawan, and Romblon) south of Luzon –the largest of all the Philippine islands. Our urban parishes, mostly within Metro-Manila are self-reliant, whereas the rural ones beyond it belong to dioceses that are still growing in viability in terms of local clergy and financial resources.

**Schools.** The Province runs two Divine Word Colleges on the island of Mindoro (in Calapan and San Jose) and another on the southern part of Luzon (in Legazpi). In Manila itself, we run a prestigious school named St Jude Catholic School whose students are predominantly children of Chinese and Sino-Filipino families.

**Special Apostolates.** Some confreres are at the service of the FABC Social Communications Office, the CBCP Commission on Biblical Apostolate, the CBCP National Appellate Matrimonial Tribunal, the CBCP National Commission on Indigenous Peoples, and the Radio Veritas Asia. An Indonesian confrere works at the Nunciature in Manila.

Still a few other confreres work among two native cultural minorities: the Aetas (dark-skinned pygmies) in Pampanga, and the Mangyans in Mindoro.

### THE SVD CHARACTERISTIC DIMENSIONS

To foster integral assistance to confreres at the pastoral grassroots, the mission secretary and the coordinators of the biblical apostolate, com-

====  
 The Province sustains collaborative links with lay missionary associations that identify with our SVD mission charism and spirituality. communication, and JPIC form the Characteristic Dimensions Secretariat that gives assistance when and where requested. Concerted efforts are exerted towards resource generation and relief assistance; coordination of programs and activities; networking for efficient use of resources and opportunities and delivery of services; and preparation modules and materials for Basic Ecclesial Community seminars, retreats and other lay formation activities.

**Mission Animation.** The Shrine of the Divine Word in Christ the King Seminary in Quezon

City serves as a center for promoting a devotion to Sts Arnold Janssen and Joseph Freinademetz, and for fostering awareness and solidarity for the worldwide mission enterprise of the Church –especially that of the Arnoldus Family (SVD, SSps, SSpSAP).

Furthermore, the Province sustains collaborative links with lay missionary associations that identify with our SVD mission charism and spirituality.

**Biblical Apostolate.** The sphere of service offered for promoting the biblical apostolate is not only province-wide through the SVD Characteristic Dimensions Secretariat, but also nation-wide through its representation in the Commission on the Biblical Apostolate of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines.

**Communication.** Some confreres are engaged in evangelization through the press, radio and television broadcasting, and the Internet as 'new Areopagus'.

**JPIC.** In promoting integral justice and peace confreres in the Province resort to networking with private, non-governmental and governmental organizations for poverty alleviation and literacy. In line with protecting the environment, confreres in Palawan, the Bicol region, Oriental Mindoro and Occidental Mindoro support advocacy against natural destruction caused by mining companies. Service among the poor and marginalized at the grassroots takes the forms of (1) community-based projects aimed at poverty alleviation, and (2) an alternative literacy program

for out-of-school youth and indigenous or Muslim communities in Palawan, Mindoro, and Metro Manila.

#### 4. Sharing Intercultural Life

*“To fulfill our mission as a Province, we commit ourselves to fostering a vibrant and witnessing community life*

- *by living the vows more faithfully, under the patronage of St. Arnold Janssen and the guidance of the Holy and Triune God,*
- *by giving witness to a life of unity that is international and intercultural in character,*
- *through formation in Prophetic Dialogue that deepens our understanding of its theology and spirituality,*
- *through formation in the SVD Characteristic Dimensions so as to actualize in our life, community and mission the power of the Animating Word, the Biblical Word, the Prophetic Word, and the Communicating Word.”*

–PHC Vision Statement

MEMBERSHIP	2000	2005	2012
Bishops	2	2	2
Clerics	151	163	182
Brothers (final vows)	6	9	8
Brothers (temporal vows)	0	1	0
Scholastics	71	45	36
Novices	22	18	17
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>252</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>245</b>

AGE and COUNTRY	2000	2005	2012
Average Age	43.6	46.5	55.1
Nationalities	14	13	15*

#### \* ZONAL ORIGIN of province members

AFRAM	3	3mad
ASPAC	229	201phi, 15isa, 4png, 3chn, 2vie, 1jpn, 1tls, 1ton, 1van
EUROPE	12	9ger, 1ire, 1oes, 1sco,
PANAM	1	1usa

**Spirituality.** Noteworthy are (1) the efforts of some local communities in regularly coming together for fraternal and spiritual bonding; (2) the confreres who are role-models of religious and missionary life; and (3) the recent effort made to form a Spirituality Animation Team with the SSpS.

**Community.** A warm fraternal atmosphere exists among members of local communities. This atmosphere facilitates the integration and assimilation of foreign students who come to live with us in our communities. Another is the regularity of community prayers in some houses in the province.

**Formation.** The Province runs three houses for initial formation: Christ the King Mission Seminary (school of philosophy) in Quezon City, the Holy Spirit Novitiate in Calapan, and the Divine Word School of Theology in Tagaytay City. Our philosophate and theologate offer academic formation not only to our SVD candidates, but also

to those of dioceses and other religious congregations. CKMS, for instance, has 20 affiliated houses of formation (diocesan and religious) whereas DWST has 23 affiliated houses of formation (diocesan and religious alike, as well as lay students).

Together with the SSpS the Province organizes orientation courses (1) for departing missionaries, (2) another for returning missionaries on home leave or back for good, (3) and a third for newly arrived missionaries from abroad. An ongoing formation seminar also gathers junior confreres (within the first five years of perpetual vows) every year. Presently in the process of joint planning is an ongoing formation program for all confreres in the three SVD Philippine provinces.

**Leadership.** Noteworthy is the level of trust and confidence the general membership has accorded to their leaders. Encouraging also is the readiness

of confreres to accept the collective decisions made by the leadership in the spirit of communal consultation.

**Finance.** In view of generating local income to sustain the Province, a part of the land property of Christ the King Mission Seminary has been allotted to constructing a columbarium in joint venture with lay business partners.

It is encouraging to note that our communities are growing in their sense of financial solidarity by contributing each an annual share to the provincial treasury in view of provincial self-reliance. On the other hand, to discourage the practice of personal hoarding and disposal of self-earned funds, the provincial leadership has prescribed a reasonable monthly allowance system for all local communities and districts –as well as policies for financial transparency. ♦

## PHILIPPINE NORTHERN PROVINCE



### 3. Sharing Intercultural Mission

*“We, the Philippine Northern Province, cradle of the Philippine SVD ... enter into constant and dynamic dialogue with the poor and marginalized, the indigenous peoples, faith seekers, secular ideologies, and youth, in the light of the four characteristic dimensions: JPIC, Bible Apostolate, Mission Animation, and Communication.”*

–PHN Mission Statement

#### Those in final vows IN ACTIVE MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Parish	32.8	39.5	30.7
School/Education	21.3	18.0	23.5
SVD Vocation/Formation	2.9	5.2	3.9
Administration/Support	9.8	11.6	11.0
Other Apostolates	13.8	9.9	14.7

#### Those in final vows NOT IN MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Studies / Orientation	2.3	1.2	1.9
Retired/Sick	10.3	4.1	3.9
Other	6.9	10.5	10.4

### PLATFORMS FOR PROPHETIC DIALOGUE

The Philippine Northern Province makes a two-fold preferential option: for the youth of the country, and for the rural poor –among whom the most marginalized are the indigenous Filipinos. This explains why its preferential platforms for prophetic dialogue are urban schools and rural or mountain parishes.

**Parishes.** The Province administers 22 parishes in five dioceses and two vicariates. In comparison to the last two decades, our presence in parishes has decreased –because of the lack of SVD personnel, and the growth of the local clergy. We then give preference to parishes remotely located in rural or mountain areas where indigenous cultural minorities live.

Whether in the lowland or upland areas, confreres in parish ministries strive to learn the local dialects and ethnic cultures. This makes them help the people in attaining mature lay leadership and self-reliant ecclesial communities.

**Schools.** In the northern Philippines the Province runs four colleges and four high schools –altogether educating eleven thousand students enrolled in these institutions. In addition to these, we still run

We have also begun to make use of the social media for evangelization.

smaller mission schools attached to our rural and mountain parishes. Through our biblical apostolate and campus ministry, we further reach out to students and teachers in public schools.

**Retreat House.** The Sunnyside Retreat House in Baguio City offers a peaceful place for retreats and recollections to various groups ranging from students to civic organizations all over Northern Luzon. It also serves as a platform for confreres to radiate the missionary spirituality of our Society and to promote the four SVD characteristic dimensions.

## THE SVD CHARACTERISTIC DIMENSIONS

**Mission Animation.** Former members of the Society –known as the XVDs– have organized themselves and support the mission projects and activities in the Province.

**Biblical Apostolate.** To further promote the Word, bible camps for the youth in the different

districts are conducted annually. Participants, in return, do their own sharing with the other youth in their respective communities. Other highlights of the ministry include Bible formation and bible study groups in the schools. Our biblical ministries work closely with the bible coordinators of the local churches.

**Communication.** We have also begun to make use of the social media for evangelization. The website of the Province and a blog for the missions serve as channels for SVD-laity partnership in mission.

**JPIC.** Some confreres running upland parishes are in active solidarity with the struggle of the indigenous Filipinos in protecting their ancestral lands and preserving their cultural heritage.

## 4. Sharing Intercultural Life

*“Living the spirituality of Arnold Janssen, we envision a community in dialogue with the Word, the world, and with one another. Thus, we stand for community life and contemplation, pioneering work and frontier missions, cultural diversity, integrity, and internationality at the service of communion.*

*We believe in teamwork with one another; in responsible stewardship; and in collaborative ministry with the local church.*

*We pass over to deeper faith, mutual trust, caring, solidarity, and fullness of life.”*

–PHN Vision Statement



MEMBERSHIP	2000	2005	2012
Bishops	2	2	1
Clerics	74	77	76
Brothers (final vows)	7	7	4
Scholastics	4	2	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>81</b>

AGE and COUNTRY	2000	2005	2012
Average Age	50.2	51.1	52.7
Nationalities	10	8	6*

#### \* ZONAL ORIGIN of province members

ASPAC	78	68phi, 9isa, 1ind
EUROPE	3	1ita, 1pol, 1ned

**Community.** The Province annually holds an assembly and a retreat to foment community spirit among SVD confreres. Districts and houses have regular meetings and recollections. Jubilee celebrations are given special time for confreres to come together for prayer and celebration.

**Leadership.** The provincial council conducts regular monthly meetings to address issues and concerns of the Province. Local superiors and coordinators actively take part in leadership by frequent meetings with the provincial council. These meetings are conducted in the various districts where members of the host district or community are invited to participate.

The senior members form a respected group that not only voices out their common needs and concerns, but also offers critique and advice on decisions directing the Province. Most of them are also still in active service, opting to stay in district houses and engaging in special apostolates such as providing assistance to poor and disabled children, or to communities of indigenous peoples.

**Finance.** Districts and houses are given a certain degree of autonomy in managing their allotted budget. They are encouraged to be resourceful in achieving communal self-reliance. For example, some resort to modest projects like hog-raising and local fundraising activities.

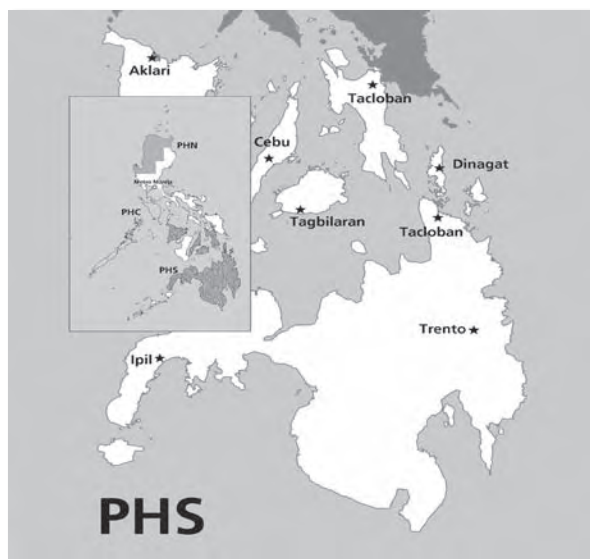
Better-off urban parishes run by confreres offer financial support to poorer ones as a form of mission solidarity.

Finally, the Province has every member under 65 years of age insured with Manulife in view of reaping eventual retirement benefits.

**Initial Formation.** Young men, attracted to the mission charism of our Society, are schooled in the Divine Word Formation Center in Urdaneta for two years before moving on to complete their philosophy studies in Christ the King Mission Seminary in the Philippine Central Province. The Formation Center has six formators and 34 seminarians. The growing number of seminarians in the Province is a welcome promise of a young membership as foreign-born confreres present in the province are becoming fewer. ♦



## PHILIPPINE SOUTHERN PROVINCE



### 3. Sharing Intercultural Mission

*“We, brothers and priests of the Society of the Divine Word belonging to the Province of the Southern Philippines, (SVD), commit ourselves*

#### IN OUR PARISHES

- *to show concern for the poor and marginalized in their aspirations and their struggle for liberation as active subjects of their own development;*
- *to promote Basic Ecclesial Communities and by proactively fostering the Bible Apostolate and JPIC projects and programs;*
- *to afford special commitment to the cultural communities we serve by living with them and learning from them.*

#### IN OUR SCHOOLS

- *to promote integral human development and excellence in instruction, research, and community extension;*
- *to place our Catholic educational apostolate at the service of the local Church by forming students, teachers and employees to become effective professionals open to dialogue and capable of assuming leadership positions in society;*
- *to integrate in curricular and co/extra-curricular activities the four characteristic dimensions of our Society and our desire to live prophetic dialogue.”*

–PHS Mission Statement

#### Those in final vows

##### IN ACTIVE MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Parish	23.8	23.0	20.0
School/Education	25.2	24.8	30.8
SVD Vocation/Formation	11.9	7.2	8.3
Administration/Support	8.7	9.5	3.3
Other Apostolates	6.4	9.5	12.5

#### Those in final vows

##### NOT IN MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Studies/Orientation	11.9	5.0	10.8
Retired/Sick	4.6	7.7	7.5
Other	7.3	13.5	6.8

## PLATFORMS FOR PROPHETIC DIALOGUE

**Parishes.** Confreres of the Province are working in 8 dioceses in the Visayas and Mindanao: Cebu, Bohol, Leyte, Davao, Aklan, Butuan, Surigao and Ipil. Cebu, as the cradle of Philippine Christianity, is well off in terms of local clergy and finances. The dioceses in Mindanao, however, are still not viable enough. Our five parishes in Butuan consist largely of Manobo cultural communities and poor peasants originally hailing from different Visayan islands. In the diocese of Ipil where the Province runs 3 parishes, Muslims form about 50% of the local population. A Muslim liberation movement and a splinter group called Abu Sayyaf are causing hardships to both government and people. At present only Filipino confreres can be assigned to the area. The dioceses of Butuan and Ipil both lack personnel, vocations and finances and remain a daunting challenge for missionaries.

**Schools.** Corruption is a main cause of the current national crisis. The Second Plenary Council of the Catholic Church in the Philippines acknowledged in 1991 a humbling fact: that many among the country's politicians are graduates of educational institutions –of which 67% at the tertiary level are owned and managed by religious congregations. Three SVD-run schools count among them: the University of San Carlos, the Holy Name University, and the Liceo del Verbo Divino.

Mindful of the critical national situation, our schools strive to train young professionals in va-

rious fields while fostering integral human maturation. Teaching, Research and Community Extension Projects are the three dimensions by which our schools reach out to some 35,000 students and the numerous others involved as teachers, non-academic staff and alumni associations.

## THE SVD CHARACTERISTIC DIMENSIONS

**In Parish Settings.** Confreres at the service of the Local Church strive to foster worldwide mission-mindedness while abiding by their respective diocesan pastoral plans that harmonize well with our so-called four SVD characteristic dimensions. Our four radio stations based in Cebu, Tacloban and Ormoc program their broadcasts as channels for popular education and integral evangelization.

**In School Settings.** Campus ministries in our two universities and a lyceum serve as bases for worldwide mission animation. Our schools also try their best to be of civic service to the grassroots communities within the range of their potential influence. National and international linkages are made with industries, government agencies and non-governmental organizations for promoting human rights and integral justice. Because such a collaborative networking is growing fast, we resort more and more to recruiting lay mission partners to work with. All this is intended to carry out the common motto of our educational institutions – to give witness to the Word by living a God-centered life that leads to proactive solidarity with our dialogue partners.

#### 4. Sharing Intercultural Life

*“As confreres and communities who believe in teamwork and responsible stewardship, we commit ourselves*

- *to nurture the contemplative dimension of our religious-missionary vocation by prayer, reading, sharing and living the Word of God;*
- *to actively contribute to vocation animation and the formation apostolate for our Society;*
- *to work for the financial self-sufficiency of our communities through optimum use of the Society’s assets, sharing of common resources and transparency in handling of funds.”*

–PHS Vision Statement

MEMBERSHIP	2000	2005	2012
Bishops	2	2	0
Clerics	92	98	105
Brothers (final vows)	11	11	11
Brothers (temporal vows)	14	2	5
Scholastics	1	4	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>123</b>

AGE and COUNTRY	2000	2005	2012
Average Age	46.2	50.5	52.7
Nationalities	7	8	11*

#### \* ZONAL ORIGIN of province members

AFRAM	3	3gha
ASPAC	111	102phi, 6isa, 2ind, 1vie
EUROPE	5	4ger, 1hun
PANAM	4	1arg, 1brz, 1ecu, 1usa

**Spirituality.** The Philippines has not been spared the effects of a rapidly ‘flattening’ and pluralizing world. In such a setting, our confreres in the Province are growing in common awareness that a faith merely based on *catechetical* knowledge and expressed in *sacramental* service can no longer suffice. As St Arnold Janssen realized in his own time: “We can no longer save the world with sermons and liturgy alone.”

More urgently needed today are sustained personal encounter with the living God and prophetic dialogue with the people whom we serve as missionaries. While recognizing that much still needs to be done in this regard, confreres have begun anew to frequent spiritual direction and to sustain biblical reflection in common.

**Community.** Our involvement with the youth, the poor, and ethnic or Muslim communities are a daily opportunity for confreres to nurture intercultural life and mission. The programs of our parishes, NGOs, radio stations, schools and formation houses are involved in dialogue with the groups entrusted to us, including the rich and powerful whom we encounter among others in our various apostolates. Encounters with such a diverse group of people have an impact not only on the people but also on the way we live with one another as confreres.

**Leadership.** Provincial planning means looking at the different responsibilities that require good leadership. The Province needs 6 administrators and 4 coordinators, whereas our universities need 2 Presidents, 6 Vice-Presidents, and 2 Liberal Arts Deans. Without looking yet at the leadership needs

of our formation houses and pastoral ministries, a total of some 20 confreres is needed at the provincial level to hold key positions, which is about 25% of our active membership. In this light what is becoming more and more decisive in the near future is greater sharing of responsibility with our Lay Partners especially in our educational Institutions.

**Finance.** The aim of the Province is to move from being subsidized to sharing its resources with other SVD provinces worldwide. At present we are concerned with securing the future expenses for health needs of our confreres including those for our missionaries working abroad. With today's technological advance in medical treatment, medical bills are also constantly increasing –not only for confreres but also for their relatives. Ever more confreres are approaching the provincial administration for help for their immediate families. Thus, clear policies and guidelines for granting such funds have been formulated by the Province Chapter of 2011.

**Initial Formation.** Over the years one of the key contributions of the Province to the Society worldwide has been personnel. In June 2010 some 141 Filipino SVDs were working outside the Philippines in 43 countries around the globe. More than 40% of these confreres do have PHS as their home province. Also, from the southern Philippines are some 40% of the SVD students in Christ the King Seminary in Manila, as well as the Novitiate in Mindoro and the Postulancy and the Divine Word Seminary in Tagaytay.

In our formation programs for brothers and clerics, candidates are screened and trained on the basis of their openness and ability to reach out to others, to get involved with JPIC issues, to work in equal footing with lay mission partners, to make God the center of their lives. ♦

“We can no longer save the world with sermons and liturgy alone.”



# PAPUA NEW GUINEA PROVINCE



(July 2011 est.)

Population

6,187,591

Religious Profile %

Christian

Catholics

Others

96.4

31.95

3.6

Age Structure %

0-14

15-64

65

Fertility Rate

(babies per woman)

36.4

60

3.6

3.46

Median Age

21.8

Life Expectancy

66.24

Below Poverty Line

37%

GDP Output %

1

2

3

Labor Force %

1

2

3

31.9

35.5

32.6

85

n.a.

n.a.

1=Agriculture, 2=Industry, 3=Services

Urban Population

13%

Urban Rate of Change

2.9%

Migrant(s) per 1000

0

Total Literacy: 66.6%

male

female

Youth Literacy: 57.3%

male

female

63.4

50.9

69.13

64.06

Mass Media per 1000 persons

Newspaper

Radio

TV

n.a.

66.3

6.8

Interactive Media per 1000 persons

Mobile

Internet

308.5

20.2

- Official Languages: **Tok Pisin, Hiri Motu, English**
- Visa: The foreign embassies of Papua New Guinea easily grant a tourist visa valid for 6 months. Within the country one can apply for a religious visa of 3-year validity, for which renewal is also easily granted.

## 1. Intercultural Setting

The official languages of Papua New Guinea reflect not only its colonial history but also its multicultural people. English is the main language of government and commerce, school and mass media. At the grassroots, however, the most widely spoken is Melanesian Pidgin –a Creole with an indige-

nous grammar and an inclusive lexis increasingly mixed with English words. Hiri Motu is a trading language originally used by the people who lived around what is now Port Moresby. In addition to these three official languages, there are more than 800 other indigenous languages.

The dominant majority of the population is Melanesian in ethnic and linguistic features. On some outlying islands and atolls Micronesian and Polynesian minorities live with their distinctive social structures headed by traditional chiefs. The presence of expatriates and immigrants is small and consists mainly of Australians, Chinese and Filipinos. In the 1970s, the government sponsored the immigration of Filipino skilled workers and professionals; many among them have settled and intermarried locally.

Since the start of our new century, however, a social issue still insufficiently addressed by the government is illegal immigration. Papua New Guinea is even a source, destination, and transit country for human trafficking. Women and teen-aged girls from Malaysia, Thailand, China, and the Philippines are subjected to sexual commerce or domestic servitude. On the other hand, men from China are transported to the country for forced labor in logging and mining camps.

## 2. Ecclesial Setting

There are about 200 different Christian churches and organizations in the country. Some have very different beliefs and practices. The mainline churches - Catholic, Lutheran, United and Ang-

lican - account for about 60% of the population, while the other churches account for the rest. The mainline churches are steadily decreasing in the number of members while the Pentecostal and Seventh Day Adventist churches are growing rapidly.

Catechists have played a significant role in the evangelization work in PNG. Until recent times, when Pidgin became the means of communication in most areas, they served as interpreters for the local language and as teachers. The role of catechist is changing today, but together with other lay ministers, the catechists are often the only agents of evangelization in remote and isolated places without resident priests.

The Catholic Church in PNG has to face many issues at the present time. Pastoral and social issues include: ecumenism, the dignity and status of women, the pastoral care of those facing difficulties in marriage, tribal/ethnic related violence, polygamy, HIV/AIDS, priests in politics, drugs, corruption and land compensation claims, among others.

The transition from expatriate missionary activity to local church leadership is well underway. Of all the mainline churches, we Catholics were the slowest in the process, but in the last 10 years great progress has been made. In the 6 dioceses which make up the traditional SVD area of work, there are now only two dioceses with active SVD expatriate Bishops. There is rapidly developing a local episcopate, so essential, if the Church in PNG is to really find its voice on the national stage.



### 3. Sharing Intercultural Mission

*“PNG is a nation in transition, experiencing a time rapidly changing values. Therefore, we Divine Word Missionaries especially commit ourselves to dialogue with:*

- *People in remote areas, because they are ignored and forgotten by the country at large;*
- *Youth, because they are the builders of the future, facing many challenges in a confusing time, and searching for purpose and direction for their lives;*
- *Migrant settlers in urban areas, because they are marginalized and unable to share in the prosperity around them;*
- *Members of other Christian communities, because Jesus commanded that we all be one, because our destiny betrays the gospel and because our divisions can breed conflict, disturbing the harmony of the community.”*

–PNG Mission Statement

#### Those in final vows

#### IN ACTIVE MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Parish	47.3	40.3	40.5
Education	9.2	5.0	10.0
Other Apostolates	20.8	29.1	22.0
SVD Vocation/Formation	3.9	8.3	6.4
Administration/Support	7.4	6.5	4.0

#### Those in final vows

#### NOT IN MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Studies / Orientation	3.6	5.8	4.0
Retired/Sick	6.6	5.0	13.1
Other	1.2	0	0

### PLATFORMS FOR PROPHETIC DIALOGUE

**Parishes.** For the past 115 years our confreres have served as pioneer missionaries in PNG. As the local diocesan clergy emerges, our missionary presence is evolving into one of serving the local Church in other capacities. But this shift from “being in charge” to “being an assistant” is not easy especially for elder confreres who have spent most of their missionary lives as parish priests.

With our dwindling yet scattered numbers, we find it presently difficult to staff parishes in preferred dioceses with an SVD mission team. The province professes to give missionary preference to remote areas; yet it is difficult to find confreres who are able and willing to live and work in such areas. It is heartening, however, that our option for challenging urban mission is gaining headway.

**Schools.** The Divine Word University under SVD leadership has become one of the best and most prestigious universities in the country. We would like to maintain an able and stable presence there, but finding qualified academics and administrators among our confreres has become more and more difficult.

**Other Apostolates.** In the 1980s we had about 275 expatriate confreres in the Province, whereas we are down to 110 confreres since last year. To cope with this dwindling membership, the province is currently prioritizing its areas of apostolate. While we hope to maintain some minimal presence in parishes, we will have to put more

confreres into SVD formation and other apostolates of wider national scope.

In this context the ongoing formation of lay leaders is an important part of our missionary work in PNG. Four confreres are in charge of diocesan pastoral and catechetical centers. A few others are engaged in retreat work and spiritual direction.

The SVD in PNG took a leading role in founding the first major seminary in the country. At present,

The SVD in PNG took a leading role in founding the first major seminary in the country.

however, the Bishops Conference in PNG is not united on inter-diocesan pooling of resources and personnel for priestly formation. This causes the costly sporadic building of seminaries with not enough qualified staff. Nonetheless, confreres serve as part-time

lecturers in two diocesan seminaries out of missionary spirit and ecclesial solidarity.

## THE SVD CHARACTERISTIC DIMENSIONS

**Mission Animation.** To set the mission secretary fully free for promoting awareness and generous involvement for the worldwide mission work of the Church and our Society, a superior delegate has been newly appointed in the province. We look forward to their collaboration in mission animation within the local Church of PNG.

**Bible Apostolate.** Every confrere in any apostolate is a promoter of the Word of God as the

basis for Christian life. The tasks of the Bible Apostolate are clearly outlined in our Provincial Plan of Action booklet. Our Bible Apostolate coordinator is proactively helping us to implement those outlined tasks, which are made easier by the great enthusiasm of the laity for the Bible.

**Communication.** In spite of its importance for the Province, we have not been able to appoint a full-time communications coordinator. However, the present part-time communications coordinator regularly contributes articles to the national newspapers while serving as editor of the Word PNG, our Province newsletter. He is also one of the three SVD members on the Board of Word Publishing that produces Wantok—the only national newspaper in Pidgin for the country.

A Brother of ours is involved in the printing apostolate. We also have confreres who work on radio broadcasting and in the production of posters and booklets for the country.

**JPIC.** Lawlessness, tribal fighting, social unrest, drug abuse, the spread of HIV/AIDS, corruption in public life, are all realities of life in PNG today.

Many of our confreres are involved as mediators of peace by helping to resolve tribal and domestic conflicts. Our confreres at the Melanesian Institute are involved in doing in-depth research into these social issues, and the Divine Word University hosts national conferences to raise these issues for public reflection and active response.

#### 4. Sharing Intercultural Life

*"We SVDs of the PNG Province, as a community of brothers from different nations and languages, are gathered together by the Divine Word to joyfully share the Good News with the people of Papua New Guinea. Journeying together with the Church in PNG we give witness to the Kingdom of God. We especially promote unity, harmony and mutual respect among ourselves and ALL the people of this land."*

–PNG Vision Statement

MEMBERSHIP	2000	2005	2012
Bishops	5	7	5
Clerics	124	100	87
Brothers (final vows)	39	32	32
Scholastics	12	13	9
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>133</b>

AGE and COUNTRY	2000	2005	2012
Average Age	52.1	52.6	54.5
Nationalities	24	23	23*

#### \* ZONAL ORIGIN of province members

AFRAM	4	4gha
ASPAC	60	22isa, 16png, 10ind, 6phil, 2aus, 2vie, 1kor, 1nzl
EUROPE	59	28pol, 14ger, 8ned, 4ire, 3ita, 1eng, 1swi
PANAM	10	4usa, 1arg, 1brz, 1chi, 1col, 1mex, 1par

**Community.** Since the 1980s, the PNG Province has lost about 60% of our expatriate confreres. The challenge is for confreres from the larger nationalities not to stay within the comfort zone of their own co-national confreres, but to transcend it and open out to others –especially in using a language commonly understood to all confreres at all times.

Since the beginning of our missionary work in New Guinea, our SVD missionaries have adapted to rough conditions. As pioneer missionaries with a papal mandate to evangelize “extensively and not intensively”, circumstances dictated that we had to work alone in remote areas to come together mainly to pick up supplies or for some mutual support. Eventually we became the “parish priests” of the local Church.

However, with the emergence of native diocesan clergy, and other religious congregations, we now have to re-invent ourselves and re-imagine new ways of serving the local Church. We have set for ourselves the goal of serving in dioceses as SVD communities, hoping by that to set a good example of teamwork with an international make up. Our internationality is our strength, but it requires a greater cohesion around a common vision and mission and a greater sensitivity and mutual respect among us.

**Formation.** Vocation work in our province began only in 1977. It was late and slow, for we had to learn through experience how to develop a forma-

The Church in our traditional SVD areas owes so much to the hard work and dedication of our Brothers.

tion program suited to Papua New Guineans who feel called to become SVD missionaries.

Because of the increase in numbers of young men joining us, we are trying to improve the quality of our formation and the number of well-trained formators. Recruiting vocations and their initial formation are high priorities for our province, as they guarantee its future and its contribution to the worldwide mission enterprise of our Society.

The Church in our traditional SVD areas owes so much to the hard work and dedication of our Brothers. Most of them are now elderly, but carry on bravely with their various apostolates. The development of a local SVD Brotherhood is slow. Expertise in a variety of trades is still very much needed by the local Church, but our Brothers will in the future also have to be involved in areas like management, accountancy, health services, formation, anthropological research, etc. ♦

# CHINA PROVINCE

China (+Hong Kong & Macau), Taiwan



- Official Language: China, Taiwan — **Mandarin**  
Hong Kong — **Cantonese, English**  
Macau — **Chinese, Portuguese**
- Visa: Foreigners need different visas to enter mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macau. Visas for Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macau are at present easily obtainable. As for Mainland China, one cannot enter as a religious or missionary, but as a professional or skilled worker with definite employment. Visitor visas to Mainland China are usually easy to apply for.

(July 2011 est.)

## Religious Profile %

	Population	Christian Catholics Others	
Mainland	1,336,718,015	5.0	n.a. 95
Taiwan	23,224,912	4.5	1.32 95.5
Hong Kong	7,122,508	10.1	5.1 89.9
Macau	578,025	15	5.31 85

## Fertility Rate

(babies per woman)

## Age Structure %

		0-14	15-64	65
Mainland	1.54	17.6	73.6	8.9
Taiwan	1.15	15.6	73.4	10.9
Hong Kong	1.07	11.6	74.8	13.5
Macau	0.92	15	76.8	8.2

## Median

Age

## Life

Expectancy

## Below

Poverty Line

	Median Age	Life Expectancy	Below Poverty Line
Mainland	35.5	74.68	2.8%
Taiwan	37.6	78.32	0.1%
Hong Kong	43.4	82.04	n.a.
Macau	36.2	84.43	n.a.

## GDP Output %

## Labor Force %

	1	2	3	1	2	3
Mainland	10.2	46.9	43	38.1	27.8	34.1
Taiwan	1.4	31.1	67.5	5.2	35.9	58.8
Hong Kong	0	7.4	92.5	0	4.7	95.3
Macau	0.1	2.8	97.1	0.1	4.3	95.6

1=Agriculture, 2=Industry, 3=Services

## Urban

Population

## Urban Rate

of Change

## Migrant(s)

per 1000

	Urban Population	Urban Rate of Change	Migrant(s) per 1000
Mainland	47%	2.3%	-0.33
Taiwan	75%	1.0%	0.03
Hong Kong	100%	0.9%	4.06
Macau	100%	0.7%	3.46

	Total Literacy %		Youth Literacy %	
	male	female	male	female
Mainland	96	88.5	99.2	98.5
Taiwan	96.1		n.a.	n.a.
Hong Kong	96.9	89.6	98	95.8
Macau	95.2	87.7	99.4	99.8

	Mass Media per 1000 person			Interactive Media per 1000 persons	
	Newspaper	Radio	TV	Mobile	Internet
Mainland	77.3	332	299.2	642.6	291
Taiwan	n.a.	693.5	381.4	1,174	700
Hong Kong	207.9	624.8	258.3	1,883	684.2
Macau	289.4	276.8	84.7	1,941	467.4

1. Intercultural Setting

**CHINA.** The People’s Republic of China is the most populous nation on earth. Of its people, 92% are Han Chinese. The remaining 8% consists of some 55 ethnic minorities that have languages and cultures of their own. Some of these groups, such as the Manchu, have peacefully integrated themselves with the Han majority. But notable exceptions are the Buddhist Tibetans, the Muslim Uigurs in Xinjiang, and the Muslim Hui –who assert their respective ethnic-religious identities and clamor for political autonomy.

For centuries China stood as a leading civilization in the world. But in the 19th and early 20th centuries, the country was beset by western powers vying for occupation, civil unrest, and major famines. After World War II, the Communists under Mao Zedong set China free from all foreign domination and established an autocratic socialist

system. When Deng Xiaoping came into power in 1978, he began leading the nation into the world market. Within just two decades of intensive industrialization, China grew not only in material prosperity, but even in weighty influence on international politics.

Consequently, a new “cultural revolution” is taking place in the country –namely, from survival to consumer culture. One can now afford to make plural choices in living, clothing, food, work, marriage partner, religion, etc. The values of rural communal living are giving way to individualistic urban lifestyles. As migrations to cities intensify, national fertility is dropping alarmingly below maintenance level. For this reason, the “one-child policy” imposed on the Han majority is now being re-assessed.

Still another tragic human sacrifice paying for the “economic miracle” is taking place mainly at the country's borders: China is a major source, transit, and destination for human trafficking. Women and children from Mongolia, Burma, Vietnam, Laos, Russia, North Korea, Romania, and Zimbabwe are brought to China for marriage, prostitution or servitude. Even Chinese children are forced into begging, stealing, prostitution, or heavy work in brick kilns or factories. There are further reports that men, women, and children are smuggled from or through China to numerous other countries worldwide.

**TAIWAN.** Taiwan is the second most densely populated country in the world. More than four-fifths of its people are descendants of Han Chinese sett-



lers who came to the island in the 17th through 19th centuries from southeastern China. This includes the Hokkien (70% of the total population) and the Hakka (14%). Later in 1949 they were joined by remnants of the Nationalist party and army that left the mainland after their defeat in the Chinese Civil War (1927-1949).

The aboriginal inhabitants (2%) are Austronesian people, related to Malayo-Polynesian peoples of Southeast Asia and the Pacific. In spite of their cultural and linguistic differences, aborigines have found a common cause in their struggle for land rights and self-determination. They continue to press for self-government in their struggle for recognition and a place in society.

There is a gradually emerging Taiwanese identity including all segments of society. But there also still exist tensions among the various ethnic groups. Adding to the tension is the fact that the People's Republic of China still contests the country's sovereignty and threatens to invade if A Taiwan would formally declare independence. Taiwan is a democracy that guarantees freedom of expression and the liberty to form political parties. Mandarin Chinese is the official language used in education, government, and the mass media. Most Taiwanese and aborigines, however, speak both a local language and Mandarin.

**HONG KONG and MACAU** are Special Administrative Regions (SAR) of the Peoples' Republic of China. Hong Kong returned to China in 1997 after 150 years of British rule and Macau returned to China in 1999 after 450 years of being an

overseas Portuguese territory. "One country, two systems" was the slogan proposed by Chairman Deng Xiaoping to define the new political reality of the two former colonies. Both enjoy freedoms unknown to Chinese Mainland citizens, although there are no free elections in either SAR. Hong Kong has an active and vocal democracy movement, while Macau does not.

## 2. Ecclesial Setting

**MAINLAND CHINA.** The local Church has gone through rough times during the Communist takeover of the mainland. The government demands that all religious break any ties with foreign religious groups –including the papacy. Government control of the appointment of bishops had resulted in a division between an underground and an official Church. Bishops do not want to come together for fear of being forced by the government to make unacceptable decisions. The strong clericalism may be seen as functional for unifying clergy and laity within the Church.

Worsened by the one-child policy, Catholic families yield less and less vocations to the religious and priestly life.

During the recent decades of rapid economic growth, the massive emigration of Chinese youth to the cities is making Catholic rural communities drop and age in membership. Worsened by the one-child policy, Catholic families yield less and less vocations to the religious and priestly life. Seminaries lack competent formators and professors. Priests and religious are usually left to them-



selves with little support and leadership. However, lay people are becoming more actively involved in evangelization, catechesis and social apostolates. So the number of the Catholic faithful is estimated to have doubled since the rise of the Communist regime.

**TAIWAN.** The Local Church mirrors present-day multicultural Taiwan. Though 93% of its people profess to be non-religious, many in fact practice a religious mixture of Buddhism and Taoism. The aboriginal tribes are 3% of the population, but 30% Catholic. Descendants of the first wave of migrants from southern China constitute more than 80% of the island's settlers, and 40% of the Catholics. The second wave of Chinese mainlanders after 1949 is 15% of the population, and 30% of the Catholics. Now other Catholics have come as migrant workers and foreign spouses.

Financially, the local Church is self-reliant and prosperous –thanks mainly to its generous laity. But its main challenge from within is the lack of personnel in proportion to the inherited church institutions that need maintenance. Local vocations are few. Hence, the Church in Taiwan is still heavily dependent on foreign personnel –more than 50% of which are religious and priests from other countries.

### 3. Sharing Intercultural Mission

*“The China Province is the first mission of the SVD, chosen by our founder Saint Arnold Janssen, and the place where Saint Joseph Freinademetz spent his missionary life.*

*Our mission is to proclaim the Word of God everywhere so that the heart of Jesus may live in the hearts of all:*

- *to accompany people –especially those in need– in their search for cultural identity, human dignity, and human relationships;*
- *to dialogue with traditional and modern Chinese cultures and religions through personal contact and study;*
- *to proclaim the Word especially to faith-seekers in a language that touches their hearts;*
- *to form communities centered on the Gospel and sharing actively in the Church's mission.”*

–SIN Mission Statement

#### Those in final vows

##### IN ACTIVE MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Parish	25.9	29.7	36.4
School/Education	20.1	21.2	12.7
Other Apostolates	5.2	9.0	5.9
SVD Vocation/Formation	7.1	8.5	4.2
Administration/Support	13.0	5.7	9.5

#### Those in final vows

##### NOT IN MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Studies / Cul. Orientation	15.6	13.7	18
Retired/Sick	6.5	6.6	5.9
Other	6.5	5.7	7.6

#### PLATFORMS FOR PROPHETIC DIALOGUE

**IN TAIWAN.** The Mainland fell to Communist forces in 1949 and the remnants of the Nationalist

army fled to Taiwan. In 1958, Fr Johannes Schütte –then superior general and former missionary to China– decided to re-found the SVD China mission in Taiwan. Our Society assumed parishes in Chiayi Diocese, including those in the mountain area of Alishan inhabited by the aborigine Tsou tribe. In the southern city port of Kaohsiung, the province also opened a German Cultural Center (which is now closed down due to lack of German-speaking personnel).

At present the southern SVD district serving the dioceses of Chiayi and Kaohsiung administers 9 parishes. Over the years confreres have also assumed parishes –now 4 of them– in Taipei and its suburbs.

Another mission enterprise of the province was the re-founding of Fu Jen University, which the Communist government seized in Beijing. At its early phase this first Catholic university in Taiwan was a joint-venture in which the SVD, the Jesuits and the Chinese clergy autonomously managed its diverse academic departments. Since 2002 it has a unified administration under the leadership of a juridically independent board of trustees, of which the largest number is that of the Bishops of Taiwan. The SVD and SSPS as well as the other two founding groups are also represented on the board. Several confreres, most of whom have doctorates, help in the university as professors and campus ministers.

In Chiayi the province founded a high school in 1962 that has won for itself a prestige for quality education. But the number of students began de-

clining drastically in the year 2000, due to the domestic migration from Chiayi to bigger cities, and also because of demographic decline in the whole country.

**IN HONG KONG AND MACAU.** The 18 priest confreres in Hong Kong mainly run 5 parishes as well as manage the schools attached to them. Three other work among migrants (Filipino and Indonesian) and seamen.

Our recent entry in Macau began in 2007 on the invitation of the present bishop to help in parish and school ministries. The district superior is based there and forms a self-reliant community with four other priests and two seminarians. Two confreres run the Our Lady of Fatima Church while the three others teach at the University of St. Joseph. From time to time, the university invites confreres from the Philippine and Indian provinces to give module courses as guest professors.

#### 4. Sharing Intercultural Life

*"We are religious who are committed to live the evangelical counsels in ways meaningful to the people of our times and as counter-values to the pervasiveness of greed, selfishness and materialism, to the exploitation and disrespect of human life, to individualism and intolerance of diversity. This we always do through our communities with our distinctive characteristics of internationality, congregational charism and spirituality."*

–SIN Vision Statement

MEMBERSHIP	2000	2005	2012
Bishops	0	2	3
Clerics	69	93	103
Brothers (final vows)	10	11	13
Brothers (temporal vows)	3	7	2
Scholastics	33	35	29
Novices	8	8	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>151</b>

AGE and COUNTRY	2000	2005	2012
Average Age	42.2	42.0	47.7
Nationalities	19	22	20*

**\* ZONAL ORIGIN of province members**

ASPAC	120	60chn, 18isa, 15phi, 9ind, 9tai, 8vie, 1mal
EUROPE	22	9pol, 5ger, 2oes, 2slo, 1hun, 1ned, 1ire, 1ita
PANAM	9	4usa, 2par, 1arg, 1chi, 1mex

**Community.** The main challenge for our confreres involved in parish work is keeping our religious and missionary identity, since one can easily slip into a “diocesan lifestyle” of living alone. In Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macau there is

also ample income at one’s autonomous disposal. The second challenge is to lead a frugal or simple lifestyle in the midst of an affluent society.

**Finances.** The province in Taiwan is financially self-reliant and offers a modest annual support to the worldwide mission of the Society. In Chiayi, confreres in the parish ministry achieve self-reliance through a new contract system: the Bishop provides them their needed means and wages, but he also has the freedom to appoint them anywhere in his diocese.

**Formation.** For reasons earlier explained, the main challenge for the province and the Church in Taiwan is the lack of vocations. Since 1980, therefore, the province has been welcoming highest number of confreres on OTP from different countries in the whole world. Thanks to this program, the province has remained young in membership and is the second biggest male religious institute in Taiwan.

We own four flats near Fu Jen University, where young confreres study Mandarin Chinese or study Theology. In Shatin (New Territories, Hong Kong) we have a house where young confreres live while studying Cantonese or Theology. In Macau two Vietnamese seminarians are studying at St Joseph University and look forward to priestly ordination in 2012. ♦

# TIMOR LESTE REGION



(July 2011 est.)

## Population

1,066,582

## Religious Profile %

Christian	Catholics	Others
98.4	88.8	1.6

## Age Structure %

0-14 15-64 65

33.8	62.5	3.6
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## Fertility Rate

(babies per woman)

3.13

## Median Age

22.5

## Life Expectancy

67.95

## Below Poverty Line

42%

## GDP Output %

1 2 3

27.9	18	54.1
------	----	------

1=Agriculture, 2=Industry, 3=Services

## Labor Force %

1 2 3

90	n.a.	n.a.
----	------	------

## Urban Population

28.6%

## Urban Rate of Change

5%

## Migrant(s) per 1000

0

## Total Literacy: 58.6%

male female

n.a.	n.a.
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## Youth Literacy: 73%

male female

n.a.	n.a.
------	------

## Mass Media

per 1000 persons

Newspaper	Radio	TV
n.a.	15.3	n.a.

## Interactive Media

per 1000 persons

Mobile	Internet
51	1.8

- Official Languages: **Portuguese and Tetum**
- Visa: The government readily and easily grants residence visas to foreign Catholic missionaries.

## 1. Intercultural Setting

The Timorese consist of a number of distinct ethnic groups, most of which are either of Malayo-Polynesian descent or of Melanesian-Papuan one. The Tetum, who form the largest of the first ethnic group, are settled mainly in the north coast and around Dili. The Bunak, on the other hand, are the

main tribe of the latter ethnic group that populate mainly in the inner center of the island. The remaining minority of the population consists mainly of the Chinese and mestiços of Timorese and Portuguese descent.

East Timor was colonized by Portugal in the 16th century. In late 1975 East Timor declared its independence. But just nine days later Indonesia invaded and occupied it as its own province. To pacify popular rebellion, an Indonesian military campaign followed for two decades –during which about 250,000 individuals lost their lives. On 30 August 1999, in a UN-supervised referendum, the overwhelming majority voted for independence. But Indonesia next responded by organizing and supporting Timorese militias to destroy the existing infrastructures of the would-be nation and to punish people, towns and villages known to be sympathetic to the cause of independence.

It was only later in 1999 when the peacekeeping troops of the International Force for East Timor (INTERFET) arrived that violence came to an end. On 20 May 2002 Timor-Leste was internationally recognized as an independent state.

Under Indonesian rule, speaking Portuguese in public was banned. For this reason the language, along with Tetum, gained importance as a symbol of struggle for freedom. This explains why after independence the two languages were adopted as official for the new nation. But according to the 2006 UN Development Report, less than 5% of the Timorese population is proficient in Portuguese. The Timorese National Institute of Lin-

guistics contests the survey and maintains that 25% of East Timorese speak Portuguese. Even then, Tetum remains the present lingua franca in the country. For pragmatic reasons young students prefer learning English to Portuguese.

## 2. Ecclesial Setting

The Indonesian rule guided by the ideology known as pancasila required all citizens to worship only the one God. Thus, it practically outlawed the native traditional religion centered on ancestral beliefs and rituals. Next made to choose between the Muslim and Christian faiths, many Timorese opted to identify with the Catholic Church. During the years of struggle for independence from Indonesia, the resistance movement found weighty support from the Catholic Church –represented by Bishop Carlos Filipe Ximenes Belo, the 1996 Nobel Peace Prize laureate.

Just these two factors alone already help one to understand why East Timor stands out today as one of the two nations (along with the Philippines) that are predominantly Catholic in the whole of Asia. Yet, at best, only 20% are said to be regular churchgoers. The constitution of the new nation abides by the principle of separation between church and state –while guaranteeing freedom of religion to everyone.

## 3. Sharing Intercultural Mission

*“In obedient response to the signs of the times in TLS, we make a preferential missionary commitment to:*

- *The East Timorese people, many among whom are baptized Catholics alienated from the Church ... that they may further grow in the ecclesial practice of their personal faith in Jesus Christ.*
- *The East Timorese families destabilized by a violent political past and disintegrating amidst a chaotic multicultural present ... that they may gain stable and sustaining ties within Christian homes of their own;*
- *The East Timorese youth, in school and out of school ... that they may attain decent education to mature in helpful knowledge, moral wisdom, and personal faith.*
- *The growing number of foreign migrants in search of social and ecclesial belonging ... that they may find welcome in local communities of faith, and defense for their human rights."*

–TLS Mission Statement

Those in final vows IN ACTIVE MINISTRY (%)		2012
Parish Ministry		41.3
School/Education		34.4
Other Apostolates		10.6
SVD Vocation/Formation		0
Administration/Support		10.3

Those in final vows NOT IN MINISTRY (%)		2012
Studies / Orientation		0
Retired/Sick		3.4
Other		0

## PLATFORMS FOR PROPHETIC DIALOGUE

**Parishes.** Presently there are 8 confreres serving in 5 parishes and a quasi-parish (Uatocarbau) in 3 dioceses. Their pastoral presence and service, marked by the SVD characteristic dimensions, are well appreciated by the bishops and the faithful.

**Schools.** The region runs the Colegio Maliana, a secondary school with boarding houses for its male and female students. We also manage the prestigious *Instituto de Ciencias Religiosas* that has been forming religious and lay people as catechists and pastoral ministers. Lastly, an SVD brother manages a carpentry school and shop.

**Other Apostolates.** Three confreres assist in the running and teaching at the seminaries (minor and major) of the Diocese of Dili.

A Filipino confrere serves as chaplain for a growing number of Filipino migrants in the new country. Some Indonesian confreres offer a similar service to their compatriots by organizing a monthly gathering for common prayer and meal.

Finally two confreres serve as spiritual advisers and ongoing formators for two closely related Catholic movements: Youth for Christ and Singles for Christ.

## THE SVD CHARACTERISTIC DIMENSIONS

**Communication.** Since 2006 the Diocese of Dili entrusted to a confrere the management of Radio Timor Kmanek (RTK) –for which we produce bi-



blical and spiritual broadcasts. Another confrere is editor of a Catholic periodical entitled *Time Timor Magazine*. Still another prepares and distributes regular Sunday leaflets with reflections on the biblical readings.

#### 4. Sharing Intercultural Life

*"We, the Divine Word Religious Missionaries in Timor Leste –called by the Holy Triune God from various nations and cultures– live together in intercultural fraternity as witnesses proclaiming the Reign of God to all people and creatures."*

–TLS Vision Statement

MEMBERSHIP	2012
Clerics	32
Brothers (final vows)	2
Brothers (temporal vows)	2
TOTAL	36

AGE and COUNTRY	2012
Average Age	44.8
Nationalities	5*

#### \* ZONAL ORIGIN of province members

ASPAC	34	29isa, 4phi, 1ind
EUROPE	1	1ger
PANAM	1	1usa

**Spirituality.** Our community in Dili follows a daily schedule of mass and common prayers. Once a month we gather for recollection with opportunity for the sacrament of reconciliation.

**Community.** Intercultural teamwork among our confreres is relatively fraternal and dialogical.

**Leadership.** During this year of transition to autonomous administration, leadership roles remain fluid. We are trying to resolve this confusion through holding two general meetings once a year to discuss salient issues and concerns.

**Finance.** Being a 'newborn' region, we still rely on the Timor Province for financial help. One modest start is that the community in Dili is already self-sustaining through its pool of income received mainly from mass stipends.

**Formation.** In November 2009 we initiated the SVD youth center formation (pre-postulancy) in Batugade. The initial year saw 14 candidates come from various places in Timor Leste. It is a six-month program for learning Indonesian and English and for initiation into SVD spirituality.

At the start of our new region, the only forms of ongoing formation are so far a common annual retreat for everyone, and the renewal course in Steyl/Nemi for those whose time is ripe for it. ♦



# VIETNAM PROVINCE



- Official Language: **Vietnamese**
- Visa: Foreign missionaries are strictly forbidden to enter Vietnam. They can be allowed entry and stay only as employed professionals (e.g., teachers and business people). Currently most of foreign missionaries hold business visas valid for only 3 months. Every 6 months, a foreigner has to leave the country and apply for a totally new visa, which can serve as basis for renewal from then onwards.

(July 2011 est.)

**Population****90,549,390****Religious Profile %****Christian****Catholics****Others**

8.0

7.15

92

**Age Structure %****0-14****15-64****65****Fertility Rate**

(babies per woman)

25.2

69.3

5.5

1.91

**Median Age****Life Expectancy****Below Poverty Line**

27.8

72.18

10.6%

**GDP Output %****1****2****3****Labor Force %****1****2****3**

20.6

41.1

38.3

53.9

20.3

25.8

1=Agriculture, 2=Industry, 3=Services

**Urban Population****Urban Rate of Change****Migrant(s) per 1000**

30%

3%

-0.35

**Total Literacy: 94%****male****female****Youth Literacy: 93.9%****male****female**

96.1

92

94.2

93.6

**Mass Media**

per 1000 persons

**Newspaper****Radio****TV****Interactive Media**

per 1000 persons

**Mobile****Internet**

4.97

90.6

39.4

388

258.2

## 1. Intercultural Setting

Vietnam is a country of indigenous peoples that had a long history of multicultural influences. During the first millennium AD the Vietnamese majority in the lowlands was subject to Chinese imperial rule. From the second to the late 15th century AD the Cham and Khmer in the lowlands, of what

is now central Vietnam, came under the culturally Indian kingdom of Champa. Many other ethnic groups that inhabit the highlands show strong affinities with other Southeast Asians in the neighboring countries.

The modern Vietnamese nation broke free from a century of French colonial rule that finally fell in 1954 to the military forces led by Ho Chi Minh. This event brought about the division between the Communist North and the anti-Communist

In the late 1960s the Congregation of Saint Joseph (CSJ) expressed the desire to collectively join our Society.

day of 1976 the Vietnamese National Assembly declared the complete reunification of the Vietnamese nation.

Vietnam today stands at a crossroad. The Doi Moi ("Renovation") policy launched in 1986 began dismantling the national socialist economy in favor of a liberal market economy. The government modernized the infrastructure of the country to produce more competitive, export-driven industries. Since then, the country has experienced tremendous social and cultural changes. It raised the standard of living of the greater population, but it also increased corruption, social inequality,

South. North Vietnam tried next to reunify the country by military conquest. It led instead to the outbreak of the Vietnam War that ended only in April 1975, when North Vietnamese soldiers captured the city of Saigon and forced the surrender of the South Vietnamese government backed by the USA. On the first

regional tensions, and an HIV/AIDS epidemic. Various ethnic minorities in mountain and rural areas have risen in protest against losing their ancestral lands or being deprived of equal socio-political rights. The Communist Party still exercises exclusive control of political power, but is growing uncertain of achieving economic advance in stable social peace in the coming decades.

## 2. Ecclesial Setting

The Vietnamese government recognizes six official religions: Buddhism, Catholicism, Protestantism, Islam, and two religious movements of recent yet indigenous origins known as Cao Dai and Hoa Hao. Cao Dai arose during the 1920s as a synthesis of Buddhism, Catholicism, and Chinese traditional religiosity. Hoa Hao, on the other hand, is neo-Buddhist in character. Despite the rapid spread of both religions today, their adherents remain a minority in comparison with more than 70% of Vietnamese who identify with Buddhism of the Mahayana tradition. Local cults centered on the veneration of nature and ancestral spirits are still widely practiced in many upland communities, whereas most Cham have remained Muslims.

In the 16th century Portuguese explorers and Dominican missionaries came to Vietnam to spread the Catholic faith. After the partition of the country in 1954, many Catholics who used to be numerous in the north fled to the south. All foreign Catholic and Protestant missionaries were expelled from North Vietnam, leaving only the native clergy. The North Vietnamese government supplanted the existing structures of the officially

recognized religions by appointing patriotic representatives to govern them. Catholics –both clergy and laity– were forced to renounce their allegiance to Rome. With the fall of Saigon in 1975, northern institutions of control over churches were extended to the south as well.

The present Vietnamese constitution professes to guarantee the freedom of religion. In practice, however, the Communist government warily controls all forms of religious gathering lest they serve as forum for dissent. The local Church has learned to remain dynamic within these many legal structures. Minimal signs of its vitality are these official figures at the start of the year 2011: the Catholic Church in Vietnam has 50 bishops, 3,721 priests, 14,400 male and female religious and 1,713 seminarians.

### 3. Sharing Intercultural Mission

*“Compelled by the Holy Spirit and joyfully responding to the call of the Incarnate Word, we strive to live out the missionary spirit of St Arnold Janssen and Fr Jean Sion (founder of the Congregation of St Joseph) as witnesses to God’s Kingdom among the people of Vietnam and the world. Responding to the call from the SVD General Chapters XV and XVI, we commit ourselves to serving and living the spirit of prophetic dialogue:*

- *with the poor and marginalized, especially among ethnic minorities –by learning their languages and cultures, and helping them protect and improve their lives,*
- *with believers of other religions –by learning from each other and working with them,*

- *with victims of HIV/AIDS –by serving them and easing their pain.*

*We empower our faithful parishioners to be our lay partners who share in our works of pastoral care and mission outreach.”*

–VIE Mission Statement

#### those in final vows

##### IN ACTIVE MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Parish	20.0	22.2	35.3
Education	1.7	5.6	1.5
Other Apostolates	16.7	1.4	15.3
SVD Vocation/Formation	13.3	18.1	16.9
Administration/Support	21.7	22.2	12.5

#### those in final vows

##### NOT IN MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Studies / Orientation	6.7	11.1	12.5
Retired/Sick	20.0	19.4	6.0
Other	0	0	0

In the late 1960s the Congregation of Saint Joseph (CSJ) expressed the desire to collectively join our Society. The CSJ was a diocesan religious institute whose numerous members –most of whom were Brothers with just a few priests– were devoted to mission outreach, catechesis, and education. The fall of Saigon in 1975 dispersed the members and contact with its leadership remained scarce and secret. By mid-1990s, a three-year period of association with our Society was formally set with the CSJ –whose membership then counted just more than 80 men. The merger was finally ratified by a decree of approval by the Holy See on 19 March

1998. Thus, the SVD Vietnam Region was born. In April 2008 it became a province.

## PLATFORMS FOR PROPHETIC DIALOGUE

**Parishes.** We are working at 8 parishes in 6 dioceses nationwide. During our previous provincial chapter, we decided to continue our missionary service among the ethnic people. We have recently assumed a new parish in Tam Ngan hamlet, Ninh Thuan Province where the ethnic group known as Raklai is dominant.

**Other Apostolates.** We work in urban apostolates in collaboration with the Pastoral Institute of the Saigon Archdiocese. We have a family ministry in pastoral response to the increasing number of broken families. Some confreres are also assigned to apostolates among young students and workers many of whom have migrated from rural to urban areas. Because the government forbids religious to run schools, we help poor students to go through proper schooling by providing them a modest living allowance or partial scholarship.

## THE SVD CHARACTERISTIC DIMENSIONS

**Communication.** The province has a blog site through which we reach out to confreres at work as missionaries at home and abroad. A Brother is presently specializing in website administration and design in view of communication ministry in cyberspace.

**JPIC.** Our parishes serve as centers for fostering rural development and serving the rural poor. These pastoral-social projects are widely appreciated by the bishops and the local people.

We are also running two centers for orphans and abandoned children: Huong Duong (Sunflower Children House) and Dai An (Greatest Peace Children House). We minister to the elderly and victims of HIV/AIDS by regular visits at their homes. At our medical clinic, we give treatment free of charge to the poor.

## 4. Sharing Intercultural Life

*“Our members come from different cultural backgrounds. Thus, living together in fraternal communion requires mutual acceptance, listening, humility, openness, solidarity and sincere cooperation from every confrere.”*

–VIE Vision Statement

MEMBERSHIP	2000	2005	2012
Clerics	19	22	52
Brothers (final vows)	11	14	9
Brothers (temporal vows)	3	3	3
Scholastics	25	66	69
Novices	10	16	11
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>144</b>

AGE and COUNTRY	2005	2012
Average Age	38.0	47.4
Nationalities	3	2*

\* ZONAL ORIGIN of province members

ASPAC 144 143vie, lisa

**Spirituality.** Apart from masses, common prayers and monthly recollections in communities, we give spiritual guidance to the groups of the St Joseph Family, the Devotees of St Arnold Jansen, and the Association of Ex-CSJ and Ex-SVD members.

**Community.** We have community day every Tuesday and hold monthly community meeting and sharing. We do not experience much internationality among us because the political situa-

tion in the country does not welcome foreigner missionaries.

**Finance.** A confrere has been sent to train in financial management. Having just finished his specialized studies, he is now tasked to initiate fund-raising projects in view of self-reliance for our young province.

**Formation.** Aside from regular required courses, learning English as a second language is a must for all our candidates both for the priesthood and Brotherhood. Every summer, we send our student confreres to the remote places to live and work among poor ethnic people in Vietnam. ♦



# EUROPE ZONE



A map of Europe with various countries shaded in gray. The shaded regions correspond to the countries listed in the table: Spain, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, United Kingdom, Italy, Romania, Moldova, Netherlands, Belgium, Austria, Croatia, Poland, Ukraine, Kaliningrad, Portugal, The Roman Communities, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Switzerland, France, Russia, and Belarus. The map shows the geographical distribution of these countries across the European continent.

<b>ESP</b>	Spain
<b>GER</b>	Germany
<b>HUN</b>	Hungary, Serbia
<b>IBP</b>	Ireland, United Kingdom
<b>ITA</b>	Italy, Romania, Moldova
<b>NEB</b>	Netherlands, Belgium
<b>OES</b>	Austria, Croatia
<b>POL</b>	Poland, Ukraine, Kaliningrad
<b>POR</b>	Portugal
<b>ROM</b>	The Roman Communities
<b>SLO</b>	Slovakia, Czech Republic
<b>SWI</b>	Switzerland, France
<b>URL</b>	Russia, Belarus





## A NEW FACE OF THE SVD IN EUROPE

Circular Letter to all Confreres in EUROPE  
After the General Visitations of 2008

Dear Confreres,

At our generalate planning and evaluation meetings in July 2008 and January 2009, we had the opportunity to review the last general visitation of our European provinces and region. The visitation was a time of enriching and fruitful dialogue between the generalate and the individual confreres and local communities in the provinces and region. We thank all of you for your hospitality and collaboration during the visitation. Through this letter, we wish to express to you our gratitude and appreciation for your contribution to mission, and to share with you our impressions and observations regarding the present situation of our provinces and region in the zone, and our concerns and hopes about the future of our Society in Europe.

A common observation among the visitators is that a new face of the SVD in Europe seems to be emerging.

First of all, it is a face that is no longer just turned outwards toward the world but also inwards toward Europe itself. The new understanding of mission signaled by the Roscommon Consensus of 1990 has now taken root in the provinces and region. Confreres are becoming more and more aware that mission exists not only outside Europe but also inside Europe, and that there is an urgent need to respond to the missionary situation in the zone.

Secondly, the faces of the people we work with have changed. Both the changed situation of Europe and a new understanding of mission require new ways of carrying out our mission in the continent. There is need to enter into prophetic dialogue with different groups of people. "Project Europe" has made this sufficiently clear. Its publication, *Today's Europe and the SVD*, indicates the varying missionary needs of the contemporary European situation.

Thirdly, the faces of the confreres who now compose our provinces and region and who help carry out our mission in Europe have also changed. No longer exclusively Europeans but also Asians, Africans and Latin Americans. Over the last few years, our European provinces and region have become more and more international and intercultural through the arrival of many missionaries from abroad, especially from the so-called "global south".

Needless to say, the face of Europe itself is changing. There are many ways to describe this new face of Europe – secularized, multi-cultural, pluralistic, post-modern, post-Christian. It is our hope that the new face of the SVD in Europe will be a genuine blessing for a changed and changing Europe and reveal the human face of the Father, Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Word.

## 1. Mission

“As members of the Society of the Divine Word, we consider it our duty to proclaim the Word of God to all ....” (c.102). The XV and XVI General Chapters have helped us to understand our mission as giving witness to God’s Kingdom through Prophetic Dialogue marked by four Characteristic Dimensions.

During our recent visitations we focused on this vision of our mission in Europe and tried to see the commitment of the confreres in the perspective of the SVD witness of prophetic dialogue.

### 1.1. The Missionary Context

Both the Church and the SVD have to face not only a new situation in the social, political or

#### RELIGIOUS PROFILE

Christian %	Catholic %	Other %
72.2	70.1	27.8
59.9	31.10	40.1
74.4	59.35	25.6
91.7	5.21	8.3
92.3	76.1	7.7
71.8	8.87	28.2
91.1	95.81	8.9
97.5	8.49	2.5
98.3	0.56	1.7
43.4	29.88	56.6
48.0	73.10	52
69.9	72.70	30.1
90.6	88.40	9.4
91.4	89.8	8.6
91.5	10.31	8.5
86.7	84.5	13.3
83.8	68.9	16.2
28.9	26.8	71.1
79.3	44.48	20.7
85	83	15
15	0.42	85
80.0	13.69	20

#### COUNTRIES

Spain
Germany
Hungary
Serbia
Ireland
United Kingdom
Italy
Romania
Moldova
Netherlands
Belgium
Austria
Croatia
Poland
Ukraine
Portugal
Slovakia
Czech Republic
Switzerland
France
Russia
Belarus

#### DEMOGRAPHIC FEATURES

POPULATION	Fertility Rate	Median Age	Life Expect.
46,754,784	1.47	40.5	81.1
81,471,834	1.41	44.9	80.0
9,976,062	1.4	40.2	74.8
7,310,555	1.4	41.3	74.3
4,670,976	2.02	34.8	80.2
62,698,362	1.91	40	80.0
61,016,804	1.39	43.5	81.7
21,904,551	1.29	38.7	73.9
4,314,377	1.29	35.4	71.3
16,847,007	1.66	41.1	79.6
10,431,477	1.65	42.3	79.5
8,217,280	1.4	43	79.7
4,483,804	1.44	41.4	76.0
38,441,588	1.3	38.5	76.0
45,134,707	1.28	39.9	68.5
10,760,305	1.32	40.0	78.5
5,477,038	1,37	37.6	75.8
10,190,213	1.26	40.8	77.2
7,639,961	1.46	41.7	81.0
65,312,249	1.96	39.9	81.2
138,739,982	1.42	38.7	66.3
9,577,552	1.26	39	71.2

cultural fields but also a radical change of the religious context. On the one hand, secularism has become so widespread, affecting even public institutions, that some speak of a post-Christian reality. On the other hand, many people in Europe are looking for a deeper meaning in life. There is a search for the spiritual dimension, even if people try to find this outside the ecclesial institutional

structures. European society is also marked more and more by pluralism. The expansion of the European Union and the migration of large numbers of people from other continents has brought about a great diversity and heterogeneity. A multi-cultural, multi-ethnic and multi-racial population has now become the reality in civil society as well as in the Church.

### LABOR FORCE

1 Agriculture	2 Industry	3 Services
4.2%	24%	71.7%
2.4%	29.7%	67.8%
4.7%	30.95	64.4%
23.9%	20.5%	55.6%
4.8%	22.2%	73%
1.4%	18.2%	80.45%
4.2%	30.7%	65.15%
29.7%	23.2%	47.1%
40.6%	16%	43.3%
2%	18%	805
2%	25%	73%
5.5%	27.5%	67%
5%	31.3%	63.6%
17.4%	29.2%	53.4%
15.8%	18.5%	65.7%
11.7%	28.5%	59.8%
3.5%	27%	69.4%
3.1%	38.6%	58.3%
3.4%	23.4%	73.2%
3.8%	24.3%	71.8%
10%	31.9%	58.1%
14%	34.7%	51.3%

### COUNTRIES

Spain
Germany
Hungary
Serbia
Ireland
United Kingdom
Italy
Romania
Moldova
Netherlands
Belgium
Austria
Croatia
Poland
Ukraine
Portugal
Slovakia
Czech Republic
Switzerland
France
Russia
Belarus

### SOCIAL INDICES

Below Pov. Line	Urban Population	Migration Rate
1.47%	77%	3.89
1.41%	74%	0.54
13.9%	68%	1.39
8.8%	56%	0
5.5%	62%	0.86
n .a.	80%	2.6
n .a.	68%	4.86
25%	57%	-0.26
26.3%	47%	-1.13
10.5%	83%	2.33
15.25	97%	1.22
6.0%	68%	1.81
17%	58%	1.51
17%	61%	-0.47
35%	69%	-0.09
18%	61%	2.98
21%	55%	0.29
n .a.	74%	0.97
6.9%	74%	1.29
6.2%	85%	1.46
13.1%	73%	0.29
13.1%	75%	0.38

## 1.2. The Challenges to SVD Mission

The changes in Europe are not threats to be faced with fear. Rather, they are signs of the times and demanding challenges for the SVD. They are to be taken seriously and responsibly as part of our missionary calling. In the midst of this transformation we, Divine Word Missionaries, are invited to participate with HOPE and URGENCY in the task of helping shape the “New Face of Europe”. In the spirit of prophetic dialogue we are called to reach out to those involved in and affected by the changes arising from globalization, secularization and migration. They are “dialogue partners”. With them we strive to build up a new form of communion among the different groups and communities, overcoming every frontier that separates or divides people.

## 1.3. Our Missionary Response

In the face of these new challenges, our provinces and region have discovered that there are missionary situations in Europe and have begun to look for ways of responding to them. Finding appropriate ways of mission will be a long and difficult process, one which some provinces will have to undertake despite decreasing numbers. We should continue to evaluate our traditional apostolates. But it is even more important to look for new ones. Several promising new initiatives have already been undertaken:

- Our outreach to migrants should not only lead to integrating them into the new European society but should also prepare the local churches in Europe to be open for mutual enrichment.
- New approaches to pastoral work with the youth, e.g., through the MAZ (missionaries for

a time) or “missionary vacation camps” with young people, are signs of our awareness that we need to consider the youth as serious partners of our prophetic dialogue.

- The search for new paths of evangelization in today’s Europe leads to the quest for a giving a more missionary profile to our institutions and parishes.
- The need to animate the local Churches often requires involving the laity ever more in our missionary commitment. To achieve this, confreres are making a significant contribution in the field of communication, aware that the new means of communication have an important role in evangelization today.
- Several initiatives in the field of JPIC show the confreres’ continuing sensitivity to the acute social problems of our time and their enduring concern for the poor, the marginalized and those in need.

## 1.4. The Agents of Mission

The future of our mission in Europe will depend largely on the following factors:

**1.4.1. Local Vocations.** Everyone is aware that vocation promotion is an up-hill task, especially in Western Europe. However, despite this real difficulty, we must nevertheless recognize that the Society’s mission in Europe can have no future without determined efforts at vocation promotion. A province that decides to stop vocation promotion is in fact deciding to close down the mission of the Society in the area. A relevant ministry among the youth is a great help toward this end. Every province should have a serious program as

well as suitable confreres for a well-organized vocation promotion. The vocation promoters of the zone should meet frequently to explore new possibilities of vocation promotion.

**1.4.2. New Missionaries From Abroad.** The Society assigns new missionaries to Europe not sim-

ply in order to keep provinces alive but in order to respond to concrete missionary needs. New missionaries coming into the European setting are confronted with great challenges, including those arising from a secularized society. While they need to immerse themselves in the local culture, new missionaries from abroad also enrich SVD com-

MASS MEDIA per 1000			COUNTRIES	LITERACY RATE %		INTERACTIVE per 1000	
Daily	Radio	TV		Total	Youth	Mobile	Internet
85.6	280.2	346.5	Spain	97.5	n .a.	1101.3	601.4
306.85	954.9	570.7	Germany	99.0	n .a.	1228.8	799.3
469.97	702.6	443.0	Hungary	99.3	99.6	1204.0	619.0
n .a.	403.8	376.1	Serbia	96.4	99.3	1356.2	551.8
120.75	545.9	314.7	Ireland	99.0	n .a.	1006.6	651.2
305.57	1347.7	486.4	United Kingdom	99.0	n .a.	1288.7	820.5
102.81	827.6	496.5	Italy	98.4	99.4	1343.9	479.1
n .a.	328.7	239.6	Romania	97.3	98.5	1124.8	355.5
152.97	746.3	292.0	Moldova	99.4	99.6	733.6	308.9
263.73	908.1	408.8	Netherlands	99.0	n .a.	1146.2	882.7
150.31	744.1	452.4	Belgium	99.0	n .a.	1165.1	777.7
304.6	739.9	517.2	Austria	98.0	n .a.	1489.6	747.5
132.7	336.7	272.1	Croatia	98.5	99.3	1418.8	498.2
102.18	525.4	339.4	Poland	99.6	99.7	1196.6	584.0
192.38	998.1	399.9	Ukraine	99.4	99.6	1194.8	172.1
95.35	280.6	307.6	Portugal	93.3	99.3	1412.3	480.2
128.72	569.6	478.3	Slovakia	99.5	99.3	1081.8	741.8
n .a.	811.5	536.8	Czech Republic	99.0	99.5	1155.6	431.8
348.95	929.3	433.2	Switzerland	99.0	n .a.	1240.2	805.2
128.98	846.7	532.8	France	99.0	n .a.	979.9	693.1
n .a.	443.2	436.0	Russia	99.3	99.6	1715.4	294.4
162.78	315.3	263.1	Belarus	99.4	99.7	1078.8	275.9

munities and the people they serve with the values and spirituality of their own cultures. This is part of the unspoken dialogue of cultural integration. Both dimensions of cultural integration can be ensured through a personal accompaniment of the new missionaries for the first couple of years (cf. c. 518). Ongoing formation will further help them to grow in their life and ministry (cf. c. 520.1).

**1.4.3. Collaboration with The Laity.** Our provinces and region in Europe are already collaborating with the laity in many areas. The time may now have come to discern whether it is appropriate to move a step further and invite the interested laity to join us in some form of formalized commitment for a period of time (cf. “SVD-Laity Mission Partnership”, IDW-8). Collaboration with laity, with NGOs and other institutions within the frame work of the SVD constitutions will help ensure the continuation, and even revitalization, of our mission. As recommended by the last general chapter, we should continue to seek to introduce the laity to the charism, the spirituality and the spirit of the Society. We should consider the laity not only as collaborators who can assist us but as real partners from whom we can also learn and by whom we can also be inspired.

## 2. Religious life

“We are a community of brothers from different nations and cultures and we strive to be a living symbol of the unity and diversity of the Church and the Reign of God” (XVI GC, IDW-6, n. 34). As religious missionaries, we are called to participate in God’s mission through a community that

bears witness to the Kingdom of God through intercultural living and openness to contemporary missionary challenges.

### 2.1. Spirituality for Mission

Despite the aging profile of our provinces and region in Europe, we are convinced that the Lord is calling us forward to carry out His mission through our particular charism, personnel and resources. This requires a spirituality of hope based on an unwavering trust in the Lord, even if we may sometimes feel like Peter and his companions: “Master, we have worked hard all night and have caught nothing” (Lk 5:5). Perhaps our mission would be more effective by strengthening some of the new missionary initiatives which have already been started (e.g., work with migrants, ministry to the youth, cooperation with institutions, etc.), rather than by keeping our traditional forms of missionary work. A spirituality of dialogue enables us to work more with others rather than rely only on our own efforts; it fosters the conviction that God’s Kingdom is also present in our dialogue partners and even beyond them in ways that often are not easy to grasp (cf. Mk 4: 26-29)

Our Founder, St. Arnold Janssen, gave us an example of openness and courage to begin something new when he said, “we live in a time when much is collapsing and new things must be established in their place” (J. Alt, *Journey in Faith*, *Analecta SVD* 85, Rome, 2002, p. 57). In some cases, this means letting go of structures and giving up ideas that tie us too much to the past. We must be able to look to the future with trust in the Lord. Our “connectedness” with God is essential



if we are to share authentic hope with the world. “God is the foundation of hope: not any god, but the God who has a human face and who has loved us to the end, each one of us and humanity in its entirety” (Spes Salvi, n. 31).

## 2.2. Community for Mission

Religious life is a witness to Christ as a community. For the sake of our mission we are called, as religious missionaries, to overcome the different forms of individualism that often jeopardize our living together. Consecrated life is “a living memorial of Jesus’ way of living and acting as the Incarnate Word in relation to the Father and in relation to the brethren” (*Vita Consecrata*, n. 22). In the SVD, intercultural living has become a hallmark of many of our communities. Thus, a “culture of teamwork should inspire our thoughts, words and actions” (XVI GC, IDW-6, n. 42). This requires mutual acceptance and the assurance that we all can be enriched by this “school of dialogue” (XV GC, IDW-1, n. 102). We need to recognize the grace of God expressed through the presence of each confrere, with his strengths and weaknesses, as well as the diversity of his culture and faith experience. In today’s world, much characterized by egoism, loneliness and violence, this witness of unity in diversity is, in and of itself, a significant means of mission.

We acknowledge the contribution to mission of our elderly confreres who now have to carry the cross of suffering, offering their prayers and community living for the confreres and for the cause of the mission. The witness of their long-life commitment to Christ as religious missionaries is of great evangelical value in this changing world.

## 2.3 Formation for Mission

Initial formation, carried out in international and intercultural communities, is still the best way to prepare missionaries, especially for Europe. We appreciate the efforts that have been made to set up suitable formation programs for European and non-European students. Perhaps we could promote a closer cooperation among the provinces with the same or similar languages (e.g., a common formation program for the German speaking provinces). For all initial formation programs in Europe, we propose finding appropriate means of sharing experiences and of fostering intercultural exchange (e.g., through e-mail, newsletters, or occasional meetings). Taking into consideration the present world situation marked by injustice and many forms of exploitation, we recommend the integration of JPIC issues in formation programs through study and exposure.

Ongoing formation also deserves particular attention. Indeed, a good number of middle-aged confreres are shouldering heavy responsibilities in the animation and administration of our missionary work in the provinces and region. To avoid “burn-out”, we recommend that provincial and regional superiors encourage confreres to attend seminars or to take advantage of other means of ongoing formation. In regard to our elderly confreres, we note and appreciate the initiatives that have been made in some provinces to help these confreres in this critical stage of their life. We also recommend continuing the practice of incorporating ongoing formation sessions in provincial/regional assemblies. At the same time, however, we would like to express our concern

over the apparent lack of sufficient ongoing formation at local level (houses and districts). Thus, we strongly recommend organizing, on a regular basis, ongoing formation on this level on pertinent topics.

### 3. Special issues

#### 3.1. Closer Cooperation among the Provinces

The visitations have underlined the need to promote common planning of our SVD missionary vision and missionary initiatives in Europe. Some of the advantages of wider cooperation are greater efficiency and the availability of more confreres to reach out to our dialogue partners. In some situations, new missionary challenges are quite demanding, requiring a more creative response and the involvement of more confreres. Collaboration should not be limited merely to certain fields of activities or apostolates. More intensive collaboration can even lead to a future merger of some provinces. We should remain open to a new configuration of our presence in Europe. Such a reconfiguration should not be seen as a threat to or a diminution of our missionary witness. It allows us to respond better to the multi-faceted changes in Europe.

#### 3.2. Our Institutes

Over the years our various institutes in Europe have made a significant contribution to missionary research in the Society. Our institutes should be grounded in the reality of today's Europe and focus on the contemporary missionary challenges of the continent. In this way, they can help develop programs for the practical training for mission

in present-day Europe. This could be done in collaboration with the local churches and with the other institutes of the Society worldwide. Our Institutes should also contribute to the updating of our formation programs and of our missionary vision and mission methods in order to better respond to the challenges of the contemporary situation.

#### 3.3. The Motherhouse in Steyl

Our Motherhouse in Steyl is an integral part of our heritage as a religious missionary congregation. We appreciate the interest of the German Province in taking care of Steyl and in making every possible effort to revitalize it. We note its commitment to actively look for ways of making Steyl an effective center of wider mission animation. We are grateful to the other European provinces for helping to bear some of the responsibility for the house in Steyl. The generalate shares the concern and hope that Steyl continues to develop into a vital center of our spirituality and mission. By establishing the Arnold Janssen Spirituality Center (AJSC) in Steyl and by introducing the newer practice of beginning all Nemi renewal courses in Steyl, the generalate wishes to promote among the members of the Society the importance of Steyl as our common motherhouse.

### 4. Conclusion

We would like to express a word of gratitude to all of you for your spirit of dialogue and for your attempts to reach out to new partners in proclaiming and witnessing to the Kingdom of God. We appreciate your openness to the emergence of a new face of the Society in a changing Europe. May the Lord give you strength, joy and continuous enthusiasm

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to carry on the mission of evangelization which has been entrusted to you. We would like to say a word of special thanks to you for sharing your resources, especially personnel and finances, with the other zones of the Society. Despite a declining number of confreres from Europe in the Society, many European confreres still contribute to God's mission in different parts of the world, and our European provinces continue to provide the much-needed financial support for our SVD mission worldwide.

Dear confreres, "We are called anew to a radical transformation of our mentality, attitudes, and behavior in order to become better witnesses at the service of God's Reign" (XVI GC, IDW-6, n. 107). The world will always need witnesses. Our prayer is that you, dear confreres in Europe, will carry on your mission with a conviction rooted in

strong faith and unwavering hope. May St. Arnold and the holy men and women of our religious missionary family help you to be untiring witnesses to the Divine Word.

*May the Lord bless you and keep you.  
May the Lord let his face shine upon you  
and be gracious to you.  
May the Lord look upon you kindly  
and give you his peace. –Num 6:24-26*

Fraternally in the Divine Word,

Antonio M. Pernia, SVD  
Superior General

Emmanuel Kofi Fianu, SVD  
Secretary General

IN PERPETUAL VOWS			INITIAL FORMATION			Average	Nation- alities	ORIGIN BY ZONES				
BIS	CLE	BRO	CLE	BRO	NOV	Age		12	AFRAM	ASPAC	EUROPE	PANAM
2	859	189	78	8	11	61.14	Total		36	159	942	10
0	50	2	3	0	0	58.65	ESP	11	6	10	37	2
0	222	84	16	3	1	67.46	GER	21	9	44	271	2
1	23	3	6	1	0	56.07	HUN	9	2	8	24	0
0	52	4	2	0	0	62.93	IBP	10	1	7	50	0
0	31	2	4	0	0	59.11	ITA	12	2	6	29	0
0	62	17	0	0	0	73.37	NEB	10	3	10	66	0
0	67	27	1	0	0	64.24	OES	13	2	8	82	3
1	167	23	25	4	7	53.74	POL	7	3	10	214	0
0	36	1	4	0	0	53.64	POR	7	2	12	27	0
0	39	11	0	0	0	56.59	ROM	16	3	20	24	3
0	45	2	14	0	3	53.61	SLO	8	0	8	56	0
0	35	6	0	0	0	62.59	SWI	10	3	5	33	0
0	30	7	3	0	0	43.26	URL	7	0	11	29	0

## MINISTRY AD EXTRA %

Parish	Education	Other
28.7	2.1	13.1
46.0	0	22.0
16.0	0.6	20.4
11.1	0	3.7
15.0	0	30.0
30.8	0	10.3
9.8	0	13.5
27.3	0	11.0
17.3	8.1	18.4
40.8	0	21.8
0	2.0	14.0
34.1	3.8	10.9
42.5	5.0	7.0
54.5	6.1	6.1

## MINISTRY AD INTRA %

Leadership	Formation
20.3	6.4
8.0	2.0
16.0	1.6
18.6	22.2
20.0	0
15.5	10.3
8.4	4.0
6.6	3.3
17.7	11.8
28.1	9.3
74.0	10.0
8.3	5.4
12.1	5.5
15.2	3.0

## NOT IN MINISTRY %

Studies	Retired	Other
4.1	22.8	2.5
6.0	16.0	0
10.4	35.0	0
11.1	29.6	3.7
0	27.0	8.0
0	20.3	0
1.5	62.8	0
3.3	33.3	15.2
3.0	15.8	7.9
0	0	0
0	0	0
4.8	30.8	1.9
5.4	22.5	0
12.1	3.0	0

# SPAIN PROVINCE



- Official Language: **Spanish**
- Visa: Citizens of full European (EFTA, EEA) Member Countries are able to live and work in Spain without a visa or work permit.
- As for non-EU nationals, the ESP Province applies for the residence visa and work permit on behalf of the confrere assigned to live and work there. With full and proper documentation, acquiring such a visa and permit presents no major obstacle except that it may entail a few months of waiting for some.

(July 2011 est.)

## Population

46,754,784

## Religious Profile %

Christian	Catholics	Others
72.2	70.1	27.8

## Age Structure %

0-14	15-64	65
15.1	67.7	17.1

## Fertility Rate

(babies per woman)

1.47

## Median Age

40.5

## Life Expectancy

81.17

## Below Poverty Line

19.8

## GDP Output %

1	2	3
3.3	26	70.7

## Labor Force %

1	2	3
4.2	24	71.7

1=Agriculture, 2=Industry, 3=Services

## Urban Population

77%

## Urban Rate of Change

1%

## Migrant(s) per 1000

3.89

## Total Literacy: 97.9%

male

female

98.7	97.2
------	------

## Youth Literacy: 99.6%

male

female

n.a.	n.a.
------	------

## Mass Media

per 1000 persons

Newspaper	Radio	TV
85.6	280.2	346.49

## Interactive Media

per 1000 persons

Mobile	Internet
1,101.34	601.4

## 1. Intercultural Setting

Because of its location on the Iberian Peninsula, the territory comprising modern Spain has served as crossroad and haven of many historic waves of migration. The multicultural impact of these waves is imprinted in the numerous regional diversities of which rural Spaniards take great

pride. At the same time they have a sense of shared belonging to *comarcas* –purely cultural and economic identities, without being administrative units. These communities patronize the same markets, wear similar traditional clothes, worship at common regional shrines, and celebrate annual festivals at places designated by their shared traditions. Spanish national identity has built on the symbiosis of these regional diversities. Those likely to feel Spanish are the Catalans and Basques, although the large and regional populace that they constitute is not unanimous in taking such a political or cultural stance.

Most Spaniards today, especially the younger ones, no longer frequent the sacraments and ignore the Catholic teachings in morals, politics or sexuality.

The Basque language is unrelated to any other known language –living or extinct ones. This fact is the main basis for the Basque sense of separateness.

Urban Spain, however, presents a rapidly changing demographic profile. By the end of the first decade of the current century, 14% of the total population was foreign-born. Of these, 5.1% came from other member states of the European Union –especially Romania, United Kingdom, Germany, Italy and Bulgaria. The 8.9% remainder came from outside Europe: Latin Americans (mainly from Ecuador, Colombia, Bolivia, Argentina and Brazil), Asians (mostly Chinese and Filipinos), Moroccans and some sub-Saharan Africans.

As the presence of immigrants increases in Spain, the resident population has been plunging down

in number since the 1980s to the lowest sub-replacement fertility rate in the world, only second to that of Japan. Furthermore, because of the worsening economic crisis in the country today, unemployment has risen to more than 50% among its highly education youth. Thus, many among the latter now dream of emigrating elsewhere within or beyond Europe.

## 2. Ecclesial Setting

For centuries Spain had been a bastion of Catholicism. But most Spaniards today, especially the younger ones, no longer frequent the sacraments and ignore the Catholic teachings in morals, politics or sexuality. A case in point is the popularly supported legalization of divorce and same-sex marriage. Cultural debates in the public sphere are far more related to politics than religion. And any revivalist movement of religious character wins very few adherents. For this reason, Spain is said to be the “graveyard” for foreign Evangelical missionaries.

Since the last decade, Catholic involvement in public issues has regained vigor through ecclesial groups of traditional orientation (such as the *Opus Dei*, Neo-Catechumenal Way or Legion of Christ). Their concerted efforts at reviving traditional Catholicism are channeled through Church-owned media (e.g., COPE radio network) and gain the support of prominent persons linked with the right-wing Partido Popular. A consequence of such an implication has been a renewed popular criticism, especially from most left-wing voters. What compensates for the dwindling number of

Spanish Catholics is the influx of foreign migrants since the 1990s from Latin America, Asia and Africa. But what is true for Catholics is truer still for Muslims – nowadays a burgeoning 2.5% minority of the total population. Islam is now the second largest religion in Spain – much more due to migration and fertility than by conversion.

### 3. Sharing Intercultural Mission

#### Those in final vows

#### IN ACTIVE MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Parish Ministry	27.0	32.5	46.0
School/Education	2.7	0	0
Other Apostolates	37.8	15.0	22.0
SVD Vocation/Formation	5.4	2.5	2.0
Administration/Support	13.5	30.0	8.0

#### Those in final vows

#### NOT IN MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Studies/Orientation	8.1	2.5	6.0
Retired/Sick	2.7	7.5	16.0
Other	2.7	10.0	0

### PLATFORMS FOR PROPHETIC DIALOGUE

The SVD Spanish Province counts among its preferential partners in dialogue: the dwindling number of the Catholic faithful, those at the margins of the Church because of religious doubt or indifference, immigrants in search of ecclesial communities, the aged and infirm, and faith-seekers within our mission outreach.

The platforms whereby we engaged them in prophetic dialogue are:

- our parishes at the service of the local Church,
- our chaplaincies for migrants in Madrid (mostly Filipinos and Poles),
- some hospitals and retirement homes where confreres serve as chaplains,
- Alba (an NGO named after an SVD-run parish founded and managed by its lay staff),
- and Editorial Verbo Divino, a publishing house of international readership.

### THE SVD CHARACTERISTIC DIMENSIONS

**Mission Animation.** One of the reasons for which our SVD presence was founded in Spain was to promote mission awareness and missionary vocations. Traditionally, therefore, the offices for vocation promotion and mission animation in the province are the ones that help instill and nourish missionary solidarity and generosity among the laity in Spain. Actively helping us in mission animation in parishes and among the youth is “*Verbo Mision*” – a lay association sympathetic to the SVD charism and worldwide mission.

**Biblical Apostolate/Communication.** The *Editorial Verbo Divino*, known in the entire Spanish speaking world for the diffusion of the Bible and Bible-related books, is more than just a publishing house. It also offers biblical formation courses online (see [www.verbodivino.es](http://www.verbodivino.es)). Our parishes and chaplaincies also serve as platforms for its biblical courses and Bible week programs. Some dioceses have even adopted and promoted these



downloadable online courses as their own. The province also has a website that presents who we are as a missionary Society (see [www.misioneros-verbodivino.com](http://www.misioneros-verbodivino.com)).

**JPIC.** Our efforts in this field are still at a phase of exploring ways and channels for more effective ecclesial and societal involvement.

#### 4. Sharing Intercultural Life

##### MEMBERSHIP 2000 2005 2012

Clerics	35	38	50
Brothers (final vows)	2	2	2
Scholastics	6	9	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>55</b>

##### AGE and COUNTRY 2000 2005 2012

Average Age	51.2	51.7	58.6
Nationalities	7	9	11*

##### \* ZONAL ORIGIN of province members

AFRAM	6	2cng, 2ang, 1gha, 1tog
ASPAC	10	4phi, 3isa, 3ind
EUROPE	37	34esp, 3pol
PANAM	2	1brz, 1mex

**Spirituality.** Our personal experience of faith, our annual retreats, and ongoing formation are notable ways in nurturing our religious missionary

life. The life-witness of some exemplary confreres among us also morally support us to persevere in our faith and ministry.

**Community.** Our experience of elaborating our mission statements in our local communities made us realize how important is promoting fraternal life in common, open dialogue through district and provincial meetings, and triennial meetings convoked by the local superiors or through the initiative of some members.

**Leadership.** Being a vital authentic service to our mission and community, our leadership from local to provincial levels strives to foster personal responsibility, mutual respect and fraternal dialogue.

**Formation.** The province organizes yearly meetings for ongoing formation. Each community can also avail of a common fund from the *Editorial Verbo Divino* for such purposes. Annual meetings, planned and programmed within a five-year period, are offered to those confreres who join the province. Some of these meetings are organized by the *Instituto Superior Pastoral de la Universidad Pontificia de Salamanca*.

**Finance.** The province is leading the way toward transparency in accounting. In all provincial assemblies a report on the economic situation of the province is given. Efforts are being taken in different communities to train and involve all confreres in responsible accounting and basic financial administration. ♦

# GERMANY PROVINCE



(July 2011 est.)

## Population

81,471,834

## Religious Profile %

Christian	Catholics	Others
59.9	31.10	40.1

## Age Structure %

0-14 15-64 65

13.3	66.1	20.6
------	------	------

## Fertility Rate

(babies per woman)

1.41

## Median Age

44.9

## Life Expectancy

80.07

## Below Poverty Line

15.5%

## GDP Output %

1 2 3

0.9	27.8	71.3
-----	------	------

## Labor Force %

1 2 3

2.4	29.7	67.8
-----	------	------

1=Agriculture, 2=Industry, 3=Services

## Urban Population

74%

## Urban Rate of Change

0%

## Migrant(s) per 1000

0.54

## Total Literacy: 99%

male

female

99

99

## Youth Literacy %

male

female

n.a.

n.a.

## Mass Media

per 1000 persons

Newspaper	Radio	TV
306.85	954.9	570.75

## Interactive Media

per 1000 persons

Mobile	Internet
1,228.79	799.36

- Official Language: **German**
- Visa: Acquiring a long-term residence visa presents no major difficulty. But because the SVD in Germany is recognized as a non-profit organization, confreres cannot apply for a working visa and are not allowed to engage in any gainful employment.

## 1. Intercultural Setting

Germany is the most populous country of the European Union. But as a unified nation it is much newer than most of its European neighbors. In 1949, following the Second World War, Konrad Adenauer founded the democratic Federal Republic of Germany. That same year communist East

Germany was born in the former Soviet Occupation Zone. For the next four decades the German people would be divided by the Berlin Wall into east and west. Since then Germans had lived two separate national lives. When the Wall fell in November 1989, they had no other choice but to go for national reunification –which till now remains an “unfinished symphony”.

Parallel to the project of reunification is that of building a multicultural society. Waves of fo-

Membership in the Christian churches, both Roman Catholic and Protestant, has been steadily decreasing over the years.

so-called *Gastarbeiter* (guest workers) came to reside legally in Germany but without right to citizenship. On the communist side, *Gastarbeiter* were also recruited mostly from Vietnam, North Korea, Angola, Mozambique and Cuba. After the fall of the Berlin Wall, these workers stayed on while facing deportation, withdrawal of residence visa and work permits, and discrimination in the workplace.

Today xenophobia runs high in the reunified country. Recent surveys show that more than 30% of the German populace believes itself to be “overrun by foreigners” who have come just to

profit from its social benefits. In October 2010 the chancellor Angela Merkel further declared that “*multi-kulti*” (multiculturalism) as a political policy “has utterly failed”. While admitting that Germany needed immigrants, she appealed for good will to go beyond complacent coexistence to cooperative integration into the German nation.

## 2. Ecclesial Setting

Membership in the Christian churches, both Roman Catholic and Protestant, has been steadily decreasing over the years. Just in the last three years, the Church has lost nearly 425,000 members. Today only 13% of German Catholics go to Sunday Mass. Polls reveal that the Catholic Church has lost a lot of credibility within and outside its confines. This loss of confidence in the institutional Church is deeply felt by Catholics, especially after the media exposure in 2010 of the sex abuse of minors perpetrated by priests and religious. The scandal has dealt a serious blow to the morale of the faithful.

Along with the dwindling number of professed Catholics is the sharp decline in vocations to the priesthood and religious life –without enough young ones to replace all those who have retired or died. Today, only 43% of men in perpetual vows are below 65 years old, and worse still, only 16% among women religious in perpetual vows are in this age group. As a result, many institutions traditionally run by the religious had to be closed down and sold or redirected for other purposes. In response to this vocation crisis, many parishes

are combined into 'pastoral units'. Another solution consists in increasing the number of permanent deacons and lay ministers.

The Christian Churches in Germany, both Catholic and Protestant, face a new missionary challenge amid a secularist society that rejects the role of religion in public life and among a people who feel no need for it in daily living.

### 3. Sharing Intercultural Mission

*"We take part in the mission of God in an environment characterized by globalization, growing social conflicts and de-christianization. Conscious of the call of Jesus, the incarnate word of God, we proclaim the message of the Kingdom of God "in season or out of season." (2 Tim 2:4.2).*

*We reach out to people in prophetic dialogue, especially those who have no faith community, those in search of meaning and faith, and those disaffiliated from the Church. We dialogue with the marginalized poor, with people of different cultures and faith traditions, and with those espousing secular ideologies.*

*We live by the mission charism of our founder in cooperation with the local Church, with lay people committed to the missionary mandate of the Church, and with all who champion the dignity of the human person and promote justice, peace and integrity of creation."*

–GER Mission Statement

### Those in final vows

#### IN ACTIVE MINISTRY (%) 2012

Parish Ministry	16.0
School/Education	0.6
Other Apostolates	20.4
SVD Vocation/Formation	1.6
Administration/Support	16.0

### Those in final vows

#### NOT IN MINISTRY (%) 2012

Studies/Orientation	10.4
Retired/Sick	35.0
Other	0

### PLATFORMS FOR PROPHETIC DIALOGUE

**Steyl as Pilgrimage Center.** Steyl is the birthplace of the Arnoldus family and final resting place of St Arnold Janssen and the cofounders of our two sister congregations. From all over the world, confreres, sisters and a growing number of lay devotees come to pilgrimage in Steyl to enter into spiritual communion with the founding generation. At their service are St Michael Centre and the Arnold Janssen Secretariat.

**Parish Ministry.** The province is involved in parish ministry in Hamburg-Neugraben, Berlin, Munich and in Dresden. Where several confreres work together in parishes, the province encourages a pastoral approach marked by the four SVD characteristic dimensions.

**Migrant Apostolate.** 12 confreres now work as full- or part-time chaplains among Chinese, Filipino, Vietnamese, Ghanaian, and Portuguese- as well as Spanish-speaking immigrants.

**School Apostolate.** In recent years, the province has given up administration of its schools. The school ministry of the province has been reduced to school chaplaincy whose main task is to look after the welfare of students and teachers, and to ensure that the schools remains centers of evangelization and Christian formation.

#### **Academic and Scientific Apostolates.**

- The *Faculty of Theology and Philosophy* at Sankt Augustin offers licentiate and doctoral degrees that have both state and church recognition. It is the only faculty in Germany that has missiology as centerpiece of its curriculum. It currently counts some 170 students of men and women, laity and religious, from different countries of the world.
- The *Missiological Institute* (Missionswissenschaftliches Institut) is a joint venture of the SVD German-speaking provinces (GER, OES, SWI) and tasked by the XIV General Chapter to foster research and publish studies with a particular focus on “the present-day missionary task in a secularized society”.
- The *Sinological Institute* (*Institut Monumenta Serica*) fosters research on Chinese culture and publishes the international journal *Monumenta Serica*, Journal of Oriental Studies. Its principal partner is *China-Zentrum* (China Centre) in Sankt Augustin – a project supported by several missionary congregations and German dio-

ceses, as well as by the funding agencies Missio and Misereor of the German Bishops’ Conference.

- The *Anthropos Institut St. Augustin* dates back to the time of the Founder who wanted social and cultural sciences to enlighten the missionary vision and action of our Society. The institute edits the journal *Anthropos* that celebrated its centennial in 2005.
- The *Academy of Peoples and Cultures* may be described as the popular outreach center of the SVD scientific institutes in Sankt Augustin. It organizes conferences for the laity and addresses themes of wide and timely interest. It aims to help break down cultural walls of prejudices and misconceptions, and to promote intercultural understanding among peoples.

#### **THE SVD CHARACTERISTIC DIMENSIONS**

**Mission Animation.** Mission animation has long been one of the pillars of the SVD presence in Germany. At present, the province is involved in the following projects and initiatives:

- the apostolate of the press, which includes a publishing house, two bookstores, the editing of texts and the distribution of three magazines and two calendars. The magazines try to respond to the challenges of post-Christian society, in particular to the search of many for an authentic spirituality.
- the *Steyl-Medien*, an audiovisual production center in Munich that creates and diffuses materials on mission, society, Church and spiri-

tuality for educational and catechetical use and TV broadcast.

- the SVD missionary presence in the Internet, promoted in collaboration with the Central European Subzone.
- the Mission Procure in Sankt Augustin that promotes mission awareness and concern through the ministry of fundraising for the worldwide mission enterprise of our Society. The funds raised are put at the disposal of the SVD Generalate.
- the *Missionare auf Zeit* ('Missionaries for a Limited Time'), a group of highly motivated young men and women who volunteer for mission adventures for two or more years.
- the three mission museums in Steyl, St. Wendel and Sankt Augustin. Together, they welcome more than 35,000 visitors annually.

**Biblical Apostolate.** Two confreres are working as a team with an SSpS sister offering various courses that enable people to get in touch with the word of God and its therapeutic dimension. Another confrere is working in Hamburg with Bible groups in parishes.

#### 4. Sharing Intercultural Life

*"We carry out our mission as an international community, thereby respecting the diversity of gifts and talents, of professions and interests, of cultures and languages of each individual member in our communities and of the people with whom we live and work."*

–GER Vision Statement

#### MEMBERSHIP 2012

Bishops	0
Clerics	222
Brothers (final vows)	84
Brothers (temporal vows)	3
Scholastics	16
Novices	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>326</b>

#### AGE and COUNTRY 2012

Average Age	67.4
Nationalities	19*

#### \* ZONAL ORIGIN of province members

AFRAM	9	6gha, 3cng
ASPAC	44	20isa, 9phi, 8ind, 5vie, 2chn
EUROPE	271	230ger, 24pol, 7slo, 3ned, 2cze, 1bel, 1hun, 1ita, 1swi, 1urs
PANAM	2	1arg, 1brz

**Community.** The care of our elderly confreres is a priority to which we give a good deal of attention. In addition to medical attention, our sick and retired confreres need a suitable place to live. In response to this need, Sankt Wendel Home (Wendelinusheim) was built. Confreres who spend the last years of their life in St Wendel also receive a mission appointment: to participate in the prayer for the missionary activities of the province and the whole Society.



**Leadership.** In recent years, the province has increasingly internationalized its make-up. Now more non-German confreres are thrust into positions of leadership and responsibility in the different houses and parishes of the province.

**Finance.** The German dioceses are going through a rapid drop in revenues in the last few years. To address this problem, they have devised ways to control spending –e.g., downsizing their salaried personnel and selling properties of scarce use and costly maintenance. The province has made financial decisions in consonance with these wise measures.

**Formation.** While the ranks of German clergy and religious have been shrinking, those of foreign priests and religious doing pastoral work in Germany have been growing. Their presence is a welcome development with a consequent new

challenge: training them for effective ministry in the German contemporary setting.

One main way by which we are responding to this challenge is the creation of a team of confreres who reflect the internationality of our Society. It reaches out to young people by inviting them to retreats and recollections. It accompanies the aspirants for a period of discernment.

The second way is sustaining houses for initial formation. In 2011 the German-speaking provinces developed a common formation program approved by the Generalate. It plans out the postulancy in Steyl and the novitiate in Berlin. After first vows, scholastics move to Sankt Augustin for their studies in philosophy and theology. Part of this program is a period of cultural and missionary orientation for confreres arriving from other countries as well as young confreres sent to Germany for cross-cultural experience (CTP/OTP). ♦



# HUNGARY PROVINCE

Hungary, Serbia



- Official Language: **Hungarian**
- Visa: Acquiring a residence visa for foreign missionaries presents no major difficulty. The Province applies on behalf of the foreign confrere assigned to the country

(July 2011 est.)

	Population	Religious Profile %		
		Christian	Catholics	Others
Hungary	9,976,062	74.4	59.3	25.6
Serbia	7,310,555	91.7	5.2	8.3

	Fertility Rate (babies per woman)	Age Structure %		
		0-14	15-64	65
Hungary	1.4	14.9	68.2	16.9
Serbia	1.4	15.1	68.5	16.5

	Median Age	Life Expectancy	Below Poverty Line
Hungary	40.2	74.79	13.9%
Serbia	41.3	74.32	8.8%

	GDP Output %			Labor Force %		
	1	2	3	1	2	3
Hungary	2.4	36.9	60.7	4.7	30.9	64.4
Serbia	12.3	22.5	65.2	23.9	20.5	55.6

1=Agriculture, 2=Industry, 3=Services

	Urban Population	Urban Rate of Change	Migrant(s) per 1000
Hungary	68%	0.3%	1.39
Serbia	56%	0.6%	0

	Total Literacy %		Youth Literacy%	
	male	female	male	female
Hungary	99.5	99.3	99.7	99.7
Serbia	98.9	94.1	99.4	99.32

	Mass Media per 1000 persons			Interactive Media per 1000 persons	
	Newspaper	Radio	TV	Mobile	Internet
Hungary	469.9	702.6	443.0	1,204.0	619.0
Serbia	n.a.	403.8	376.1	1,356.2	551.7

## 1. Intercultural Setting

**HUNGARY** is unique in Europe in that its national language is not related to any other major ones in the continent. This linguistic isolation seemed to have conditioned the political history of Hungary, proud to be the only people to have established a long-lasting state in the Carpathian

The number of Hungarian musicians, artists, scientists, mathematicians, economists, and anthropologists – among whom have been a dozen of Nobel laureates– spurred some speculation about “the mystery of the Hungarian talent.”

shifts made it ethnically homogeneous, so that today more than 90% of the population is ethnically Hungarian and speaks Hungarian (Magyar) as mother tongue. A small percentage of the population is made up of ethnic minority groups, among which are Germans, Slovaks, Croatians, Romanians, Jews, and Serbs. But the largest minority consists of the Roma or Gypsies who form about 5% of the population. Their high birth rate worsens their economic poverty and social marginalization.

Basin. Only after six centuries of independent statehood (896–1526) did Hungary become part of two other political entities: the Habsburg and Ottoman empires. But even then Hungary retained much of its political autonomy when it entered the Austria-Hungary partnership (1867–1918).

Hungary had been a multi-ethnic country since the 10th century. After World War I, a few territorial

On the other hand, many Hungarians also form an ethnic minority in the neighboring countries of Romania, Slovakia, Ukraine, Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, and Austria. For this reason, the government strives after fair and friendly relations with these other countries, as the Hungarian minorities in them often complain of being socially discriminated against.

Hungarian emigrations during the 20th century, along with the drop of fertility rate caused by rapid urbanization, have led the country’s population to its present alarming decline. It is quipped that, in the choice of young couples between having a kicsi (baby) or a kocsi (car), the latter is the frequent winner. A noteworthy impact of Hungarian emigration has been the “brain drain”. Hungarian scientists who migrated to the United States helped in pioneering nuclear physics and computer technology. The number of Hungarian musicians, artists, scientists, mathematicians, economists, and anthropologists –among whom have been a dozen of Nobel laureates– spurred some speculation about “the mystery of the Hungarian talent.”

**SERBIA.** The Balkan Peninsula is a hodgepodge of cultures and ethnicities. Though most of its inhabitants are of Slavic origin, their histories diverged under the varying influences of politics, religions, and cultures. The north has a strong influence from Hungary, and the south displays vestiges of Turkish culture. The union of these peoples under a repressive regime made for an unstable society. For this reason the entire region has been called the “Balkan tinder-

box." Since the early 1990s ethnic hostilities led to civil wars and the successive breakup of the six republics that formed Yugoslavia: Serbia, Macedonia, Bosnia-Herzegovia, Croatia, Slovenia and Montenegro.

To consolidate Serb power in Serbia, the Milosevic regime resorted to violent ethnic cleansing to rid the country of Croat Muslims in Bosnia and ethnic Albanians in Kosovo when these groups have agitated for self-rule. In February 2008, after nearly two years of inconclusive negotiations, the UN-administered province of Kosovo declared itself independent of Serbia – a unilateral action that Serbia refuses to recognize till today.

## 2. Ecclesial Setting

**HUNGARY.** Following the Second World War, Hungary became officially an atheistic communist state. The Church struggled with the government after it enacted laws to close down Catholic schools and to confiscate church properties. But since the fall of communism in 1990, religious freedom was guaranteed anew. Many schools and other buildings were returned to the churches. Otherwise, in compensation for the confiscated properties, the state now financially supports parochial schools and other religious institutions.

More than half of the Hungarian population professes to be Catholic; most of them live in the western and northern parts of the country. About one-fifth, concentrated in eastern Hungary, is Calvinist. Lutherans constitute the next most signifi-

cant minority faith, and relatively smaller groups belong to various other Christian denominations. However, surveys show that nominal religious affiliation does not correspond by far with regular attendance in common worship nor with sincere spiritual conviction. The four decades of communist atheism bred religious indifference and often openly antireligious attitudes among Hungarians. Nonetheless, baptisms, weddings, and funerals still informally tie many non-churchgoers to the Catholic Church.

**SERBIA.** The dominant religion in Serbia is the Serbian Orthodox Church. But there are also some Muslims living mostly in the southwestern part of Serbia, and in the disputed territory of Kosovo. Catholics form a minority and live mostly in the northern part of the Vojvodina province. Fewer still are Jews and Protestant Christians.

The Church struggled with the government after it enacted laws to close down Catholic schools and to confiscate church properties.

## 3. Sharing Intercultural Mission

*"Nurtured by the spirituality of our Society, we Divine Word Missionaries of the Hungarian Province proclaim the Reign of God through prophetic dialogue with all faith-seekers in Hungarian secular society, and with the poor and marginalized members of ethnic minorities and followers of other religions."*

– HUN Mission Statement

**Those in final vows****IN ACTIVE MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012**

Parish Ministry	33.3	41.7	11.1
School/Education	0	0	0
Other Apostolates	11.1	6.7	3.7
SVD Vocation/Formation	7.4	5.0	22.2
Administration/Support	11.1	20.0	18.6

**Those in final vows****NOT IN MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012**

Studies/Orientation	7.4	0	11.1
Retired/Sick	29.6	26.7	29.6
Other	0	0	3.7

tive way of evangelization. More than 10,000 Hungarians have taken part in one of these courses. We are also working with other movements and prayer groups. Our house in Köszeg has become a popular retreat center for priests and religious.

**Pastoral Ministry.** We do not run parishes, but confreres regularly help out in pastoral ministry during weekends. In 1970 we opened a mission house in Novi Sad (then Yugoslavia). Just one confrere now lives there. But since 2008 Bishop Ladislaus Nemet SVD lives in Zrenjanin, only 50 kilometers away from there. Some of our confreres are also engaged in prison ministry.

**PLATFORMS FOR PROPHETIC DIALOGUE**

**Youth ministry.** A decade ago our community in Budapest started a summer camp program for children and youth –especially those coming from poorer sectors of Hungarian society and from Roma state institutes (25% of the places are reserved for them). The participation of Roma children in these mission camps is subsidized by the province. In the first year the camps had gathered around a hundred youth. By 2004 participants we already had to split up the 400 young participants into different camps in various parts of Hungary. Year by year, the number of participants for this program is on the increase. Since 2008 biblical reflection has been integrated into these summer camps.

**Retreat Ministry.** The spreading of the *Cursillo* movement has proved to be a fruitful and effec-

**THE SVD CHARACTERISTIC DIMENSIONS**

**Mission Animation.** The confreres regularly give recollections, retreats, and conferences to help promote mission awareness. The mission secretariat is growing and successfully promotes interest in worldwide mission. Since the Pontifical Mission Societies (OPM) was re-organized in Hungary, an SVD confrere has been serving as its national director.

**Communication.** We have a mission magazine edited by a professional journalist. He works with two confreres who are responsible for the content and spirit of the publication. We have resumed the publication of an SVD calendar. The Society is actively present in the mass-media of Hungary and Serbia through articles in newspapers as well as radio and TV programs.

#### 4. Sharing Intercultural Life

*“Through our international and intercultural communities, we seek to bring the cultural and religious richness of the world Church into our local Church.”*

– HUN Vision Statement

MEMBERSHIP	2000	2005	2012
Bishops	0	0	1
Clerics	24	28	23
Brothers (final vows)	3	2	3
Brothers (temporal vows)	0	1	1
Scholastics	3	7	6
Novices	4	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>34</b>

AGE and COUNTRY	2000	2005	2012
Average Age	59.9	58.0	56.0
Nationalities	5	8	9*

#### \* ZONAL ORIGIN of province members

AFRAM	2	2gha
ASPAC	8	4isa, 3ind, 1phi
EUROPE	24	14hun, 3pol, 3yug, 2rum, 2slo

**Community.** To foster a spirit of fraternity and community, confreres in the province gather once a year for Family Feast. The internationalization

of the province is now underway. Interculturality among us finds expression in our liturgical celebrations and communal feasts.

**Finance.** We try to lead a simple lifestyle and make conscientious use of our financial resources.

**Formation.** In 1924, five years before the official founding of the SVD Hungarian Province (in 1929), an SVD minor seminary was opened in the village of Budatétény, on the outskirts of Budapest. Another formation house was founded in Köszeg in 1928. Thanks to the rapid increase of vocations to the Society, construction for a third house in Köszeg began in 1942. This third one became the home for high school students, as well as of the novices and Brother candidates. These formation houses produced some 70 priests and 20 Brothers in perpetual vows.

Immediately after World War II it became evident that it would become very difficult to work for world mission and for the local Church in Hungary under the new communist government. A good number of confreres then applied for foreign missions and our young candidates were sent to St Gabriel or St Augustin. Our formation houses had to close down and all our land properties were confiscated by the government.

In 1994, in partial compensation for the properties lost during the communist regime, we have been granted a piece of land near Budapest. On it is now built a new formation house, presently with 7 scholastics and novices. ♦



# IRISH-BRITISH PROVINCE

Ireland & United Kingdom



- Official Language: Great Britain — **English**  
Ireland — **English and Irish** (Gaelic)
- Visa: It is increasingly difficult to obtain residence visas and work permits for non-European citizens, including all ministers of religion. Applying for a temporary or long-stay is generally tedious, difficult and expensive

(July 2011 est.)

## Religious Profile %

	Population	Christian	Catholics	Others
Ireland	4,670,976	92.3	76.1	7.7
Gr. Britain	62,698,362	71.8	8.8	28.2

## Fertility Rate

(babies per woman)

## Age Structure %

		0-14	15-64	65
Ireland	2.02	21.1	67.3	11.6
Gr. Britain	1.91	17.3	66.2	16.5

## Median Age

## Life Expectancy

## Below Poverty Line

Ireland	34.8	80.19	5.5%
Gr. Britain	40	80.05	n.a.

## GDP Output %

## Labor Force %

	1	2	3	1	2	3
Ireland	5.5	24.7	69.8	4.8	22.2	73
Gr. Britain	0.7	21.7	77.6	1.4	18.2	80.4

1=Agriculture, 2=Industry, 3=Services

## Urban Population

## Urban Rate of Change

## Migrant(s) per 1000

Ireland	62%	1.8%	0.86
Gr. Britain	80%	0.7%	2.6

## Total Literacy: 97.2%

male female

## Youth Literacy: 98.9%

male female

	male	female	male	female
Ireland	99	99	n.a.	n.a.
Gr. Britain	99	99	n.a.	n.a.

## Mass Media

per 1000 persons

## Interactive Media

per 1000 persons

	Newspaper	Radio	TV	Mobile	Internet
Ireland	120.7	545.9	314.7	1,006	651.2
Gr. Britain	305.5	1347	486.4	1,288	820.5



**IRELAND.** Ethnic relations in the Republic of Ireland are peaceful, thanks to a culturally homogeneous population with ethnic minorities amounting to just 5% of it. In the remote past Celts, Norsemen, Normans, English, and Scots

Ireland was a country that exported priests and nuns all over the world.

successively invaded and colonized what is the Irish isles of today. Yet these peoples have left no corresponding ethnic communities. What are more at play in Irish society today are subcultural differences that crosshatch

the divides between urban and rural lifestyles and regional traditions of the West, South, Midlands, and North. Still others identify either as “pure” Irish or one of British descent (“Anglo-Irish” or “West Britons”).

Among the ethnic minorities, the Travelers or “Tinkers” stand out most. As their name suggests, they rove in bands and earn their living as artisans, traders, and entertainers. Being resistant to social integration, they are often the victims of social prejudice.

Sizeable waves of Irish emigration abroad during the last century had been depleting the Irish population. Hundreds of thousands of Irish-born people now live outside their native land, and millions of citizens of other countries are of mixed Irish descent. However, in the 1990s foreign immigration to Ireland outpaced emigration from the country. New immigrants included a large number of Irish Americans moving back to the country, as well as new minorities from Asia (e.g., China, India, and Pakistan) who retain visible aspects of their exotic cultures.

**GREAT BRITAIN.** Most British people have mixed ancestries identified with the four neighboring nationalities: English, Irish, Scottish and Welsh. During the last century this cultural diversity has widely increased with continual immigration from Europe and overseas. Before and after the Second World War, the British Isles offered shelter and eventual residence to refugees and some prisoners of war from the Baltic countries, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary. They were next joined by immigrants of European descent from Canada, New Zealand, Australia, as well as from Cyprus, South Africa, and East Africa. The latter half of the last century saw the arrival of non-European immigrants mainly from the former British colonies in Asia. Finally, since the early 1970s, Ugandan Asians (expelled by Idi Amin) and immigrants from Latin America, Southeast Asia, and Sri Lanka have sought refuge in Britain. People of Indian, Pakistani, and Bangladeshi origins comprise more than half of the total ethnic minority population.

Even though more than half the number of foreign immigrants resides in Greater London, no pattern of ethnic ghettos can be sharply defined. Yet many non-European immigrants complain of being frequent victims of discriminatory practices in employment and other spheres of public life.

## 2. Ecclesial Setting

With the influx of immigrants, British and Irish societies have become multi-cultural. In Ireland, this multi-cultural situation is also widely Catholic, seen in the numbers of Poles, Filipinos, In-

dians from Kerala and Nigerians from the Christian south of their country.

Ireland was a country that exported priests and nuns all over the world and had plenty left at home to administer parishes, schools, and hospitals. Now there is a growing problem with a serious reduction in clergy numbers resulting from retirement, death and the lack of vocations. At one time in Ireland most parishes would have two or three priests assigned for ministry. Now there is a system of clustering parishes as there are simply not enough priests to answer all the pastoral needs.

Britain would still be considered as a country with a Christian majority. But this allegiance is very nominal. Actual religious practice is very low. There are important minorities from other faith traditions including Muslims, Hindus, and Jews. In Ireland, up to quite recently, the Catholic Church held enormous influence in society. However, revelations of child sex abuse perpetrated by members of the Catholic clergy, including the cover-ups applied by various bishops and religious superiors, has seriously weakened its credibility and moral authority.

### 3. Sharing Intercultural Mission

#### Those in final vows

#### IN ACTIVE MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Parish Ministry	18.4	25.0	15.0
School/Education	10.2	7.1	0
Other Apostolates	13.3	21.4	30.0
SVD Vocation/Formation	2.0	0	0
Administration/Support	26.5	14.3	20.0

#### Those in final vows

#### NOT IN MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Studies/Orientation	0	1.8	0
Retired/Sick	23.5	21.4	27.0
Other	6.1	8.9	8.0

### PLATFORMS FOR PROPHETIC DIALOGUE

**Migrant Chaplaincies.** Various confreres work among immigrants from Brazil, the Philippines, Poland and Slovakia. In particular, the SVD parish in Bristol, England, served by an Irish and an Indonesian, provides pastoral care to several immigrant groups in the parish.

**Other Ministries and Apostolates.** Confreres in the province also engage in supply work in local parishes at weekends and on special occasions. They also give recollections to the local clergy, retreats to communities of nuns, and organize Bible courses.

**English Language School.** This special school in Maynooth began as a service offered to confreres who came to learn English in Ireland before proceeding to their mission assignments in English-speaking countries. In recent years other missionary congregations, diocesan priests and lay people have availed of the service. This aspect of our work in Ireland has interculturally enriched and enlivened our community in Maynooth and the whole province. Those who avail of the courses literally “come from every nation, people and language”.

## THE SVD CHARACTERISTIC DIMENSIONS

**Mission Animation.** In Ireland, the mission secretary assigns confreres to a different diocese each year to visit its parishes and preach mission appeals. This provides opportunities for dialogue with the lay faithful, priests and bishops all over the country who are still interested to know about the Church's worldwide mission outreach. Missionaries on home leave are especially invited to help out in these appeals. The funds acquired are made available for the annual distributions of the generalate for mission projects overseas.

**Biblical Apostolate.** Our house in Donamon is also used as a center for the biblical apostolate.

**Communication.** The province runs two major communications media: the Divine Word Printing Press in Donamon and the *Kairos Communications* in Maynooth. Aside from being a source of funds, the printing press has also become an effective instrument of advertising for the Society and its missionary endeavors through the sale of various religious cards. *Kairos*, on the other hand, offers programs ranging from one-day trainings on different media skills to postgraduate courses on TV, radio and multimedia production. It is well-known especially for its broadcasts of Sunday Mass from different parishes all over Ireland and has won awards for its religious broadcasts. At times a confrere contributes to the broadcasting of a two-minute "Thought for the Day" slot on national radio.

**JPIC.** In all its apostolates, the province underlines the issues of justice and peace and the inte-

grity of creation. There are two confreres working with a non-governmental organization called "Instruments of Peace" (IoP)

### 4. Sharing Intercultural Life

#### MEMBERSHIP 2000 2005 2012

Bishops	0	0	0
Clerics	44	48	52
Brothers (final vows)	5	8	4
Brothers (temporal vows)	0	0	0
Scholastics	2	0	2
Novices	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>58</b>

#### AGE and COUNTRY 2000 2005 2012

Average Age	59.5	61.0	62.9
Nationalities	5	8	10*

#### \* ZONAL ORIGIN of province members

AFRAM	1	1saf
ASPAC	7	2chn, 2ind, 2phi, 1isa
EUROPE	50	36ire, 7eng, 4pol, 2ger, 1slo

**Spirituality.** The province has two larger communities based in Donamon and Maynooth, and smaller communities based in the Dublin and British districts. These entities meet at various inter-

vals for bible sharing and community meetings in mutual spiritual sustenance.

**Community.** Though a good number of confreres in the province live on their own, no one is totally cut off from community life. They are generally on good terms with the leadership. Most attend community meetings at the houses to which they officially belong. Several come to the provincial retreat and maintain contact through visits.

**Leadership.** The leadership encourages the setting aside of time for prayer and reflection. This is necessary on both the personal and community levels. Many of our problems arise because we are stressed out, and this comes about because we do not take the vital time for spiritual reading and quiet meditation. We encourage the communities to set days for recollection and to invite animators

who can offer inspiring and nourishing reflections on spiritual and missiological themes.

**Finance.** We have seen our investments and reserves descend in value because of the general financial meltdown. The goal of the province is to live modestly and within our means, and to be conscious of the economic hardships people in Britain and Ireland are going through at present.

**Formation.** At the moment, the province has just one confrere in formation, in the novitiate in Techny. We have received a few younger men from Poland, the Philippines, India and Slovakia. However, their arrival places a heavy responsibility on the province especially in the area of ongoing formation. There are two SVD Chinese seminarians in formation at the major seminary in Maynooth, one studying philosophy and the other theology. ♦



# ITALY PROVINCE

Northern Italy, Romania, & Moldova



- Official Language: Italy — **Italian**  
Romania — **Romanian**  
Moldova — **Moldovan** and **Russian**

- Visa: For foreign confreres assigned to the SVD Province, a residence visa and permit for religious work is easily granted in all three countries –Italy, Romania and Moldova.

(July 2011 est.)

	Population	Religious Profile %		
		Christian	Catholics	Others
Italy	<b>61,016,804</b>	91.6	85.8	8.4
Romania	<b>21,904,551</b>	97.5	8.49	2.5
Moldova	<b>4,314,377</b>	98.3	0.56	1.7

	Fertility Rate (babies per woman)	Age Structure %		
		0-14	15-64	65
Italy	1.39	13.8	65.9	20.3
Romania	1.29	14.8	70.4	14.8
Moldova	1.29	15.5	74	10.4

	Median Age	Life Expectancy	Below Poverty Line
Italy	43.5	81.77	n.a.
Romania	38.7	73.98	25%
Moldova	35.4	71.37	26.3%

	GDP Output %			Labor Force %		
	1	2	3	1	2	3
Italy	1.9	25.3	72.8	4.2	30.7	65.1
Romania	12.2	37.6	50.2	29.7	23.2	47.1
Moldova	16.3	20	63.8	40.6	16	43.3

1=Agriculture, 2=Industry, 3=Services

	Urban Population	Urban Rate of Change	Migrant(s) per 1000
Italy	68%	0.5%	4.86
Romania	57%	0.6%	– 0.26
Moldova	47%	0.9%	– 1.13

	Total Literacy %		Youth Literacy %	
	male	female	male	female
Italy	98.8	98	99.8	99.8
Romania	98.4	96.3	97.7	99.78
Moldova	99.1	99.7	99.49	99.5

	Mass Media			Interactive Media	
	per 1000 persons			per 1000 persons	
	Newspaper	Radio	TV	Mobile	Internet
Italy	102.8	827.6	496.5	1,343.8	479.1
Romania	n.a.	328.7	239.6	1,124.8	355.5
Moldova	152.9	746.3	292.0	733.5	308.9

## 1. Intercultural Setting

**ITALY.** For more than two millennia of known history, many peoples came to invade and settle in different parts of what is present-day Italy. Inter-marriages through the centuries now make it difficult to typify Italians by any single set of physical traits. Some ethnic groups in the country are recognizable by the foreign languages spoken: German in the Trentino-Alto Adige region, French in the Valle d'Aosta region, and Slovene in the Trieste-Gorizia region. Regionalism continues to create tensions between the north, the central, and the south. However, literacy has made the Italian language the common norm while mass media have helped the educational system foster a sense of national identity.

Since the 1970s, favorable economic conditions in Italy have been attracting migrant workers from nearby non-EU countries and even from other continents. The most noteworthy are mostly female immigrants from Asian countries in contrast to a predominantly male influx from North Africa. Other countries from Sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, and Eastern Europe are also represented. There are businesses that exclusively employ foreigners. Menial jobs that are poorly paid are generally relegated to male migrant workers,

whereas many female migrants are employed for household chores or care for elderly Italians who are retired or chronically ill. Others end up in prostitution.

**ROMANIA.** In 1859 the regions of Walachia, Moldavia, and Transylvania united as a nation. Due to the common influence of ancient Rome on their common language, the country named itself "Romania". Its population is relatively homogenous in culture, except for the Hungarian community that still forms the ethnic and linguistic majority in Transylvania. Tensions between Hungarians and Romanians have resulted in political conflict and occasional violence. In 1976, the communist government outlawed the use of the Hungarian language in education and the media in what it claimed was an effort to assimilate minorities into the national culture. Since 1989, the government has softened its stance, but discrimination against the ethnic Hungarians lingers on.

The other ethnically prominent minority scattered throughout Romania consists of the Roma (Gypsies) who live in small camps at the outskirts of towns and cities. Having lived through a long history of persecution throughout Europe, they still suffer high rates of poverty, unemployment, and malnutrition. And in the face of ongoing social discrimination, many leave the country with the hope of finding better treatment and living conditions elsewhere.

**MOLDOVA.** Because of the close linguistic and historical ties between Romania and Moldova, most inhabitants of Moldova identify themselves



as nationally Moldovan but culturally Romanian. In fact, in the early 1990s, sentiments ran high in favor of national unification with Romania. But the tide turned so that, by the 1994 referendum, 95% of the voters preferred to retain independence. The 180 years of separation from Romania and the multi-ethnic influences that Bessarabia (the region between the rivers Prut and Dniestr) imbibed since the early 19th century have preserved and reinforced a distinctive Moldovan identity east of the Prut. At the turn of the 21st century, the fierce debate between "Unionists" and "Moldovanists" has died down. What the Moldovan-Romanian majority (78.2%) of the population now faces is the challenge of building a multi-ethnic nation-state in harmony with sizeable minority groups of Ukrainians (8.4%), Russians (5.8%), Gagauzians (4.4%), and Bulgarians (1.9%).

## 2. Ecclesial Setting

**ITALY.** Despite the declining number of churchgoers (Sunday mass attendance at 15-18%), the Catholic Church in Italy remains a strong and influential presence in society. As in other parts of the world, vocations to the priesthood and religious life have also gone down. On the positive side, this downward trend in vocations has led to increased and more active participation of the laity in pastoral roles. In general, there appears to be a kind of coming forward of the laity as shown, for example, by the rise and rapid expansion of various Catholic lay movements, such as the Neo-Catechumenal Way, Communion and Liberation, the Focolare, Movements of the Spirit, etc., which offer a strong sense of belonging and mission.

**ROMANIA.** Romania is predominantly a Christian Orthodox country where religion and socio-political life are intimately intertwined and where the notion of the Church is still very much hierarchical and nationalistic. The Catholic Church, reorganized and revitalized after the 1989 revolution, has increasingly grown in importance after the reconstruction of churches. However, the Church still has a distinctly clerical outlook, and laypeople are hesitant to get involved. Pastoral work is mainly about the celebration of the liturgy and the administration of the sacraments. Ecumenism, though seen as the essential path for all the Christian Churches, is moving at a rather slow pace due to the lack of dialogical outreach on the part of the bishops.

**MOLDOVA.** Although most Moldovans profess to be Orthodox Christians, they show little interest in religion –due perhaps to many years of atheistic Communist rule. At the same time, the Orthodox Church does not give great importance to family life and civil participation –not even in social services of charity. Churchgoing is irregular, and religious formation or catechesis is practically non-existent. The Orthodox faithful is further divided between the Moldavian-Russian and Ukrainian patriarchates.

Being a small minority, the Catholic Church resumed its activities of primary evangelization only in

Despite the declining number of churchgoers, the Catholic Church in Italy remains a strong and influential presence in society.

1991. There is only one Roman Catholic diocese in Moldova consisting of 17 parishes and served by about 30 priests. But there are currently 14 religious congregations of missionary presence in Moldova.

### 3. Sharing Intercultural Mission

*"As spiritual sons of Sts Arnold Janssen and Josef Freinademetz, we Divine Word Missionaries of the Province of Italy give witness to the universality of God's Reign of Love. Wherever we work we seek to promote:*

- *missionary awareness and an appreciation of the situation of the peoples who follow other religious traditions or who are not religious;*
- *justice, peace and the integrity of creation, by giving special attention to the poor, the marginalized and the aged;*
- *the veneration of St Joseph Freinademetz."*

– ITA Mission Statement

#### Those in final vows

##### IN ACTIVE MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Parish Ministry	25.8	33.3	30.8
School/Education	0	0	0
Other Apostolates	31.8	16.7	13.7
SVD Vocation/Formation	6.1	2.8	10.3
Administration/Support	24.2	23.6	22.2

#### Those in final vows

##### NOT IN MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Studies/Orientation	6.1	5.6	2.7
Retired/Sick	6.1	18.1	20.3
Other	0	0	0

### PLATFORMS FOR PROPHETIC DIALOGUE

In Italy, the main challenges that the Province faces are its aging membership, the growing demand for pastoral involvement in the local Church, and the challenge of multiculturalism. It is currently going through a reflective phase in search of new future directions. Our three communities in the North have each a particular missionary and pastoral focus:

- in Varone – two pastoral units entrusted to our care;
- in Bolzano – pastoral ministry among German-speaking people;
- in Vicenza – chaplaincies for Filipino, Ghanaian, and Nigerians migrants.

### THE SVD CHARACTERISTIC DIMENSIONS

**Mission Animation.** Founded on 11 October 1992 and based at the SVD Mission House in Varone is the *Associazione Amici Verbiti* (Association of SVD Friends), a group of former students of the Mission House whose goal is mainly to "foster human and spiritual growth, and the missionary commitment of the members, as well as fellowship and cooperation among the members." The province publishes the magazine *Missionari Verbiti* that introduces readers to the world of mission. In Bolzano, confreres collaborate with the local diocesan mission center in conducting mission animation activities. At Oies, the province is privileged to be the custodian of an important patrimony of the local and universal Church: the house where St. Joseph

Freinademetz was born, which is now a famous pilgrimage destination (about 40,000 pilgrims annually). Moreover, it is a unique platform for sharing our missionary spirituality and to promote mission awareness.

**Biblical Apostolate.** The province considers the biblical apostolate and mission animation as the two main dimensions of our pastoral activity. To further equip the province in this task, a confrere recently finished higher studies in biblical ministry. Bible-based mission animation is carried out at two fronts: through our spirituality center where retreats are offered, and through the press in Traian (as in the publication of Sunday missal sheets).

**Communication.** Confreres, particularly in Bolzano, engage in mission animation through radio and television broadcasts.

**JPIC.** The migrant apostolate in Vicenza and the soup kitchen for children and the elderly in Stauceni, Moldova are two concrete examples of the province's commitment to solidarity with the poor and the needy. Another is our collaboration with VAROM, a non-profit organization of volunteers for international cooperation dedicated to providing assistance to the depressed areas in Romania and Moldova.

#### 4. Sharing Intercultural Life

*"We strive to be faithful listeners to the Word of God as gift of the Spirit. We form religious communities that nurture fellowship among ourselves and hospitality to others."*

– ITA Vision Statement

##### MEMBERSHIP 2000 2005 2012

Clerics	27	33	31
Brothers (final vows)	6	3	2
Brothers (temporal vows)	0	0	0
Scholastics	1	7	4
TOTAL	37	43	37

##### AGE and COUNTRY 2000 2005 2012

Average Age	56.1	54.8	59.1
Nationalities	10	10	12*

##### \* ZONAL ORIGIN of province members

AFRAM	2	1ang, 1gha
ASPAC	6	2isa, 2ind, 1fij, 1phi
EUROPE	29	16ita, 5ger, 5rum, 1oes, 1pol, 1por



# NETHERLANDS-BELGIUM PROVINCE



- Official Language: The Netherlands - **Dutch**  
Belgium - **Flemish and French**
- Visa: In the Netherlands, applying for a residence visa –without work permit– involves a long and tedious process. But so far no confrere coming from outside Europe and appointed to the province has been refused, thanks to the legal assistance offered by the conference of Dutch religious and missionary organization “*Mensen met een Missie*” (People with a Mission).

(July 2011 est.) **Religious Profile %**

	Population	Christian Catholics Others		
Netherlands	16,847,007	43.4	29.88	56.6
Belgium	10,431,477	75	73.1	25

**Fertility Rate** (babies per woman) **Age Structure %**

		0-14	15-64	65
Netherlands	1.66	17	67.4	15.6
Belgium	1.65	15.9	66.1	18

	Median Age	Life Expectancy	Below Poverty Line
Netherlands	41.1	79.68	10.5%
Belgium	42.3	79.51	15.2%

	GDP Output %			Labor Force %		
	1	2	3	1	2	3
Netherlands	2.8	24.4	72.9	2	18	80
Belgium	0.7	21.9	77.4	2	25	73

1=Agriculture, 2=Industry, 3=Services

	Urban Population	Urban Rate of Change	Migrant(s) per 1000
Netherlands	83%	0.8%	2.33
Belgium	97%	0.4%	1.22

	Total Literacy%		Youth Literacy%	
	male	female	male	female
Netherlands	99	99	n.a.	n.a.
Belgium	99	99	n.a.	n.a.

	Mass Media per 1000 persons			Interactive Media per 1000 persons	
	Newspaper	Radio	TV	Mobile	Internet
Netherlands	263.7	908.1	408.8	1,146	882.7
Belgium	150.3	744.1	452.4	1,165	777.7

## 1. Intercultural Setting

**THE NETHERLANDS** is the most densely populated country in Europe. Close to 17% of its population are foreign residents, most of whom are Germans and other nationals from the European Union. In the 20th century, immigrants from former Dutch colonies (particularly Indonesia, the Moluccas and Suriname) began flowing into the country. In recent decades, Muslims from Turkey and Morocco added to the influx. These provoked an anti-immigrant movement that prompted the government to pass stricter laws. One, for instance, requires immigration applicants to pass a test on the Dutch language and culture before being allowed to enter the Netherlands.

In its history, the the Netherlands had been a haven of refuge for people persecuted for being “different” in creed or culture.

As the number of practicing Catholics declines, so does the number of benefactors who contributes regularly to the Church.

ver, shows that most non-European minorities are economically disadvantaged and socially marginalized in comparison with the European population in the country.

For this reason, the Dutch people are adverse to any suggestion that a homogenous “national culture” unifies them. Instead, they take pride in being a multicultural nation and profess tolerance of cultural and religious differences and openness to foreign influences. The current socioeconomic reality, however,

**BELGIUM.** Aside from the long-running tension between the two predominant ethnic groups (the Flemings and the French-speaking Walloons) constituting its native population, Belgium today also has to contend with the tension between the native population and the non-European immigrants whose presence has grown considerably in recent years. Large sections of certain Belgian cities have now become foreign ghettos where most native citizens would not dare enter.

Also notable in both Flanders and the Netherlands is the rise and growing influence of right-wing political parties with militant anti-foreign and anti-Muslim tendencies. Efforts at integration have so far produced mixed results. Conflicts due to cultural and religious differences, as well as economic disparities, have sometimes led to violence.

## 2. Ecclesial Setting

The Church in the Netherlands and in Belgium is living through the same critical situation. Practicing Catholics are aging and dwindling in number. In general, faith has ceased to play a central role in the lives of most people, regardless of religious background. Similarly, the influence of the Church(-es) on society has also diminished.

In response, Church authorities have adopted a more inward-looking and conservative stand. By looking back to traditionalist ways and certainties, the Church today is perceived to be increasingly alienated from the mainstream of

society and the more progressive segment of the Catholic faithful.

The recent pedophilia scandals involving priests and religious, including the allegations of ecclesiastical cover up, have dealt a grievous blow to the Church's credibility and prestige. Today, aside from those who have gradually abandoned the Church, we also see active Catholics taking the dramatic step of formally renouncing their membership to the Church.

Faced with the problem of declining number of priests and parishioners, dioceses have been merging existing parishes (now called 'faith communities') into a 'mega-parish' entrusted to the care of a pastoral team composed of lay pastoral workers headed by one or two priests. Naturally, this new system entails heavier work load for the pastoral team and the participation of numerous lay volunteers. Still, despite this new arrangement, the number of priests available still does not suffice. To fill the gaps, some dioceses recruit priests from Poland and from outside Europe. However, experience has shown that without a proper program of preparation and integration, employing foreign priests can create other problems.

As the number of practicing Catholics declines, so does the number of benefactors who contributes regularly to the Church. With the ongoing economic crisis and the high cost of maintaining personnel and church-owned properties, most dioceses and parishes today find themselves in a precarious financial position.

### 3. Sharing Intercultural Mission

*"We bear witness to the Kingdom of God through the fourfold prophetic dialogue:*

- *with people in search of meaning or belonging to a faith community –by our life witness to God's love and the sharing of our faith experiences;*
- *with the poor and desperate –by our solidarity with them through our simple lifestyle and in their struggle for a just and humane society;*
- *with people of other cultures –by welcoming their being different from us as enriching, while challenging cultural aspects that may be enslaving and oppressing;*
- *with people of other religious traditions and secular ideologies – through mutually enriching exchange of views leading to a new spirituality in the post-modern world."*

–NEB Mission Statement

#### Those in final vows

##### IN ACTIVE MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Parish Ministry	12.2	10.8	9.8
School/Education	1.3	0	0
Other Apostolates	13.9	16.5	13.5
SVD Vocation/Formation	0	0	4.0
Administration/Support	18.7	13.9	8.4

#### Those in final vows

##### NOT IN MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Studies/Orientation	1.7	2.1	1.5
Retired/Sick	51.3	55.7	62.8
Other	0.9	1.0	0



## PLATFORMS FOR PROPHETIC DIALOGUE

Although the Dutch-Belgian Province does not have parishes entrusted to its care, many confreres collaborate closely with the local Church through week-end assistance or even as pastors in diocesan parishes. However, the province is still searching

The presence of non-European confreres in particular contributes to a greater awareness on the part of the local Church of the presence of marginalized groups belonging to other cultures and/or religions.

Currently, two international SVD communities are established in multicultural urban areas for this purpose: the Missionaire Leefgroep SVD in Nieuwegein (1981) and the community in The Hague, called HIRCOS or The Hague International Religious Community (1995).

Another dialogue platform is the Kloster St Raphael community in Montenu (Belgium). It is a contemplative missionary community founded to welcome and accompany faith-seekers and those searching for the meaning of life. At the moment,

for the best way to integrate itself into the structures of the local Church without losing its religious missionary identity. It sees the mission of prophetic dialogue mainly in terms of dialogue of life.

First in the province's list of dialogue platforms is the apostolate to Catholic foreign immigrants, because of the promise it holds for revitalizing the local Church. Cur-

the community is composed of four confreres and three sisters.

A third platform is the St Willibrord community in Deurne (Netherlands) which pastorally reaches out to alienated Catholics who no longer feel at home in a parish setting.

## THE SVD CHARACTERISTIC DIMENSIONS

**Mission Animation.** Mission animation in the province is promoted through the internationality of our communities and the missionary spirit of individual confreres. There are confreres in Belgium and the Netherlands involved in various mission organizations. The presence of non-European confreres in particular contributes to a greater awareness on the part of the local Church of the presence of marginalized groups belonging to other cultures and/or religions.

**Biblical Apostolate.** One confrere writes articles on exegetical and pastoral-biblical themes, while others lead Bible-sharing groups, especially among the migrants.

**Communication.** For internal circulation, the province sends out a bi-monthly newsletter and the monthly newsletter of the provincial superior. It also publishes the quarterly newsletter Rond for family members and SVD friends. The province also operates a website: [www.svdneb.nl](http://www.svdneb.nl).

**JPIC.** The province has been very active in the field of JPIC. The provincial JPIC commission

has at present five members and cooperates very closely with VIVAT International and with the Africa Europe Faith and Justice Network. The commission keeps the confreres in the province informed about JPIC issues through a two-page attachment to the provincial newsletter.

#### 4. Sharing Intercultural Life

*“Mission stems from a contemplative presence. If we wish to witness to the Reign of God, we need first to have had an experience of God in our own life. We must have listened to the Word of God coming to us through the Bible and through other people.”*

—NEB Vision Statement

MEMBERSHIP	2000	2005	2012
Bishops	1	0	0
Clerics	90	73	62
Brothers (final vows)	23	24	17
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>79</b>

AGE and COUNTRY	2000	2005	2012
Average Age	74.4	75.2	73.3
Nationalities	5	6	11*

#### \* ZONAL ORIGIN of province members

AFRAM	3	1cng, 1gha, 1tog
ASPAC	10	4isa, 3ind, 2phi, 1chn
EUROPE	66	54ned, 8bel, 3ger, 1pol

**Spirituality.** The communal celebration of the Eucharist is well attended. Most communities hold regular faith-and-Bible sharing as well as days of regular recollection. Aside from the annual provincial retreat, confreres also come together for the annual ‘theme-day’ to share personal experiences about certain aspects of their spirituality.

**Community.** The confreres from outside Europe enrich the intercultural life of our communities in the province. All communities and districts hold regular meetings. Thrice a year, a small group of confreres undergoes a kind of desert experience during which participants share their personal experiences and aspirations. The confreres in Teteringen belong to a larger community that includes Benedictine monks and Missionaries of the Holy Family. They meet once a month for a highly appreciated SVD get-together. The leadership team periodically visits confreres in the communities of Montenaus, Nieuwegein and The Hague.

**Leadership.** The challenge to the provincial and his council is to provide leadership attuned to the needs of both the great majority of retired confreres, as well as of a small group of young confreres still new to the province and country. Two members of the current council come from among the younger confreres. The council meets once a month, local superiors assemble once a year, and meetings for new missionaries are organized twice a year. During the month of February, the provincial council gathers in the SVD motherhouse in Steyl for four days of intensive

evaluation and planning anew. Leadership in the province tries to be as participative as possible.

**Finances.** The economic crisis has adversely affected the once secure financial situation of the province. On the positive side, it has also brought about greater awareness of shared responsibility. Together with the provincial treasurer and an advisory financial commission, the provincial council closely monitors the use of the province's resources. Also, an ad hoc commission has been formed to find different ways of providing for the

future needs of the province, particularly of the new missionaries.

**Formation.** Ongoing formation is promoted through personal study, recollections, and conferences on contemporary issues. Special attention is given to the initiation program for newly arrived non-European confreres appointed to work in the province. The *Missionaire Leeftgroep* SVD in Nieuwegein and The Hague International Religious Community are not only apostolic communities, but also formation communities. ♦

# AUSTRIA PROVINCE

Austria, Croatia



- Official Language: Austria — **German**  
Croatia — **Croat**

- Visa: It is relatively easy to obtain a residence permit, provided a diocese issues an invitation to the missionary or student "to engage in pastoral work". The residence permit has to be yearly renewed.

(July 2011 est.)

	Population	Religious Profile %		
		Christian	Catholics	Others
Austria	8,217,280	73.6	72.7	21.7
Croatia	4,483,804	90.6	88.4	9.4

	Fertility Rate (babies per woman)	Age Structure %		
		0-14	15-64	65
Austria	1.41	14	67.7	18.2
Croatia	1.44	15.1	68.1	16.9

	Median Age	Life Expectancy	Below Poverty Line
Austria	43	79.78	6.0%
Croatia	41.4	75.99	17%

	GDP Output %			Labor Force %		
	1	2	3	1	2	3
Austria	1.5	29.3	69.2	5.5	27.5	67
Croatia	5.5	24.4	70.1	5	31.3	63.6

1=Agriculture, 2=Industry, 3=Services

	Urban Population	Urban Rate of Change	Migrant(s) per 1000
Austria	68%	0.6%	1.81
Croatia	58%	0.4%	1.51

	Total Literacy %		Youth Literacy %	
	male	female	male	female
Austria	98	98	n.a.	n.a.
Croatia	99.32	97.08	99.65	99.64

	Mass Media per 1000 persons			Interactive Media per 1000 persons	
	Newspaper	Radio	TV	Mobile	Internet
Austria	304.6	739.9	517.2	1,489	747.5
Croatia	132.7	336.7	272.0	1,418	498.2

## 1. Intercultural Setting

**AUSTRIA.** The vast majority of the Austrian population is culturally homogeneous and German speaking. However, in some parts of the country, we find a few ethnic minorities to which Hungarians, Slovenes, Croats, Roma/Sinti and Jews belong. The preservation of their respective languages and cultures is guaranteed by Austria's constitutional law.

After World War II, so called "guest workers", mainly from southern Europe and the Balkans,

found employment in Austria and eventually settled permanently with their families. In more recent times, the influx of workers and immigrants from Turkey has considerably increased. In the early nineties, refugees, workers and immigrants from Turkey has considerably increased. In the early nineties, refugees and immigrants came particularly from disintegrating Yugoslavia and since the collapse of the communist regimes in Eastern Europe, from the countries of this region. Furthermore, many immigrants and asylum-seekers have come to the country from all trouble spots of the world.

At present, all these "immigrants" roughly make up one tenth of the Austrian population. Many of them hold low-paid jobs and live in poorer urban

neighbourhoods, especially in the capital Vienna and other major cities. There is a sizable number of non-documented persons among them. In the traditional population of the country, there is a growing resistance against immigration and immigrants, which is also fostered and fanned by certain political parties.

**CROATIA.** Croatia is ancient as motherland of a people, yet very young as a nation state. It was a feared kingdom in the 10th century and a naval power in the 16th and 17th centuries. Its struggle to achieve national unity since the 19th century had to bear with frequent foreign interventions and dominations before achieving international recognition in 1992 as an autonomous republic.

A variety of ethnic groups coexist within the republic. Croats constitute about nine-tenths of the population. Among the minorities, the largest group consists of the Serbs. Lesser groups are those of the Bosniacs, Hungarians, Italians, and Slovenes. Croats living outside Croatia is roughly estimated to equal the number of those living inside the country.

In the late 1980s tension began to build between Croats and Serbs in the former Yugoslavia and ended in a war between them in 1991. The reasons for the war are very complex for outsiders to understand. But they may be simply summed up by saying that, while Croatia wanted to break away from Yugoslavia, Serbs did not want such separation to happen. Now that the new nation is growing in democracy, its youthful people prefer to be identified as a modern country of Western Europe.

2. Ecclesial Setting

**AUSTRIA.** Many Austrians have a negative image of the Church because of what the mass media present, or because of frustrating experiences they have had within the Church. As a result the recent decades saw many Catholics drop out quietly from churchgoing.

What worsens the internal of the Church is the grave lack of vocations to the priesthood and religious life. Among the clergy and in religious congregations, the elderly and retired members have outnumbered those still in active ministry. To resolve this problem, many dioceses invite help from neighboring countries (Poland and Croatia) and elsewhere as from India and some African countries.

The picture of the Church in Austria would be very pessimistic if we leave out the many signs of hope evident in many parishes, in lay ecclesial movements and in quasi-religious communities. The remnant faithful Catholic flock is indeed smaller now, but its faith and search for human and Christian authenticity have found renewed light and force.

**CROATIA.** Religious affiliation in Croatia is traditionally paired with ethnic identity. Most Croats are Roman Catholics, whereas most Serbs are Eastern Orthodox. Among the Bosnians is the larger portion of the Muslim population. A small minority in the country professes to be atheist or non-religious.

3. Sharing Intercultural Mission

*“As a religious missionary congregation of international membership, we are dedicated*

- *to primary evangelization,*
- *to interreligious and intercultural dialogue,*
- *to solidarity with the poor and marginalized,*
- *and to the promotion of equality and solidarity in the Church and in the world.*

*By means of our life and mission we promote consciousness of the worldwide mission of the Church and we present the richness of the Universal Church in our Local Church.”*

– OES Vision Statement

Those in final vows  
IN ACTIVE MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Parish Ministry	17.1	20.8	27.3
School/Education	1.2	0	0
Other Apostolates	18.3	29.2	11.0
SVD Vocation/Formation	11.4	4.7	3.3
Administration/Support	26.0	24.2	6.6

Those in final vows  
NOT IN MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Studies/Orientation	2.4	1.7	3.3
Retired/Sick	15.4	13.6	33.3
Other	8.1	5.9	15.2

PLATFORMS FOR PROPHETIC DIALOGUE

Traditionally, the Austrian province focused mainly on fostering mission awareness through



the print media, vocation promotion, seminary formation, theological research and teaching, and support for foreign missions. The Roscommon Consensus of 1990 created a radical shift of vision by declaring that the whole continent of Europe –and Austria as part of it– is now a mission territory. This not only made our confreres change their ways of approaching their traditional ministries, but even challenged us them to explore new ones. Since then we now run some parishes and help promote the lay missionary movement known as “*Missionare auf Zeit*” (temporary missionaries). Other new apostolates of ours are:

**Migrant Ministry.** In collaboration with our SSps sisters, our confreres formed a group called “Migration” that reaches out to migrants. There are similar parochial groups organized by a good number of committed lay volunteers.

**Youth Ministry.** The province offers space and facilities to two youth centers: “*Weltdorf-World Village*” in the mission house St Gabriel, and the school chaplaincy center for our secondary school in St Rupert. These centers welcomes young people and offer missionary events in which they can meaningfully participate.

**Spiritual guidance and counseling.** We have joined other religious congregations in Vienna and Innsbruck to reach out to people in need of spiritual guidance and counseling.

#### THE SVD CHARACTERISTIC DIMENSIONS

**Mission Animation.** The Mission Procure looks for tested as well as new creative ways to promote

mission awareness in the local Church, as well as to raise funds for worldwide mission.

**Communication.** We continue to use the print media as a vehicle to promote mission awareness in light of the current reality of the world and the Church. We involve lay people in the promotion and distribution of our local publications.

**JPIC.** We strengthen our pastoral presence in prisons and for people in custody pending deportation. We minister to the pastoral needs of ecclesial communities of foreign migrants living in big cities.

#### 4. Sharing Intercultural Life

MEMBERSHIP	2000	2005	2012
Bishops	1	1	0
Clerics	82	81	67
Brothers (final vows)	37	36	27
Brothers (temporal vows)	0	1	0
Scholastics	11	9	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>95</b>

AGE and COUNTRY	2000	2005	2012
Average Age	58.0	59.6	64.2
Nationalities	15	16	13*

#### \* ZONAL ORIGIN of province members

AFRAM	2	2gha
ASPAC	8	Sisa, 3phi
EUROPE	82	61oes, 9ger, 5pol, 3swi, 2yug, 1cro, 1ita
PANAM	3	1arg, 1brz, 1mex



**Spirituality.** The presence of confreres from other countries gives us opportunities for intercultural faith sharing. The bigger and more established communities carry on their traditional spiritual practices.

**Leadership.** The provincial leadership is heavily burdened by the administration of temporal goods such as our big and empty houses. For this reason, those in leadership positions feel a great need for more knowledge and expertise in the organizational and juridical field.

**Finance.** Due to dwindling number of Catholics, donations in support of our local and

worldwide mission enterprise have equally been decreasing. We expect this trend to continue. In our consumer society, we strive to live a simple lifestyle in keeping with our vow of poverty.

**Formation.** Our students live in a small community and study in a public university together with diocesan candidates, religious and laypeople. This arrangement has proved viable so far so that ways are being explored to establish a common formation program for the German-speaking Subzone and find a common place for the formation community. ♦



# POLAND PROVINCE

Poland – Ukraine – Russia



- Official Language: Poland — **Polish**  
Ukraine — **Ukrainian**

- Visa: Foreign missionaries do not experience major problems in obtaining a visa to Poland. More difficult situation exists in Kaliningrad. If one follows prescribed procedures, visa for pastoral work in Ukraine is possible.

(July 2011 est.)

	Population	Religious Profile %		
		Christian	Catholics	Others
Poland	38,441,588	91.4	89.8	8.6
Ukraine	45,134,707	91.5	10.3	8.5

	Fertility Rate (babies per woman)	Age Structure %		
		0-14	15-64	65
Poland	1.3	14.7	71.6	13.7
Ukraine	1.28	13.7	70.8	15.5

	Median Age	Life Expectancy	Below Poverty Line
Poland	38.5	76.05	17%
Ukraine	39.9	68.58	35%

	GDP Output %			Labor Force %		
	1	2	3	1	2	3
Poland	3.4	33	63.5	17.4	29.2	53.4
Ukraine	9.4	33.6	57	15.8	18.5	65.7

1=Agriculture, 2=Industry, 3=Services

	Urban Population	Urban Rate of Change	Migrant(s) per 1000
Poland	61%	-0.1%	-0.47
Ukraine	69%	-0.1%	-0.09

	Total Literacy%		Youth Literacy%	
	male	female	male	female
Poland	99.8	99.7	99.8	99.8
Ukraine	99.7	99.2	99.8	99.8

	Mass Media per 1000 persons			Interactive Media per 1000 persons	
	Newspaper	Radio	TV	Mobile	Internet
Poland	102.1	525.4	339.4	1,196	584.0
Ukraine	192.3	998.1	399.9	1,194	172.1

## 1. Intercultural Setting

**POLAND.** Poland is one of the most homogeneous countries in Europe in terms of ethnicity and religion. 97% percent of the population claims a Polish ethnic heritage, and ninety-seven percent of the population is Roman Catholic. Nevertheless, there are sizeable communities of nine “national” minorities (Byelorussians, Czechs, Lithuanians, Germans, Armenians, Russians, Slovaks, Jews and Ukrainians) and four “ethnic” minorities (Karaims, Lemeks, Romas and Tatars).

Poland is one of the most homogeneous countries in Europe in terms of ethnicity and religion.

Poland also has economic immigrants, in particular from Vietnam, Korea and China. Warsaw alone has a population of some 50,000 Vietnamese.

**UKRAINE.** Surrounded by diverse nations and cultures, Ukraine is home to Belorussians in northern Polissia; Poles, Slovaks, Hungarians, and Romanians in western Ukraine; Moldovians and Gagauz in southern Ukraine; and Russians in eastern and northern Ukraine. Ukraine’s history went through ethnic conflicts emerging on social and religious grounds. But governmental programs aimed at national integration are underway. Ethnic communities receive support for their cultural development, such as the use of

ethnic languages for school instruction in multicultural regions. Or still, recently opened in the country is the first center for fostering the Roma (Gypsy) culture.

## 2. Ecclesial Setting

**POLAND.** Based on the relatively high level of religious practice, it would seem that Poles are rather resistant to secularization. However, a “selective” approach to Church teaching and practice is becoming more widespread. Also, between 20 to 30% of the population profess to be Catholics, but are no longer churchgoers.

One way by the Church tries to reach out to non-Catholics and no-longer Catholics is through mass media (press, radio and television) and the internet. But much needs still to be done to foster this so-called “second circuit” of Catholic media. For instance: Catholic TV programs reach only 2 or 3% of the citizens, and only 3 to 4% of Poles read the Catholic press. Hope lies in new ecclesial movements among the laity, who may described as a sleeping giant that needs to be awakened to engage responsibly in building up civil society.

Though a sharp decline in vocations to priestly and religious life in Poland, the Church remains dynamic. It offers a variety of charitable services to the poor and unemployed, as the Caritas. It promotes ecumenical relations with other Christians and interreligious dialogue with other faiths. For instance, the Church in Poland celebrates annual days of interreligious feasts such as a Day of Islam, and a Day of Judaism. Lastly, the

vitality of the Polish Church is manifest in the ongoing sending of missionary men and women to foreign missions.

**UKRAINE.** The religion practiced by more than half of the Ukrainian population is Eastern Orthodoxy. There are also significant numbers of Protestants, Roman Catholics, and evangelical Christians in the country. Minority religions include Judaism and Islam (among the Crimean Tatars). More than one-tenth of Ukrainians profess not to have any religious belief or belonging.

### 3. Sharing Intercultural Mission

*“Open to the signs of the times, we reach out in the spirit of dialogue:*

- *to foreign migrants,*
- *to addicted and marginalized people,*
- *to seekers of truth and purpose in life,*
- *and to adherents of other religions and secular ideologies.*

*We carry out our mission of first proclamation in Poland through the following evangelizing activities:*

- *spiritual and material support of the missions,*
- *pastoral and special ministries,*
- *academic research and teaching work at universities and schools,*
- *apostolic work through the mass media.*

*In this way, we seek to awaken and cultivate missionary awareness in Polish society, in cooperation with the local Church”*

–POL Mission Statement

### Those in final vows

#### IN ACTIVE MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Parish Ministry	11.3	16.5	17.3
School/Education	4.7	5.2	8.1
Other Apostolates	20.0	17.8	18.4
SVD Vocation/Formation	10.5	12.0	11.8
Administration/Support	22.1	20.2	17.7

### Those in final vows

#### NOT IN MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Studies/Orientation	15.8	3.0	3.0
Retired/Sick	10.3	9.8	15.8
Other	5.3	5.5	7.9

The Polish province of the Society of the Divine Word was founded in 1935. At present it covers the Republic of Poland, the Kaliningrad Region (Russian enclave between Poland's northern border and Lithuania) and Ukraine (previously belonged to the URL region). Most of the confreres live and work in Poland. The province cooperated well with the local Church at the diocesan and national level in the beatification process of a group of martyrs of the II World War. 19 of these martyrs are our own confreres.

### PLATFORMS FOR PROPHETIC DIALOGUE

Our preferential dialogue partners are children, young people and university students. Children who are neglected and are from dysfunctional families come under our care. We keep our doors open to people who need spiritual renewal and

guidance. Lastly, our Society is the first to recognize the need for a sustained apostolate among the migrants.

For us, the most important platforms for prophetic dialogue are our parishes and mission houses. They provide an environment conducive to sustained pastoral service to persons and families. Our missionary initiatives like “Mission Holidays”, Youth Mission Day or Young Peoples' Prayer Vigil are the most effective platforms for prophetic dialogue. Similar initiatives have been introduced by our confreres, in collaboration with the SSpS Sisters, in Verboviets, Ukraine.

Outside our parishes and houses, a good number of confreres are engaged in giving retreats in other

For us, the most important platforms for prophetic dialogue are our parishes and mission houses.

parishes and institutions here and there in Poland. Some dioceses request our confreres to serve as spiritual directors for their clergy. Some 15 confreres teach theology, missiology, ethnology, religion, philosophy and law in 5 universities.

## THE SVD CHARACTERISTIC DIMENSIONS

**Mission Animation.** The often held mission animation campaigns generate funds for the missions. This program contributes to raising mission awareness among the faithful. It also opens up Polish society to the needs of the uni-

versal Church. Some of the examples of our mission awareness programs are “Eyeglasses for Ghana”, “Crutches of Hope for Angola”, “Cell phones for the missions”, and the “Arnoldus Family Prayer Vigil” at the national shrine of Our Lady of Czestochova.

**Biblical Apostolate.** Biblical Retreats, parish Bible study groups, or a website promoting Bible awareness are some of the ways we promote the Biblical apostolate in the province. The biblical apostolate coordinator is also responsible for promoting the Bible in the diocese of Opole. This apostolate prepares and conducts quarterly recollections and retreats for the Arnoldus family. For the wider public, it offers courses and workshops for catechists, parishioners and the clergy. It also prepares articles for catechetical journals, develops materials for radio programs, and promotes the celebration of Bible Sunday.

**Communication.** *Verbinum Publishing House* continues to bring forth scholarly and popular works in spirituality, missiology, ecumenism, and Scripture. Each Sunday, Radio Vatican programs are produced in the province. Confreres maintain a number of websites, including the official one of the province.

**JPIC.** Several marginalized people are helped through the Family Help Association 'Droga' (Road), in Bialystok. *FuShenfu Migrant center* in Warsaw offers a wide array of assistance to migrants. It provides legal advice, teaches Polish language, and gives pastoral assistance to these people. Our center for Dialogue of

Cultures and Religions, emphasizes interreligious dialogue.

#### 4. Sharing Intercultural Life

*“We, members of the religious-missionary and international community of the Polish province of the Society of the Divine Word, live out the charism of our Founder, St Arnold Janssen. Aware of the mission entrusted to us, we witness to God’s presence in the world by following the example of Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Word.”*

–POL Vision Statement

MEMBERSHIP	2000	2005	2012
Bishops	0	1	1
Clerics	154	177	167
Brothers (final vows)	25	22	23
Brothers (temporal vows)	6	5	4
Scholastics	61	61	25
Novices	15	14	7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>261</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>227</b>

AGE and COUNTRY	2000	2005	2012
Average Age	42.8	45.4	53.7
Nationalities	7	10	7*

#### \* ZONAL ORIGIN of province members

AFRAM	3	3tog
ASPAC	10	7isa, 2vie, 1ind
EUROPE	214	212pol, 1ger, 1urs

**Spirituality.** A provincial commission for ongoing formation and spirituality has been created to prepare prayers for different occasions and daily meditations to help our confreres spiritually.

**Community.** The presence of confreres from abroad helps to experience the international character of our Society, especially for those in temporary vows.

**Finances.** All our mission houses have been grouped in a joint economic venture with other religious orders in Poland. It helps to procure goods and services at economical prices. It has proved to be a good exercise in developing one's skills at cooperation and adapting to the changing circumstances.

**Formation.** The first phase of our formation program is a six-week postulancy held at Nysa. That follows a one year novitiate in Chludowo, which is also the location for the Polish-language course for confreres from other countries. The next stage of formation takes place in Pieniezno. The philosophy and theology studies last for six years. After the fourth year, the confreres go for a year of regency or for OTP.

Foreign students doing their theological studies in Poland add an intercultural dimension to the formation process. In Pieniezno, there are also seminarians from Ukraine who belong to the Society of St Andrew the Apostle, a missionary congregation of the Greek-Catholic Church. Lastly, a renewal program is offered to missionaries returning to Poland. ♦





# PORTUGAL PROVINCE



(July 2011 est.)

Population	Religious Profile %		
	Christian	Catholics	Others
10,561,614	86.7	84.5	13.3

Age Structure %			Fertility Rate
0-14	15-64	65	(babies per woman)
16.2	65.8	18	1.32

Median Age	Life Expectancy	Below Poverty Line
40	78.54	18%

GDP Output %			Labor Force %		
1	2	3	1	2	3
2.5	22.9	74.7	11.7	28.5	59.8

1=Agriculture, 2=Industry, 3=Services

Urban Population	Urban Rate of Change	Migrant(s) per 1000
61%	1%	2.98

Total Literacy%		Youth Literacy%	
male	female	male	female
95.5	91.3	99.6	99.6

Mass Media per 1000 persons			Interactive Media per 1000 persons	
Newspaper	Radio	TV	Mobile	Internet
95.35	280.66	307.61	1,412.35	480.28

- Official Language: **Portuguese**
- Visa: Foreign missionaries find no difficulty in obtaining residence visas.

## 1. Intercultural Setting

Whereas neighboring Spain had been deeply divided along ethnic, linguistic, and regional lines all through its history, Portugal had had no sizable ethno-linguistic minorities. This fact helped it become the first unified nation-state in Western Europe. There used to be regions that differed in

clothes, customs, dances, and festivals. But the advance of modern transport and mass media opened up and linked formerly closed regions to the wider homogenous culture.

Those who add some ethnic diversity to the Portuguese populace are the Roma people or “gypsies” and recent waves of foreign immigrants, most from former colonies in Africa and Asia. Despite government programs to integrate the gypsies into mainstream society, they prefer to live apart as urban semi-nomads that live on begging or peddling, weaving and fortune telling. However, together with some Africans who live in urban ghettos, the gypsies form too small a minority to pose a serious social problem. Most foreign migrants and their descendants have easily integrated with the wider society –in particular the Brazilians, Goans and Timorese. A recent survey across EU countries shows that the Portuguese people are the most tolerant of the culturally and religiously “different”.

## 2. Ecclesial Setting

The Catholic faith has been one major cultural marker –along with a common language and colonialist history– that shaped the Portuguese national identity. Today most Portuguese still identify with the Catholic Church in name, though churchgoing has declined in the cities and larger towns, particularly in the south. In recent decades the number of local clergy has also alarmingly declined.

## 3. Sharing Intercultural Mission

“Our mission in Portugal is addressed to:

- *the marginalized –among whom are the poorest of the poor, the elderly, and the migrants coming from other cultural and religious backgrounds;*
- *non-believers and faith-seekers –especially among the youth and university students;*
- *the local Church –that it may awaken to its missionary calling in solidarity with the Universal Church.”*

–POR Mission Statement

## Those in final vows

### IN ACTIVE MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Parish Ministry	10.4	22.9	40.8
School/Education	2.1	10.4	0
Other Apostolates	25.0	31.2	21.8
SVD Vocation/Formation	12.5	6.2	9.3
Administration/Support	29.2	25.0	28.1

## Those in final vows

### NOT IN MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Studies/Orientation	8.3	0	0
Retired/Sick	8.3	0	0
Other	4.2	4.2	0

## PLATFORMS FOR PROPHETIC DIALOGUE

For decades, the Society heavily concentrated its personnel and financial resources in the minor seminaries at Tortosendo, Guimaraes and Fatima. Collaboration with the local Church was

limited to occasional pastoral ministry on personal initiative.

A new phase began for us with the closing down of our seminaries. Some Portuguese confreres returned from foreign missions and young confreres from other continents were assigned to the province. They then moved to live and work in dioceses that were suffering from a shortage of local clergy. In 1993, we took over the pastoral region of Almodovar in southern Portugal, a highly dechristianized area with many elderly people. Then we accepted the parish of Prior Velho in Lisbon where a large number of parishioners are of African origin (Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau and Sao Tome). The SVD also took over the rural parishes of Tortosendo, Cortes do Meio and Unhais da Serra in the diocese of Guarda, the pastoral area of San Torcato in Guimaraes. Finally, in 2010, we also took charge of the pastoral zone of Nisa situated in the interior of the country. By now we serve in six of the twenty dioceses in Portugal.

In Lisboa, our ministry is directed primarily to the migrants most of whom have come from Africa and Asia. In the interior of the country, we reach out to elderly people living in poverty and severe loneliness. In the North, where the population is younger and more active, the SVD is just entering the parish ministry and collaborates closely with the local Church. The newly erected Diocesan Mission Center of the Braga Archdiocese employs a confrere and two lay SVD associates.

Aside from these pastoral territories, we also manage four houses that were formerly minor seminaries:

- a hotel for pilgrims in Fatima,
- SVD homes that welcome ecclesial groups in Guimaraes and Tortosendo,
- and the formation house (where the provincial also resides) in Lisbon.

## THE SVD CHARACTERISTIC DIMENSIONS

**Mission Animation.** The Mission Secretariat in Fatima launches annual campaigns and promotes various projects to raise funds for the missions and make people aware of the missionary cause. The SVD is a member of ANIMAG, an association of missionary institutes in Portugal that organizes joint animation weeks. We are also partners with three SVD-linked lay groups: the Friends of the Divine Word (AMIVD), the Association of Ex-SVD Students (AAVD), and the *DIALOGOS*. This third group promotes lay mission and volunteer work within Portugal and abroad. The annual pilgrimage to Fatima, in which lay friends and associates of the Society participate, is also an opportunity for animating missionary awareness and solidarity.

**Biblical Apostolate.** Four confreres (including the Provincial Biblical Coordinator) have academic training in biblical studies. They offer courses

The Mission Secretariat in Fatima launches annual campaigns and promotes various projects to raise funds for the missions and make people aware of the missionary cause.

on the Bible and promote the practice of *lectio divina* in parishes and other places.

**Communication.** To disseminate information and promote mission awareness, we publish and distribute materials such as the bi-monthly newsletter *Contacto SVD*, SVD ao Encontro, the *Agenda Jovem* (a diary type calendar for young people), calendars (pocket and wall), various books about the SVD saints, and leaflets for vocation promotion. We are also present in the internet.

**JPIC.** We work in partnership with the Justice and Peace Commission of the Conference for the Religious. We also collaborate ecumenically with agencies and NGOs of other Christian churches.

#### 4. Sharing Intercultural Life

*“Rooted in a renewed consecrated life of community and mission we live our religious, missionary vocation in international communities, inserted into local churches and guided by a genuine experience of God.*

*We seek to promote vocations by awakening and accompanying those whom the Lord calls, so that their commitment to mission may be solid and lasting.”*

–POR Vision Statement

MEMBERSHIP	2000	2005	2012
Clerics	21	23	36
Brothers (final vows)	3	1	1
Scholastics	4	10	4
TOTAL	28	34	41

AGE and COUNTRY	2000	2005	2012
Average Age	50.9	45.9	53.6
Nationalities	7	8	7*

#### \* ZONAL ORIGIN of province members

AFRAM	2	2cng
ASPAC	12	6isa, 5ind, 1phi
EUROPE	27	25por, 1fra, 1pol

**Spirituality.** The Province holds annual spiritual exercises, often with the confreres of the Spanish Province (ESP), and local communities organize regular days of recollection. Every community has a biblical coordinator directly responsible for animating communal faith sharing and biblical reflection.

**Community.** Christmas is celebrated in common by members of the Province. There are activities that promote training in biblical and parish ministry, vocation promotion, and mission animation. Other days are set apart for communal evaluation and planning. ♦

## THE ROMAN COMMUNITIES

Composed of three SVD communities in Rome –the Collegio del Verbo Divino, the Collegio San Pietro, and the Centro Ad Gentes in Nemi– ROM is a unique jurisdiction in the Society. It is neither a province nor a region nor a mission. Although located in Italy, it is not part of the SVD Italian Province. It is under the direct authority of the superior general.

*“We, Divine Word Missionaries of the three Roman Communities, commit ourselves to a two-fold mission:*

- *Koinonia inter nos: Due to our diversity in age, race, language and culture, we are called to go beyond being merely members of a multicultural group to being an intercultural fraternity and a community of prayer that serves as a school and as a sign of the Kingdom of God.*
- *Diakonia ad extra: In the spirit of the four-fold dialogue, we offer a diversity of services in support of the mission of the Church and of the Society.*

– ROM Vision-Mission Statement

### 1. Collegio del Verbo Divino (1928)

The history of the *Collegio del Verbo Divino* began in 1888, when St. Arnold Janssen sent three newly-ordained priests and a student of theology to study in Rome. The St. Raphael community, as it was known, rented space at various locations until September 1928, when it moved to a newly-

constructed building just outside the ancient wall of Rome. Soon afterwards the SVD general council also transferred its headquarters from Steyl to the Collegio, where it has remained ever since. Aside from being the residence of all confreres doing higher studies in Rome and the seat of the SVD generalate, the Collegio also offers hospitality to confreres who come to Rome for official Society business or personal visit.

The *Collegio del Verbo Divino* is an international community serving all the provinces, regions and missions of the Society. The more than 70 confreres comprising the community (83 by start of the 17th General Chapter in 2012; 73 by the beginning of the 2012-2013 academic year) come from nearly 20 nations. At present, 28 make up the generalate: the superior general and his council, the generalate officials, and the staff, including secretaries, translators, archivists, a statistician, IT technicians and publications personnel. Approximately 30 confreres are students enrolled at various pontifical universities and institutes in Rome. The rest are confreres who either were appointed specifically to manage the house (e.g., the rector, the house treasurer, and confreres in charge of maintenance, postal service, etc.) or engaged in various commitments outside the house (e.g., the Vatican, the Domitilla Catacombs, teaching at pontifical universities).

The Collegio del Verbo Divino is an international community serving all the provinces, regions and missions of the Society.

## STATISTICAL PROFILE

Students at the Collegio del Verbo Divino 2006 - 2012

(includes incoming students for Academic Year 2012-2013)

Students by country of origin				Students by sending provinces			
	Country	Students			Province/Region	Students	
		no.	%			no.	%
1	Angola	1	1.6	1	ANG	1	1.6
2	China	2	3.2	2	BOL	1	1.6
3	Congo	1	1.6	3	BOT	1	1.6
4	Ghana	3	4.8	4	CAM	1	1.6
5	India	17	27.4	5	CNG	1	1.6
6	Indonesia	19	30.6	6	ECU	2	3.2
7	Philippines	6	9.7	7	GHA	4	6.5
8	Poland	5	8.1	8	IDE	8	12.9
9	Russia	1	1.6	9	IDJ	4	6.5
10	Slovakia	2	3.2	10	IDR	3	4.8
11	Togo	1	1.6	11	IDT	2	3.2
12	Vietnam	3	4.8	12	INC	3	4.8
13	Zambia	1	1.6	13	INE	4	6.5
Total		62		14	INH	3	4.8
Students by zones of assignment				15	INM	3	4.8
	Zone	Students		16	ITA	1	1.6
		no.	%	17	JPN	2	3.2
1	AFRAM	8	12.9	18	PAR	1	1.6
2	ASPAC	46	74.2	19	PHC	5	8.1
3	EUROPE	3	4.8	20	PHS	1	1.6
4	PANAM	5	8.1	21	PNG	1	1.6
Total		62		22	POL	1	1.6
				23	SIN	4	6.5
				24	SLO	1	1.6
				25	TOG	1	1.6
				26	VIE	3	4.8
				Total 62			



## 2. Pontificio Collegio San Pietro Apostolo (1946)

**Collegio San Pietro** is an international residence for priests sent to Rome for higher studies by dioceses throughout the world that come under the jurisdiction of the Vatican Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples. In 1947 Pope Pius XII entrusted its care to the SVD. These words of Pope Paul VI aptly sums up what the Collegio San Pietro is meant to be: “a college that wants to foster collegiality –i.e., communion, friendship, fusion of spirits, to be started here and here enjoyed in unity; and in future years to be remembered and lived again, when you will be spread around the Catholic world.” At present, four confreres serve at this college as rector, vice-rector, treasurer and spiritual director.

## 3. Centro Ad Gentes – Nemi (1960)

**The Centro Ad Gentes** in Nemi began as a center for renewal in the spirit of Vatican Council II for all confreres in ministry and perpetual vows for ten or more years. The offering of this renewal course not only continues to the present, but has even diversified to respond to the differing needs of ongoing formation of confreres. The first emerged in response to a recommendation of the 14th

General Chapter of 1994: a periodic course for SVD formators. By now, these renewal courses are from time to time a joint SVD-SSpS project. These courses are also open to diocesan priests and religious from other missionary congregations who request to take part in them.

Still an important feature of the course offerings at the Ad Gentes Center is the joint project of the Society and the Catholic Biblical Federation since 1987: the *Dei Verbum Biblical Course*. It is aimed at training animators –priests and religious, lay men and women– for the biblical apostolate at the service of local churches.

As envisioned by the Society, the *Centro Ad Gentes* is an “International Missionary Formation Center”. Dedicated to the Holy Spirit (21 October 1962), “the driving force of all formation and spirituality”, it aims “to serve as a venue for ongoing formation for Divine Word Missionaries, members of the Arnoldus Family, their mission partners, and for lay people, religious, and clerics” (Mission Statement, CAG). Originally established as a special venue for SVD-organized activities, today *Centro Ad Gentes* also offers itself to other groups as a venue for their workshops, chapters, retreats, and other programs. Currently, there are four confreres assigned to this community. ♦



# SLOVAKIA PROVINCE

Slovakia & Czech Republic



- Official Languages: Slovakia — **Slovak**  
Czech Republic — **Czech**
- Visa: A residence visa and work permit is easily granted to foreign confreres to live and work in both Slovakia and the Czech Republic.

(July 2011 est.) **Religious Profile %**

	Population	Christian	Catholics	Others
Slovakia	5,477,038	73.4	73.85	26.6
Czech Rep.	10,190,213	28.9	26.8	71.1

**Fertility Rate** **Age Structure %**

	(babies per woman)	0-14	15-64	65
Slovakia	1.37	15.6	71.6	12.8
Czech Rep.	1.26	13.5	70.2	16.3

	Median Age	Life Expectancy	Below Poverty Line
Slovakia	37.6	75.83	21%
Czech Rep.	40.8	77.19	n.a.

	GDP Output %			Labor Force %		
	1	2	3	1	2	3
Slovakia	3.8	34.8	61.4	3.5	27	69.4
Czech Rep.	2.4	37.6	60	3.1	38.6	58.3

1=Agriculture, 2=Industry, 3=Services

	Urban Population	Urban Rate of Change	Migrant(s) per 1000
Slovakia	55%	0.1%	0.29
Czech Rep.	74%	0.3%	0.97

	Total Literacy %		Youth Literacy %	
	male	female	male	female
Slovakia	99.7	99.6	99.57	99.67
Czech Rep.	99	99	n.a.	n.a.

	Mass Media			Interactive Media	
	per 1000 persons			per 1000 persons	
	Newspaper	Radio	TV	Mobile	Internet
Slovakia	128.7	569.6	478.3	1081	741.8
Czech Rep.	n.a.	811.5	536.7	1155	431.7

## 1. Intercultural Setting

**SLOVAKIA.** Ethnic Slovaks constitute more than four-fifths of the country's population. Hungarians, concentrated in the southern border districts, form the largest minority, making up about one-tenth. Some Czechs, Germans, and Poles live dispersed within the country, while Ruthenians (Rusyns) are concentrated in the east and northeast. There is a sizable semi-nomadic population of Roma (Gypsies), who live mainly in the eastern part of the country. Recent statistics count their presence at 1.5% of the

On the Slovak side, roughly three-fourths profess to be Christians, among whom most are Catholics.

reflect the hostility toward the Gypsies among the Slovak populace.

After the First World War, Czechs and Slovaks shared a common state (1918-1992). However, even though their languages were closely related and mutually intelligible, many Slovaks felt discriminated against. On 1 January 1993, in deference to the Slovak desire to assert their ethnic identity, the Czechs complied with a peaceful separation between them into two independent countries.

**CZECH REPUBLIC.** Moravian and Bohemian Czechs make up about 94% of the population. A

3% Slovak minority remains from the Czechoslovakian federal period. Other ethnic minorities are numerically insignificant, except perhaps for the Roma (Gypsy) people who have resisted assimilation with the broader society. The latter ethnic group counts as only 0.3% by self-declaration in official censuses, but may form as much as 2.5% of the country's population.

## 2. Ecclesial Setting

During the communist era of Czechoslovakia, atheism became the official policy of the government. Churches were allowed to exist but their role was largely restricted to ritual celebration. In 1990, a year after religious freedom was restored in the country, Pope John Paul II came to visit and celebrate the resurgence of the Catholic faith that then counted about two-fifths of the total population.

Since the start of the 21st century more than three-fifths of Czechs have come to declare some religious affiliation, while one-third claim no religious belief or belonging. The national Czech church, founded in 1920 and renamed Czechoslovak Hussite Church in 1972, has a significant number of Czech adherents. On the Slovak side, roughly three-fourths profess to be Christians, among whom most are Catholics. Other major churches include the Evangelical Lutherans (nearly 7%) and the Orthodox Christians (4.1%). Atheists and non-affiliated persons together may number as many as 10% of the population, while adherents to other faiths account for the rest.

The Catholic Church in Slovakia has been able to reach a certain degree of internal stability. It now independently runs schools and a university, several hospitals, hospices and social facilities for the elderly and handicapped. These church-run schools and social institutions are subsidized by the state. In the Czech Republic some high schools (gymnasium) are run by religious congregations. Lay religious movements and religious orders, which during the Socialist era went clandestine, are once again openly active. In 2008, two new dioceses were created: the one of Bratislava and the other of Zilina. Many religious congregations and NGOs are engaged in pastoral and social activities. There are many lay movements in Slovakia offering the people help for spiritual and social services.

### 3. Sharing Intercultural Mission

*“We, the Divine Word missionaries of the Slovak Province, faithful to the heritage of St Arnold, our Founder, aim to live in keeping with our religious missionary vocation in a constant openness to the call of the Holy Spirit:*

- *by proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Word of God, where it is not yet known or known enough (through the biblical apostolate, the mass media, campus ministry among university students, committed service to the local Church –especially in the Czech Republic, and mission outreach to the ethnic minorities);*
- *by spiritually and materially supporting the worldwide mission endeavors of the Church and*

*our Society (by mission animation wherever we work, recruitment and formation of missionary vocations, and empowerment of the laity for missionary collaboration.)”*

–SLO Mission Statement

#### Those in final vows

##### IN ACTIVE MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Parish Ministry	23.8	19.8	34.1
School/Education	3.2	5.6	3.8
Other Apostolates	16.7	14.3	10.9
SVD Vocation/Formation	7.9	4.0	5.4
Administration/Support	16.7	15.1	8.3

#### Those in final vows

##### NOT IN MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Studies/Orientation	3.2	7.9	4.8
Retired/Sick	28.6	31.8	30.8
Other	0	1.6	1.9

#### PLATFORMS FOR PROPHETIC DIALOGUE

The Slovakia province of the Society is composed of communities living and working in both Slovak and Czech Republics. A contribution of the SVDs is in the area of pastoral care of the University students in Bratislava and pastoral activities for vocation promotion. Two confreres from Vietnam are engaged in the care for the migrants, mainly in the Czech Republic. There is an invitation from the archdiocese

of Prague to take over a parish in the capital mainly for pastoral care of the Vietnamese immigrants.

Our dialogue partners are mainly the people we meet in our workplaces and those who have invited us to cooperate with them in matters of faith. At present they are predominantly university students, individuals, and families. We also reach out to foreign immigrants and the Roma or Gypsy minority. Parishes and university campuses with the centers for religious care (UPC) form for us the platform for prophetic dialogue.

#### THE SVD CHARACTERISTIC DIMENSIONS

**Mission Animation.** We continue to use the summer camp program called "mission holiday" for the youth –in school or out of school. The Mission Museum in Nitra, mission fairs (Nitra, Bratislava), and 'parish missions' at the local level are some of the venues where we raise mission awareness and concern. These activities are also aimed at awakening interest in the religious and missionary vocation among the youth.

**Biblical Apostolate.** The coordinator organizes biblical activities in the province. Our community in Bratislava continues to hold biblical programs called "Renew".

**Communication.** Through our monthly publication Hlasy, and through other books and videos, we help disseminate the Word of God. We produce calendars, missionary biographies, leaflets, etc. for our pastoral activities. We cooperate with the only Catholic television station in the country named "Lux".

**JPIC.** We work among the Roma or Gypsy minority for their social well-being and integration in the Church and society.

#### 4. Sharing Intercultural Life

*"We strive to give witness to the Love of the Holy Triune God towards humanity by living out our personal and community life in harmony with all our confreres of different nationalities and cultures."*

– SLO Vision Statement

MEMBERSHIP	2000	2005	2012
Bishops	0	0	0
Clerics	55	57	45
Brothers (final vows)	7	6	2
Brothers (temporal vows)	3	1	0
Scholastics	16	17	14
Novices	3	2	3
TOTAL	84	83	64

AGE and COUNTRY	2000	2005	2012
Average Age	52.0	51.2	53.6
Nationalities	5	6	8*

#### \* ZONAL ORIGIN of province members

ASPAC	8	3ind, 2isa, 2vie, 1tls
EUROPE	56	51slo, 3pol, 1cze, 1oes

**Spirituality.** Besides daily masses and prayers in common, our communities hold faith sharing around the Word of God in varying regularities.

**Community.** Our province is made more international by the presence of OTP and theology students. We have now missionaries assigned

from other countries to enhance this factor.

**Formation.** The young confreres are given an opportunity to gain pastoral experience in parishes. Our OTP program goes well. We continue to offer our invitation to more OTP students, with the possibility of continuing their study of theology in the province.





# SWITZERLAND PROVINCE

Switzerland, France



- Official Languages: Switzerland — **German, French, Italian, Romansh**  
France — **French**
- Visa: France and Switzerland are members of the 15 Schengen countries of Europe but Switzerland is not a member of the European Union (EU). For confreres, the difficulty of being granted residence visa and work permit comes less from the consular process of application (mainly handled by the host SVD Province), but the demand to learn the country's national language.

(July 2011 est.) **Religious Profile %**

	Population	Christian	Catholics	Others
Switzerland	7,639,961	79.3	44.4	20.7
France	65,312,249	85	83	46.5

**Fertility Rate** (babies per woman) **Age Structure %**

		0-14	15-64	65
Switzerland	1.46	15.2	67.8	17
France	1.96	18.5	64.7	16.8

	Median Age	Life Expectancy	Below Poverty Line
Switzerland	41.7	81.07	6.9%
France	39.9	81.19	6.2%

	GDP Output %			Labor Force %		
	1	2	3	1	2	3
Switzerland	1.3	27.2	71.5	3.4	23.4	73.2
France	1.7	18.6	79.7	3.8	24.3	71.8

1=Agriculture, 2=Industry, 3=Services

	Urban Population	Urban Rate of Change	Migrant(s) per 1000
Switzerland	74%	0.5%	1.29
France	85%	1%	1.46

	Total Literacy%		Youth Literacy%	
	male	female	male	female
Switzerland	99	99	n.a.	n.a.
France	99	99	n.a.	n.a.

	Mass Media per 1000 persons			Interactive Media per 1000 persons	
	Newspaper	Radio	TV	Mobile	Internet
Switzerland	348.9	929.3	433.2	1,240.2	805.2
France	128.9	846.7	532.8	979.91	693.0

**SWITZERLAND** is an outstanding model of society in which peoples of diverse cultural backgrounds do live in social harmony. One of its distinctive features is the official recognition of four national languages. At the beginning of the 21st century, more than three-fifths of the total population spoke German, one-fifth French, one-twelfth Italian, and less than 1 percent Romansh. Foreign residents make up about one-fifth of the country's total population. Foreign immigration increased substantially in the 1990s, when the country provided refuge to those fleeing the vio-

lence in in Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina. The influence of the Reformation and the Enlightenment had shaped the unique structure of the Swiss Church that joins features both of hierarchy and democracy.

Switzerland is a patchwork of small regions called "cantons" that gradually joined as a confederated nation – not because they shared a common culture and history, but because that type of government seemed best to guarantee their respective autonomies. The linguistic regions emerged through a long history of internal migrations and intermarriages – thus, making it difficult to determine the existence of "ethnic groups." What then rules is the principle of the linguistic territoriality: i.e., internal migrants have to use the canton's language in their contacts with government offices and agencies.

**FRANCE** is one of the oldest nations in the world. The French Revolution of the late 18th century drastically transformed its medieval monarchy

into a secularist state that professed to promote "liberty, equality and fraternity". The "fraternal" or universal spirit of the French people served as fertile ground for the advancement of art and science – particularly anthropology, philosophy, and sociology. But abiding by the values of "liberty" and "equality" has kept the nation publicly torn till now. On the one hand, the French people expect the state to provide its citizens with social services ranging from free education to health care and pension plans. On the other hand, this centralist outlook often clashes with the individualism self-ascribed to the French character. As the historian Jules Michelet himself remarked: "England is an empire, Germany is a nation-race, France is a person."

In the last decades the waves of multicultural immigration into France have been testing the nation's professed commitment to "liberty, equality, and fraternity." UN statistics in 2010 counted 11.1% of the French population – or 7.2 million – to consist of immigrants and their immediate descendants. 42% of these have come from Africa, especially from former French colonies; 34% from countries of the European Union; and the rest from other continents, especially from Turkey and Asia.

## 2. Ecclesial Setting

**SWITZERLAND.** The influence of the Reformation and the Enlightenment had shaped the unique structure of the Swiss Church that joins features both of hierarchy and democracy. An elected Church-state council of laypeople ma-

nages ecclesial property. And the parish community itself has the final say in administrative matters –even the appointment of a new pastor.

Many Swiss Catholics are resigned to seeing the Church diminish in number. Priests and religious are becoming fewer as divorces and departures from the Church increase. As a consequence, many parishes are being unified into broader pastoral units served with the help of lay pastoral agents (men and women), parish councilors, preachers at biblical services, and at exceptional occasions even ministers of baptism and confirmation. Ecumenical collaboration is a welcome practice in many parishes.

**FRANCE.** The downward religious trend in Switzerland appears graver in France: in the last three decades the membership of Christian churches has shrunk as manifest in the much fewer requests for baptisms, weddings and funerals. Foreign immigrations are bringing in new Catholic churchgoers, as well as members of other faiths –in particular Islam. Because of the growing immigrant Muslim communities, religious convictions become political issues challenging the *laïcité* (secularity) of the state. A classic instance is the *burqa* (Islamic veil) used by women to cover their heads and even faces. Muslims and their sympathizers denounce the ban on using the *burqa* as a violation of religious freedom supposed to be guaranteed by the state. President Nicolas Sarkozy, however, was expressing the public opinion of the French majority when he said: “The *burqa* is not a religious sign; it is a sign of the subjugation, of the submission of women...”

### 3. Sharing Intercultural Mission

*“Through dialogue and sharing we strive to bring our experience of the proclamation and celebration of the Good News in other parts of the Universal Church into the reality of our SVD communities and into the local Church.*

*We prefer areas of work that bring us into contact with people who live at the margins of the Church and of society in order to be in solidarity with them.*

*We collaborate with institutions and with people who have goals similar to ours, and we accompany interested persons who show themselves ready and willing to take part in our religious-missionary life in Europe or abroad.”*

–SWI Mission Statement

#### Those in final vows

#### IN ACTIVE MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Parish Ministry	21.2	35.1	42.5
School/Education	18.8	8.1	5.0
Other Apostolates	12.5	1.4	7.0
SVD Vocation/Formation	5.0	2.7	5.5
Administration/Support	20.0	13.5	12.1

#### Those in final vows

#### NOT IN MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Studies/Orientation	0	5.4	5.4
Retired/Sick	22.5	33.8	22.5
Other	0	0	0

## PLATFORMS FOR PROPHETIC DIALOGUE

We SVD try to live our missionary presence and activity through prophetic dialogue with our various dialogue partners namely:

- faith seekers through pastoral encounters in baptisms, first communion, marriages etc., and the welcoming of newcomers in the parishes;
- poor and the marginalized migrants and refugees;
- adherents of other religions.

We make every effort to reduce the fear of foreigners among the Swiss population. Our pastoral work in the province, especially in Paris, offers us new and concrete opportunities to practice inter-religious dialogue.

## THE SVD CHARACTERISTIC DIMENSIONS

**Mission Animation.** Our magazines *Stadt Gottes* and *Mikaelskalendar* are our ways of maintaining our ties with our friends and benefactors. We collaborate with various missionary groups and with our other German speaking SVD provinces. We work side by side with the lay missionary group MaZ, groups of SVD Friends and benefactors.

**Communication.** This characteristic dimension is present through the regular publications of our magazines *Stadt Gottes*, *Weite Welt*, *Pico* and *Mikaelskalendar*.

**Community.** Our Society is the only religious congregation committed to inviting and receiving confreres from other continents as missionaries in

Switzerland. We introduce our foreign confreres to the Swiss culture and pastoral setting as best as we can.

## 4. Sharing Intercultural Life

*“As international communities we live and work to give witness to the Kingdom of God. Such living witness leads others to see that following Christ enables us to grow into healthy persons of human integrity. Our communities are spiritual spaces that sustain us in our various ministries and services.”*

– SWI Vision Statement

MEMBERSHIP	2000	2005	2012
Bishops	0	0	0
Clerics	30	30	35
Brothers (final vows)	10	7	6
Brothers (temporal vows)	0	0	0
Scholastics	3	0	0
Novices	0	0	0
TOTAL	43	37	41

AGE and COUNTRY	2000	2005	2012
Average Age	61.0	60.8	62.5
Nationalities	5	6	10*

## \* ZONAL ORIGIN of province members

AFRAM	3	1ben, 1cng, 1tog
ASPAC	5	3isa, 2phi
EUROPE	33	28swi, 2pol, 1bel, 1ger, 1lie

# URAL REGION

Russia, Belarus



- Official Language: USSR — **Russian**  
Belarus — **Belarusian**
- Visa: In Russia, Short-term visas are issued for three months. For a longer stay one has to apply for a 3 year residential permit just after entering the country. After three years of stay, one can be issued a five-year residential permit. For the newcomers, the University complies with our request to issue a student's visa, which can be prolonged as long as the person intends to study the language or some other subject..
- In Belarus, it is still not possible to get a religious visa neither for Asians, nor for Europeans. The Government policy is to employ Belarusian priests and religious.

(July 2011 est.)

	Population	Religious Profile %		
		Christian	Catholics	Others
<b>Russia</b>	<b>138,739,982</b>	70.3	0.42	29.7
<b>Belarus</b>	<b>9,577,552</b>	80.0	13.69	20

	Fertility Rate (babies per woman)	Age Structure %		
		0-14	15-64	65
<b>Russia</b>	1.42	15.2	71.8	13
<b>Belarus</b>	1.26	14.2	71.7	14.1

	Median Age	Life Expectancy	Below Poverty Line
<b>Russia</b>	38.7	66.29	13.1
<b>Belarus</b>	39	71.2	13.1

	GDP Output %			Labor Force %		
	1	2	3	1	2	3
<b>Russia</b>	4	36.8	59.1	10	31.9	58.1
<b>Belarus</b>	9.5	44.8	45.8	14	34.7	51.3

1=Agriculture, 2=Industry, 3=Services

	Urban Population	Urban Rate of Change	Migrant(s) per 1000
<b>Russia</b>	73%	-0.2%	0.29
<b>Belarus</b>	75%	0.1	0.38

	Total Literacy %		Youth Literacy %	
	male	female	male	female
<b>Russia</b>	99.7	99.2	99.7	99.83
<b>Belarus</b>	99.8	99.4	99.8	99.83

	Mass Media per 1000 persons			Interactive Media per 1000 persons	
	Newspaper	Radio	TV	Mobile	Internet
<b>Russia</b>	n.a.	443.2	436.0	1,715	294.4
<b>Belarus</b>	162.7	315.3	263.1	1,078	275.9

## 1. Intercultural Setting

**THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION** is an enormously complicated country belonging to 190 different nationalities, speaking distinctive languages, each with its own cultural identity. The people, ethnically identified as Russians have been politically and culturally dominant in an enormous territory but not uniformly populated. However, despite continuous repression of their cultural autonomy, cultural minorities have survived within the Russian Federation including the Ukrainians and Belarusians. All, except the younger citizens share a Soviet cultural experience under Communist party.

At present, however, the number of churches available is still not enough to accommodate all the regular churchgoers.

The fall of communism and the disintegration of the Soviet Union caught the people unprepared. For more than 75 years the communist ideology tried to provide social cohesion for the different nationalities. But much of socialist experience is now being rejected by Russians and non-Russians who are reclaiming or reinventing their ethnic or traditional pasts. Many communities are still asserting their respective identities in terms of language and culture. There is a broad cultural continuity throughout the federation and among the millions of Russians in the newly independent republics of Central Asia, the Baltic region, and the Caucasus.

**BELARUS.** Belarusians make up about four-fifths of the country's population. Russians form the second largest ethnic group, accounting for roughly one-tenth of the population. The rest are mostly Poles and Ukrainians. Throughout the centuries, Belarusian lands were home to an ethnically and religiously diverse society. Muslims, Jews, Orthodox Christians, Roman and Greek Catholic Christians, and Protestants lived together without any major conflict. Belarusians, Poles, Russians, Jews, Lithuanians, Ukrainians, and Roma (Gypsies) also lived in peace in Belarus. Although the twentieth century brought many challenges to this peaceful coexistence, Belarus has remained a tolerant society. All ethnic groups enjoy equal status, and there is no evidence of hate or ethnically-biased crimes.

## 2. Ecclesial Setting

**RUSSIA.** The majority of the Russian people identify with the Orthodox Church more on the basis of tradition and nationality than on actual faith in God. Other Christians present in Russia (including the Catholics) constitute less than 1% of the population. Other major religions, such as Islam, Judaism and Buddhism, are also present in Russia. In fact, along with Orthodox Christianity, these three are accepted as the four traditional religions of the Russian Federation.

After the fall of communism, Russia witnessed a booming religious revival manifest through the rapid growth and spread of new religious communities and sectarian movements.



There are now four new ecclesiastical provinces in Russia all erected in 2002: the Archdiocese of Moscow and the dioceses of Saratov, Novosibirsk and Irkutsk. They serve a small Catholic population composed of European (Germans, Lithuanians, Polish, etc.) descendants. Consequently, majority of the missionaries working now in Russia are either Polish or German citizens.

Parish communities are mostly small groups of 30-50 people. They may be larger in bigger cities, but they do reflect the multicultural diversity of the country. The Church counts as members not only descendants of European immigrants, but also local Russians, Armenians, Buriyats and other nationalities present in the Russian Federation. Financially, the local Church is still far from being self-reliant, with about 90% of its operating costs borne by foreign benefactors.

**BELARUS** is predominantly Eastern Orthodox (80%). Most Catholics (15%) are concentrated in the western part of the country. The rest includes Protestants, Jews and Muslims. Churches which were once destroyed are now being rebuilt and those which were once confiscated have mostly been returned to their previous owners. At present, however, the number of churches available is still not enough to accommodate all the regular churchgoers.

The situation of the Church at the parish level has improved a lot since the early 1990s, though one cannot yet speak of full religious liberty in Belarus. The State still tries to exercise control over the different religious groups while favoring the Or-

thodox. There is some unhealthy spirit of rivalry among the different religious denominations.

3. Sharing Intercultural Mission

*“As missionaries of the Society of the Divine Word we seek to be messengers of dialogue, unity and brotherly solidarity:*

- first to those who profess to be Catholics, by cultural tradition or personal conviction, who for decades of persecution had no pastoral care;*
- to non-believers, the religiously indifferent, and to seekers, to all who feel a call and are willing to become disciples of Jesus;*
- to the followers of the Orthodox faith and tradition, with whom we are called to work together to hasten the hour in which all will praise the Father in spirit and truth.”*

–URL Mission Statement

Those in final vows

IN ACTIVE MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Parish Ministry	34.4	36.5	54.5
School/Education	0	2.7	6.1
Other Apostolates	20.3	13.5	6.1
SVD Vocation/Formation	3.1	5.4	3.0
Administration/Support	10.9	17.6	15.2

Those in final vows

NOT IN MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Studies/Orientation	25.0	21.6	12.1
Retired/Sick	0	0	3.0
Other	6.2	2.7	0

## PLATFORMS FOR PROPHETIC DIALOGUE

**Parishes.** In Russia, the SVD is present in three of the four dioceses. Confreres are involved in a variety of areas: lay and youth formation, seminary formation and vocation promotion, diocesan administration, social apostolate, etc. In Belarus, the SVDs serve mainly in Baranovitchi. However, we also have parishes in Darewo, Makijowszczyzna, Juskiewiczze, Kroszyn, Rusino, Stoliczka and Gorodyszcze. The great cultural and religious diversity where the region carries out its missionary presence challenges us to be bridge builders between peoples.

**Special Apostolates.** The confreres are also involved in various forms of social apostolate to children, women, as well as to the homeless and the sick (the HIV-infected and the addicts).

**Ecumenical Dialogue.** Still in an initial stage, our efforts to reach out to our brothers and sisters of the Russian Orthodox Church take various forms: personal and informal contacts, parish-based meetings for prayer and reflection, seminary formation (e.g., retreats preached by Russian Orthodox priests).

**Outreach to Non-Believers.** We also strive to maintain regular contact with local officials, most of whom know very little or nothing at all about the Catholic Church or about religion in general. More directly, we try to engage non-believers (agnostics and atheists) through activities such as concerts, informative exhibits, children's theatrical presentations.

## THE SVD CHARACTERISTIC DIMENSIONS

**Mission Animation.** We give witness to the missionary aspect of the Church through retreats, conferences and publications. Through the Catechetical College in Belarus and the formation of lay people in the parishes, we contribute to the formation of ministers and leaders who carry out the missionary task of the Church.

**Communication.** Musical shows and concerts are regular features of our parish ministry. Recently an audio program about the Word of God was also produced and broadcasted.

**JPIC.** The region considers JPIC the primary dimension of its mission. The confreres work among the street children, gypsies and migrants (e.g., Koreans, Indonesians, Filipinos, and Africans). Most of the parishes have well organized pro-life centers which help women and children.

## 4. Sharing Intercultural Life

*"As an international community of priests and brothers, bound together by the bonds of religious life and the missionary charism, we believe that only Jesus Christ can heal the deep wounds of human beings today and fulfill the expectations of those who are searching for meaning. Attentive to the signs of the times and trusting in the guidance of God's Spirit, we enter into the life of the East. We share with the people our understanding of life and community as we experience them in the Catholic Church and in our SVD communities."*

– URL Vision Statement

MEMBERSHIP	2000	2005	2012
Bishops	2	1	0
Clerics	21	28	30
Brothers (final vows)	6	8	7
Brothers (temporal vows)	0	1	0
Scholastics	5	5	3
Novices	0	0	0
TOTAL	34	43	40

#### AGE and COUNTRY

	2000	2005	2012
Average Age	37.4	39.4	43.2
Nationalities	7	9	7*

#### \* ZONAL ORIGIN of province members

ASPAC	11	6isa, 3ind, 2vie
EUROPE	29	19pol, 5slo, 4rus, 1ger

**Spirituality.** The SVD *Vademecum* has been translated into the local language. We hold some com-

munity events and recollections, but the distances that separate our mission areas prevent us from making them frequent.

**Community.** Our communities are established within the district level. The immense distances and the costs of travel limits the Region to gather frequently and with regularity. Contacts and information sharing are done through emails, blogs etc.

**Finance.** The region is still largely dependent largely on external support.

**Formation.** Undoubtedly the heart of the region is formation work. We have a formation house in St Petersburg. Mindful of the challenges and opportunities that internationality brings, particularly in terms of developing an intercultural way of living and working together, the leadership takes seriously the task of making the formation program intercultural, e.g., by sending students to undergo the OTP. The region also hopes that more confreres from different parts of the world would consider the URL as a future field of mission. ♦





# PANAM ZONE

<b>ARE</b>	Argentina
<b>ARS</b>	Argentina
<b>BOL</b>	Bolivia
<b>BRA</b>	Brazil
<b>BRC</b>	Brazil
<b>BRN</b>	Brazil
<b>BRS</b>	Brazil
<b>CAM</b>	Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama
<b>CHI</b>	Chile
<b>COL</b>	Colombia, Venezuela
<b>ECU</b>	Ecuador
<b>MEX</b>	Mexico, Cuba
<b>PAR</b>	Paraguay
<b>USC</b>	United States, Canada, West Indies
<b>USS</b>	United States
<b>USW</b>	United States



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# New Challenges for SVD Mission

Circular Letter to all Confreres in PANAM  
After the General visitations of 2008-2009

Dear Confreres,

After the General Visitations of 2008-2009 in the PANAM Zone, we in the Generalate undertook a profound reflection on and evaluation of our missionary service and religious life in the zone. With this letter we want to share with you our observations and expectations.

Several provinces in the PANAM Zone possess a long history, their roots going back to the time of our Founder. Their beginnings were marked principally by pastoral assistance to European immigrants, rural parishes, schools, the press apostolate, and mission among the indigenous and with African Americans. Large mission houses were built in a European style, dedicated to the formation of the youth, the majority of them coming from immigrant areas. One of the objectives was to prepare these young men for mission “ad gentes.” As a consequence, many missionaries were sent to different parts of the world, especially to Asia and Africa. The provinces of Spain and Portugal were created by confreres coming from Argentina and Brazil. We have contributed to the good education and preparation of the laity, which has been a great help to society and to the Church.

We live now in a moment with new challenges for SVD mission in the PANAM Zone: the poor and the marginalized whose numbers continually increase as a result of economic globalization; the presence of other cultures, especially indigenous groups and African Americans; the processes of urbanization and increasing migration; the presence of other Christian communities, different religions, and people that seek spiritual values, especially the young.

## 1. NEW MISSIONARY CHALLENGES

### 1.1 New situations of social inequality

The Americas possess similarities but also great differences and conflicts between the different countries as well as within the countries themselves. There are a variety of reasons for this situation of social inequality, and these reasons represent a great challenge for our missionary service. The contrast between the natural riches with which God has blessed this continent and the poverty of the majority of its inhabitants constitutes a challenge for the Church and for our Society to strengthen our commitment in the social sphere.



In the PANAM Zone, prophetic dialogue with the poor expresses our closeness to the spirit of the “preferential option for the poor,” as defined and continually reaffirmed in the teachings of the Church and in the documents of our Society, especially those of the last two General Chapters. We live in times when the globalizing economy overburdens the poor and the option for them becomes more urgent, from the north to the south of the continent. The challenge for us is to go out to meet these new situations of the poor within the zone.

The American continent is known for the testimony of many bishops, religious and lay people

who have given their blood to keep alive the dream of Jesus, “that all may have life and have it to the full.” One iconic figure is the former archbishop of San Salvador, Mons. Oscar Romero, and this year (2010) we mark the passage of thirty years since his assassination. We Divine Word Missionaries, through our prophetic dialogue with the poor, want to make real what he said in his homily on January 27, 1980, a few months before his martyrdom: “How beautiful will be the day when a new society, instead of selfishly hoarding and keeping, apportions, shares, divides up, and all rejoice because we all feel we are children of the same God!

### RELIGIOUS PROFILE

Christian %	Catholic %	Other %
94.0	92.5	7.3
97.0	83.5	3.0
90.4	84.5	9.6
81.7	58.5	18.3
90.7	76.3	9.3
92.0	84.6	8.0
87.2	70.0	15.1
97.6	87.2	2.4
98.0	87.3	2.0
99.0	91.37	1.0
94.5	91.9	5.5
85.0	52.9	15.0
96.9	91.4	3.1
78.4	23.9	21.6
70.3	42.6	29.7

### COUNTRIES

Argentina
Bolivia
Brazil
Nicaragua
Costa Rica
Panama
Chile
Colombia
Venezuela
Ecuador
Mexico
Cuba
Paraguay
United States
Canada

### DEMOGRAPHIC FEATURES

POPULATION	Fertility Rate	Median Age	Life Expect.
41,769,726	2.31	30.5	76.9
10,118,683	3	22.5	67.5
203,429,773	2.18	29.3	72.5
5,666,301	1.9	22.9	71.9
4,576,562	1.93	28.8	77.7
3,460,462	2.45	27.5	77.8
16,888,760	1.6	32.1	77.7
44,725,543	2.15	28	74.5
27,635,743	2.42	26.1	73.9
14,483,499	2.42	28.4	75.7
113,724,226	2.29	27.1	76.4
11,087,330	1.44	27.1	76.4
6,459,058	2.11	25.4	76.2
313,232,044	2.06	36.9	78.3
34,030,589	1.58	41	81.3

## 1.2 Continuing urbanization

The urbanization of the continent is one great change that has occurred since the arrival of the first Divine Word Missionaries in the 19th century. Our mission started in a largely rural context, but is now marked by the challenge of megacities and all that they involve. Internal migration from rural areas to the city is brought about by a lack of attention and planning in rural zones, leading to a confluence of inhabitants from different parts of the continent, as well as from other continents.

The accelerated growth of cities has generated a chaotic structure which increases inequality between the rich and the poor and often results in violence and family disintegration. Urbanization, accompanied by technological development, has provoked tremendous and profound cultural changes and has created new forms of social and family relationship. At the same time, the cities constitute new spaces of liberty and opportunity for many. Our provinces and regions have sought to respond to these changes through appropriate pastoral responses and through their presence in the city peripheries or in the inner city. These urban realities offer new challenges for SVD mission.

### LABOR FORCE

1	2	3
Agriculture	Industry	Services
5%	23%	72%
40%	17%	43%
20%	14%	66%
28%	19%	53%
17.6%	8.8%	73.6%
17.6%	8.8%	73.6%
13.2%	23%	63.9%
18%	13%	68%
13%	23%	64%
8.3%	21.2%	70.4%
13.7%	23.4%	62.9%
20%	19.4%	60.6%
26.5%	18.5%	18.5%
0.7%	20.3%	79.1%
2%	22%	76%

### COUNTRIES

Argentina  
Bolivia  
Brazil  
Nicaragua  
Costa Rica  
Panama  
Chile  
Colombia  
Venezuela  
Ecuador  
Mexico  
Cuba  
Paraguay  
United States  
Canada

### SOCIAL INDICES

Below Pov. Line	Urban Population	Migration Rate
30%	92%	0
30.3%	67%	-0.92
26%	87%	-0.09
48%	57%	-3.54
16%	64%	0.87
25.6%	75%	-0.42
17%	89%	0
45.5%	75%	-0.67
2.42%	93%	0
28.6%	63%	-0.52
18.2%	78%	-3.24
18.2%	75%	-3.56
18.9%	61%	-0.08
15.1%	82%	4.18
9.4%	81%	5.65

### 1.3 New immigrants

Nevertheless, the great wealth of the continent is its people! Advances in the means of transportation and communication have driven the phenomenon of globalization and have led to a constant social mobility. In the United States and Canada a great number of people come from all over the world with the hope to conquer "the golden opportunity" and thus enable themselves to send aid to their beloved who live in diverse parts of the world. The arrival of Hispanics in recent years and of other immigrants originating from Asia and Africa prompted society at large as well as the Church to respond and to organize certain structures so that all can live with dignity, promoting good social relationships among groups. Latin America is now also more and more affected by the arrival of immigrants from other continents, as well as from within the continent.

There is no lack of misunderstanding, rejection and discrimination on the part of some organized groups, which creates walls and barriers against these people who have come seeking a certain dignity of life. The immigrants, with their suffering and their religious sensibilities, offer opportunities for ecclesial presence in the places where they live. With their Catholic roots, Hispanic groups and various minority groups from Asia present a special challenge to the Catholic Church. We are happy to note the new structures that have been created in diverse places to serve immigrant groups, through parishes and other centers.

In Latin America we are challenged to meet the reality of immigration with creative res-

ponses. The effort to learn English or Spanish has grown considerably in the provinces and among the confreres. In the future this is a condition "sine qua non" for those who work in the zone--to have the knowledge of these two languages. Various forms of exchange and OTP experiences or similar programs should help to facilitate this learning.

### 1.4 Indigenous and African American cultures

Since the beginnings of our mission, the SVDs in the Americas have dedicated their attention to marginalized cultures. The interest of the Founder in anthropology led us to assume missions in indigenous areas and among African Americans in various countries. It is in line with this concern that a new presence among indigenous in Venezuela has been started recently.

The American continent experiences a resurgence of local cultures, with their longing for participation and their desire to show their intrinsic value, the beauty of their diversity and their specific contribution to society and to the local community. There has been a growing consciousness of their role in the destiny of the various nations and a consequent increase in their representation in governmental structures. There is a noticeable revaluation of local languages. The awakening to these rich local cultures is partly the result of the involvement of the Church and many missionaries who have lived with and experienced these cultures, as well as the solidarity of many non-governmental organizations. The fruits of the various African American and indigenous

movements and the Church’s presence can be seen in the changes of mentality in society, as well as in the Church. The resurgence of native and African American cultures, with their vigor and diversity, is an invitation to seek new and creative ways of accompaniment. The presence of the SVDs among indigenous groups has been the result of the personal conviction of self-sacrificing confreres as well as of a well-planned mission assumed collectively. Recently, however, we have had difficulties finding available and well-prepared personnel for this important mission.

### 1.5 Ecumenical challenges

The religious situation in the PANAM Zone has also experienced profound transformation. The countries in the north of the zone were strongly Protestant, but with the arrival of Latin Americans and great numbers of Asian immigrants a new and stronger Catholic presence has emerged. On the other hand, there is the need to live with the great religious diversity brought by African and Asian immigrants, as well as with secularism. The Latin American countries in recent years have seen a growing flight of Catholics to

MASS MEDIA per 1000			COUNTRIES	LITERACY RATE %		INTERACTIVE MEDIA per 1000	
Daily	Radio	TV		Total	Youth	Mobile	Internet
118.1	581.7	190.3	Argentina	97.2	98.9	728.9	327.8
779.2	518.8	88.9	Bolivia	86.7	97.3	709.5	109.0
38.8	349.01	179.4	Brazil	88.6	96.8	997.6	373.5
n.a.	218.8	56.4	Nicaragua	67.5	85.7	665.5	35.2
60.09	214.1	114.7	Costa Rica	94.6	97.6	663.2	324.5
n.a.	235.5	147.4	Panama	91.6	93.6	1887.2	277.4
n.a.	306.7	185.5	Chile	95.7	97.9	1175.5	62.5
24.4	469.5	102.6	Colombia	90.6	97.5	970.5	503.9
n.a.	388.9	148.3	Venezuela	92.6	97.2	1008	322.6
81.3	333.1	166.6	Ecuador	91.0	96.4	984.9	223.4
179.0	272.6	225.1	Mexico	85.6	97.1	803.4	27.3
105.1	351.8	238.1	Cuba	99.4	99.9	9.04	14.5
n.a.	143.2	153.2	Paraguay	94.0	95.5	915.7	171.0
170.4	1751.7	667.2	United States	99.0	99.0	850	746.4
151.8	949.1	631.8	Canada	99.0	99.0	704.3	79.2

of native cultures also brings the return of religious traditions and their right of expression.

This has led to the emergence of ecumenism as one facet of our dialogue with religions, despite the difficulties involved in that dialogue. We have the challenge to move ahead with new ecumenical initiatives in the service of life and justice. Let us not forget that ecumenism should permeate all that we do for life, peace and re-evangelization. It was also a special concern of our Founder during his lifetime.

### **1.6. The youth as privileged dialogue partners**

The efforts of the provinces/regions in accentuating the importance of our presence among and missionary activity with youth are increasingly notable. It is certainly among the youth that we will encounter the challenge to find channels for dialogue with faith seekers.

We face the challenge of a more effective and engaged presence among the impoverished youth of the city, in our schools, among immigrants, and among the indigenous and African Americans. Keeping in mind the great number of parochial structures and schools where we are in mission, the question arises as to whether our efforts in these areas will strengthen families, education and social development. As a result these efforts can also awaken new missionary vocations. Therefore we are left with the question: Is it not possible to get more vocations for our mission?

## **2. OUR RESPONSE TO THE NEW MISSIONARY CHALLENGES**

### **2.1. His mission is our mission – Dialogue ad extra**

**2.1.1 Missionary Profile of Our Parishes.** In the more than 100 years of our presence in the zone, SVD parishes have been platforms for our missionary presence expressing concrete commitments within the local church. For many years we have assumed responsibility for vast geographical regions that have later been transformed into several dioceses. We have not been lacking in generosity in creating good structures and then willingly turning them over to the dioceses, in search of new missionary situations. In recent years there has been a growing concern that the parishes should be platforms for us to present the strength of our charism as a congregation at the service of the local Church.

It is with great joy that we see in recent years the different initiatives, such as seminars, encounters and reflections--on a zonal, subzonal, and province level--regarding our missionary presence in parishes and our contribution through the characteristic dimensions and prophetic dialogue. The new ecclesial and social situations challenge us to not slacken in our efforts to find creative ways of developing our pastoral work and seeking new ministries that can respond to the new demands of the times. We are not the “owners” of our mission. We develop it in a climate of dialogue, communion and joint planning with lay people and other collaborators of the local Church. One of

our priorities in our parishes should be the care of families and attention to the youth as the creators of the future of the continent.

**2.1.2 Educational structures.** Since the beginnings of the SVD presence in some provinces, we have understood education as a way to be present and influence the process of evangelization in the larger society. Our contribution in this sense has been considerable. With economic support from the outside we have created structures of education that are highly respected and trusted. The concrete option for a greater identification with the poor made in the 70s led to a certain neglect in the preparation of personnel to run our schools. The loss of an intermediate generation by the departure of confreres in perpetual vows and a certain lack of concern in introducing the younger generations to this work can bring difficulties in the future in the area of education. Added to that is the influence of the market in this sector, resulting in the conception of education as a kind of commodity. Some provinces have already engaged in a process to revitalize their educational structures according to the current demands, or to give them up.

In places where we consider education as part of our missionary task, there is an urgent need for the professional training of our confreres. It is also important to introduce lay professionals as part of the team, to develop our schools to respond to the new demands of mission.

Our schools must be places to awaken the youth to the missionary dimension of our faith and to the

missionary vocation. We encourage and support the different initiatives on the subzonal level to develop a common policy for education in the zone.

**2.1.3 The characteristic dimensions at the service of the new missionary challenges.** The 2006 General Chapter tells us that the characteristic dimensions imply "a basic attitude in our life and service" (IDW6, 9). Thanks to God, the PANAM Zone has assimilated this basic attitude and made it a reality in the provinces and regions. We note some achievements and new challenges in relation to our commitments with the characteristic dimensions. We are happy to see in some provinces an enthusiasm to try new initiatives, such as the organization of seminars in the zone along with other member congregations of VIVAT. We make note of our missionary service in the parishes through the organization of workshops and biblical courses. In the field of JPIC we collaborate with VIVAT in promoting social themes. Many confreres also use means of communication for evangelization. We encourage that all the available structures in the different provinces/regions are used to augment our missionary commitment in light of the four characteristic dimensions.

**2.1.4 Mission shared with the laity.** One of the priorities of the last General Chapter is collaboration with the laity. Our communities are strengthened "by our working together and in cooperation with the local Church, with our lay co-workers, and with all people of good will. Teamwork, shared responsibility, and participatory decision-making help prepare us to enter into genuine dialogue with others" (IDW6, 40).



We are happy to see in the reports from the provinces and regions as well as in the general visitations the growing conviction that laypeople are our partners in mission, and that we should dedicate time, attention and personnel towards joint mission with them.

## 2.2. His life is our life – Dialogue ad intra

**2.2.1** Communal and personal spirituality incarnated in the new reality. Without a deep spirituality it is impossible to confront the challenges of the reality both inside and outside our communities. The dream of a new humanity based on equality and the harmonious living together of various peoples, and among ourselves, can only become a reality if we seriously dedicate time and energy to personal prayer and persevere in community prayer.

The PANAM Zone is known for its facility of uniting faith and life in its spirituality. The creativity that emanates during moments of prayer helps us in our relationship with God and with the community. The general visitations showed that the majority of the communities dedicate time to pray with the people. However, we cannot fail to mention that activism is something that weakens the cultivation of spirituality. The last General Chapter reminds us that "over-activity results in less time for personal prayer and daily meditation, superficiality in spiritual matters and debilitating fatigue in our religious missionary commitments" (IDW6, 17). We cannot save the world for God if we do not dedicate time for intimacy with Him and with the confreres that He has provided to share the same mission.

Leaders of local communities and of the provinces should be the first to encourage and to organize opportunities that favor the cultivation of our personal and communal spirituality. We are able to nourish ourselves with the rich Divine Word tradition that began with our Founder, Arnold Janssen. On the other hand, we also need to seek new ways of missionary spirituality that respond to the demands of the present and concrete cultural contexts.

**2.2.2** Intercultural communities. Our communities in the PANAM zone previously aimed toward a cultural homogeneity. For many years, the communities were composed mainly of confreres from Europe. On the other hand, the PANAM zone has generously sent out confreres who dedicated their lives to the mission on other continents. In recent years, the numerical decrease in the confreres from Europe coupled with the numerical growth of confreres from Asia and Africa--which is a blessing for our mission--has changed the configuration of the provinces and has brought new challenges. A part of this challenge is the need to share and to talk openly about the difficulties encountered in this process, and also to challenge our young members to engage in the process of cultural integration.

We are by vocation and origin intercultural communities in mission. Just as the larger society is challenged by waves of immigration, we are also challenged in our communities to find new ways of living together and planning together for mission.

It is contrary to our purposes to want to control the flow of the confreres or close down the possi-



bility of a diversity of nationalities in our communities and our provinces/regions. The PANAM Zone is invited to continue to be open in receiving new confreres from other continents, and, at the same time, provide structures of support that facilitate the necessary process of inculturation:

- To prepare local leaders and confreres that are more sensitive and capable to receive, to introduce, to plan and to encourage activities that contribute to a natural process of intercultural growth in our communities. It is the task of the entire province to be welcoming to the new missionaries.
- The confreres that arrive have the challenge to open their eyes, their ears and their heart to the new reality and to be open to dialogue, to understand and to assume the values of a different historical, social, and ecclesiastical reality.
- The provinces have the challenge to receive, to understand and to enable programs of introduction for the new missionaries and to see interculturality as an enrichment and blessing. To this end, we have seen in many instances that initiatives on the subzonal level are more effective.

**2.2.3** Missionary formation and vocation animation for universal mission. The situation of formation in the zone has also changed in recent years. Large numbers of vocations seem now to be a thing of the past. In the United States, efforts to obtain vocations from among immigrant groups have had a notable result. In Latin America there is some growth in local vocations, but interest in the missionary vocation seems to be diminishing.

Our identity as a missionary family at the service of mission everywhere in the world requires that the formation process be carried out from the perspective of mission and the needs of the Kingdom of God everywhere. In the past, large formation communities were conceived of as mission houses that prepared and sent missionaries *ad gentes*. With the growth of the communities and the call to renewal, formation houses have multiplied and they have taken on a new identity. Our internationality is already present during the time of formation. We are grateful to the formators and formation teams for their efforts and the fruits they have generated. In reference to formation we would like to emphasize some challenges for the future.

We have various types of formation communities. We find that small, inserted communities are appropriate in some parts of the zone. We are happy with the initiative taken towards the formation of a common Novitiate and Scholasticate among the Spanish speaking subzones. We want to recommend also the exchange of students among the different language areas: English, Spanish and Portuguese. We encourage the North Subzone and the Brazil Subzone to continue your cooperation and co-responsibility in the area of formation, working and planning together in the perspective of mission 'Ad' and 'Inter Gentes'.

OTP experiences have multiplied in recent years and this opens the heart and broadens the horizon toward our universal mission. The young confreres of the PANAM Zone have missionary experiences in other continents while others

come to the Americas. It makes us happy to see this availability for mission. Some provinces, to meet their own needs, are tempted to simply expect the Generalate to assign new confreres to their native country. We understand the need of for healthy balance between local confreres and other nationalities. However, for a healthy development of our missionary vocation we give preference to a mission experience abroad for the first years after final vows and ordination. When necessary, confreres can be called back to work in their own country.

**2.2.4 Administrative co-responsibility and missionary maturity.** A lot has been said about financial co-responsibility. We thank a few provinces of the PANAM Zone for their generosity in contributing funds for the mission of the Society in other continents. The large structures that we have inherited require more and more human and financial resources for their management. Without the contribution of lay people and their professional help we cannot maintain and develop these structures.

The proper regulation of the finances of our schools and other institutions is part of our missionary commitment. It is already time that parochial and educational structures provide what is necessary for their own maintenance and generate funds for the other commitments of the province/region and the Society. We should see that the contracts made with the local Churches are such that they guarantee not only the survival of the apostolate, but also generate funds for solidarity with poorer mission situations inside and outside the zone. As a Society we expect a more

significant contribution through benefactors for funds for mission from all the provinces of the PANAM Zone.

**2.2.5 Qualified personnel and ongoing formation.** In the American continent we are also present in diverse theological or religious institutes of formation, and in some of these institutions we participate in their direction and management. Thanks to God, we also have a significant number of well prepared confreres who collaborate individually in formation for religious life and in the local Church. We encourage these confreres not to put aside these efforts and commitments, helping our provinces to clarify and define our mission in the continent and in the local churches.

The preparation of new confreres for specific tasks and for our characteristic dimensions is one of the concerns of the zone and the provinces. A short and long range strategic plan for this purpose should be worked out. Sending more confreres for formation in other continents could be of great help for our internal self understanding as well as support for our external efforts towards meeting the future challenges of the Church and of mission. The PANAM Zone has a specific contribution to offer to the whole Society, although this contribution seems to have diminished in recent years.

These engagements urge us to be committed to the training of personnel in order to give continuity to the specific presence of our SVD charism. We encourage the zonal assemblies to continue to be occasions for constant reflection in this sense.

**2.2.6** Collaboration within zonal and subzonal structures. The zones are privileged places of animation and concrete collaboration among the provinces. Since the beginning, the PANAM Zone has been a sign for the Society in terms of reflection, formation and zonal articulation of the SVD in the continent. The subzonal structures are also privileged places of collaboration in animation and in leadership in the characteristic dimensions as well as in the areas of spirituality, formation and parish work. The most recent subzonal structure is Central America. Because of the need to consolidate and to plan SVD mission in three countries with very different realities, the new region of CAM has dedicated time and effort for its internal structuring. In the future the Province of MEX and the Region of CAM have the challenge to form a more effective commitment as the Central American Subzone.

## Conclusion

The world always needs witnesses of the Kingdom of God. We testify to this Kingdom, rooted in faith, hope and love. Our testimony, which is the essence of our missionary service, expresses itself in a historical context and very concrete culture, always open and willing to meet

the new missionary challenges of our time. Our Congregation, the Society of the Divine Word, with its experience of interculturality and internationality can contribute something new to the people of the Americas, deepening their social and spiritual development. During the general visitations we have experienced many interesting missionary initiatives in the provinces and regions of the PANAM Zone. Many confreres take seriously the challenges of the realities in which they live. They are engaged in discernment, evaluation, and action (see, judge, act). We appreciate especially the openness to new possibilities for dialogue. We hope that the Holy Spirit guides us in our search for new ways of mission, especially those that help us grow in enthusiasm for mission. This enthusiasm for mission will help us face the new challenges more effectively. New ways need missionary creativity, new challenges require renewed zeal. Thus, we can hope for a future full of God's blessings.

Faternally in the Divine Word,

Antonio M. Pernia, SVD  
Superior General

Emmanuel Kofi Fianu, SVD  
Secretary General

IN PERPETUAL VOWS			INITIAL FORMATION			Average	Total	Nation- alities	ORIGIN BY ZONES			
BIS	CLE	BRO	CLE	BRO	NOV	Age			AFRAM	ASPAC	EUROPE	PANAM
13	1056	101	120	11	14	54.20			60	406	285	564
0	59	2	3	0	0	55.97	ARE	18	2	20	22	20
0	88	12	14	3	3	57.74	ARS	15	0	32	23	65
1	36	3	1	1	0	43.66	BOL	17	3	12	17	10
0	32	5	3	0	0	44.75	BRA	13	1	16	14	9
1	69	7	15	2	2	51.80	BRC	17	4	23	18	51
2	77	8	6	1	0	53.46	BRN	14	5	22	21	46
1	65	3	4	0	0	55.59	BRS	13	3	24	20	26
0	35	1	3	0	0	43.56	CAM	14	2	16	12	9
3	70	4	5	0	0	56.36	CHI	17	4	23	23	32
0	41	2	7	2	0	44.43	COL	14	4	18	11	19
0	43	1	4	0	2	46.72	ECU	14	3	21	14	12
0	75	1	11	0	0	47.16	MEX	22	4	27	18	38
0	71	9	14	0	0	52.20	PAR	26	7	24	25	38
3	176	33	25	2	7	62.84	USC	29	8	76	28	134
2	54	4	4	0	0	54.44	USS	13	6	25	8	25
0	65	6	1	0	0	58.63	USW	16	4	27	11	30

MINISTRY AD EXTRA %			MINISTRY AD INTRA %		Zonal	NOT IN MINISTRY %		
Parish	Education	Other	Leadership	Formation	average	Studies	Retired	Other
48.58	5.56	11.17	7.41	5.57		4.63	9.67	7.35
71.9	6.0	5.4	3.3	3.3	<b>ARE</b>	0	10.1	0
45.6	12.4	6.7	4.2	6.7	<b>ARS</b>	4.2	12.6	7.6
38.9	5.5	16.8	11.2	5.5	<b>BOL</b>	5.5	0	16.6
54.0	5.0	17.5	5.3	5.0	<b>BRA</b>	0	7.9	5.3
46.3	8.6	14.5	5.5	8.3	<b>BRC</b>	4.3	7.2	5.3
51.7	11.4	3.4	10.3	6.9	<b>BRN</b>	5.4	5.2	5.4
56.0	1.5	6.6	5.3	4.0	<b>BRS</b>	4.0	16.0	6.6
43.6	0	7.7	10.2	5.2	<b>CAM</b>	20.5	2.6	10.2
31.4	22.9	21.4	4.3	2.9	<b>CHI</b>	0	11.4	5.7
43.4	0	15.6	12.3	12.5	<b>COL</b>	0	0	16.2
46.5	0	16.2	9.3	6.9	<b>ECU</b>	6.9	4.6	9.6
54.2	0	15.2	5.1	11.8	<b>MEX</b>	8.5	3.4	1.8
47.5	8.5	5.0	7.4	3.7	<b>PAR</b>	6.1	9.5	12.3
25.7	4.7	14.0	12.1	6.5	<b>USC</b>	3.3	31.8	1.9
73.7	0	5.3	5.3	0	<b>USS</b>	3.5	12.2	0
46.9	3.1	7.5	7.5	0	<b>USW</b>	1.5	20.3	13.2



# THE ARGENTINIAN PROVINCES



(July 2011 est.)

Population	Religious Profile %		
	Christian	Catholics	Others
41,769,726	94.0	92.5	6

Age Structure %			Fertility Rate
0-14	15-64	65	(babies per woman)
25.4	63.6	11	2.31

Median Age	Life Expectancy	Below Poverty Line
30.5	76.95	30%

GDP Output %			Labor Force %		
1	2	3	1	2	3
8.5	31.6	59.8	5	23	72

1=Agriculture, 2=Industry, 3=Services

Urban Population	Urban Rate of Change	Migrant(s) per 1000
92%	1.1%	0

Total Literacy: 97.2%		Youth Literacy: 98.9%	
male	female	male	female
97.2	97.2	98.7	99.1

Mass Media per 1000 persons			Interactive Media per 1000 persons	
Newspaper	Radio	TV	Mobile	Internet
118.1	581.7	190.3	728.9	327.8

- Official Language: **Spanish**
- Visa: Acquiring a residence visa presents no major difficulty for missionaries –except for its slow bureaucratic process.

## 1. Intercultural Setting

About 80% of Argentina's population is white –mainly of Italian and Spanish descent. In the past century the country went through industrialization and subsequent economic stagnation that caused migration to the bigger cities from



the interior provinces and from the neighboring countries. These new residents were predominantly mestizos. Other migrants included indigenous peoples and a small number of Afro-Americans from Uruguay and Brazil. In the last decades of the 20th century migrations were already hailing not just from Latin America, but also from Eastern Europe, Africa, and Asia. Many came without legal papers documents and escaped official counting.

Argentines are known to be nationalistic, but on differing grounds with no clear commonalities. To

===== The number and quality of vocations further call for critical reflection.

some, the national culture consists of a mixture of indigenous, Spanish, and Afro-Argentine traditions. But this finds little resonance among migrants of Asian and Eastern European descent who equally value their own cultural origins and influence. For still others, the 'true' Argentinian nation is rooted in the Catholic and Spanish heritage.

## 2. Ecclesial Setting

The Catholics constitute the greater majority of Argentinians, but only 8% of them are noted to

be regular churchgoers. More than a century ago Jews from Eastern Europe, Russia, and the Middle East migrated to Argentina. Their descendants now form the largest Jewish community in all of South America, though they remain a religious minority of at most 500,000 members. Among some of the middle and upper classes, New Age and Oriental religions are growing in popularity. Among the lower classes, however, "electronic churches" of Pentecostal character are gaining ever massive adherence.

In light of this situation the Church exerts much effort on catechesis or "new evangelization." The hierarchy organized events with massive attendance such as the National Eucharistic Congress in 2004. The following year two other events were held: the National Catechetical Assembly and the Congress on the laity.

The number and quality of vocations further call for critical reflection. "Traditional" dioceses and religious congregations are attracting many young candidates, whereas "progressive" ones winning little attention. Our SVD internationality and the risks involved in a missionary calling do not seem to attract many young people anymore. Born into a hedonist and self-seeking society, today's youth seem to want to make the best of the present without thinking much of the future. ♦

## ARGENTINA – EAST PROVINCE



The Province of ARE covers the provinces of Misiones and Chaco, the land of the aborigines but also of the colonizers and immigrants. We began in Argentina East in 1953 with the arrival of the first SVD missionaries. The Jesuits had been the first missionaries in these lands; they created pastoral centers that were later converted into parishes. With the creation of the Diocese of Posadas and its first bishop, the late Msgr. Kemerer SVD, our missionary work extended to more parishes and schools. The congregation also works in two parishes in the Diocese of Resistencia in the province of Chaco.

### 3. Sharing Intercultural Mission

The ARE Assembly of September 2007 had outlined what its new *proyecto misionero* would contain. Since then, its formal elaboration has remained a promise.

#### those in final vows

##### IN ACTIVE MINISTRY (%)

	2000	2005	2012
Parish Ministry	64.9	62.9	71.9
School/Education	4.5	6.9	6.0
Other Apostolates	17.1	15.5	5.4
SVD Vocation/Formation	1.5	1.7	3.3
Administration/Support	6.0	4.3	3.3

#### those in final vows

##### NOT IN MINISTRY (%)

	2000	2005	2012
Studies / Orientation	0	0	0
Retired/Sick	6.0	8.6	10.1
Other	0	0	0

### PLATFORMS FOR PROPHETIC DIALOGUE

Our preferential partners in prophetic dialogue are our parishioners, and the students and their families in our schools and institutions. The main energies of the Society focus on pastoral ministry, distributed to some 24 parishes in four dioceses.

We consider the children and youth to be our important dialogue partners in our missionary endeavors. We assume the spiritual animation of the faith of the children and youth in 27 schools

"*Familias Agrícolas*" (EFA) and the *Roque González Institute*.

## THE SVD CHARACTERISTIC DIMENSIONS

**Mission Animation.** Mission animation in the province is expressed in many forms. To name a few, the confreres are involved in summer missions, mission groups, catechesis and movements such as Cursillos and Marriage Encounters. As SVDs we have kept alive the missionary spirit through these groups.

The Word of God is the center of our family catechesis, liturgical celebrations and biblical missions.

**Biblical Apostolate.** The Word of God is the center of our family catechesis, liturgical celebrations and biblical missions. Bible courses are offered, regularly accompanied and sustained by the distribution of biblical materials.

**Communication.** This characteristic dimension is present through our various parish

bulletins, radio and TV programs, magazines and other forms of publication.

**JPIC.** Many JPIC activities are carried out in our parishes and schools. They are mostly geared to charitable works channeled through existing institutions such as the Caritas. We are also involved in food centers, homes for the children, the old and disabled. We also take part in advocating for the protection of the rights of the indigenous peoples.

## 4. Sharing Intercultural Life

The ARE Assembly of September 2007 had outlined what its new *proyecto misionero* would contain. Since then, its formal elaboration has remained a promise.

### MEMBERSHIP 2000 2005 2012

Clerics	63	57	58
Brothers (final vows)	2	1	2
Scholastics	5	1	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>63</b>

### AGE and COUNTRY 2000 2005 2012

Average Age	53.2	57.0	55.9
Nationalities	15	16	18*

### \* ZONAL ORIGIN of province members

AFRAM	2	1cng, 1ken
ASPAC	20	9isa, 5ind, 4phi, 1jpn, 1png
EUROPE	22	11pol, 7ger, 1oes, 1esp, 1hun, 1ire
PANAM	19	15arg, 2mex, 1brz, 1usa

**Spirituality.** There is a shared conviction among the confreres that the mission enterprise of the province is sustained mainly through a faithful prayer life. It finds common expression in their participation in spiritual activities integrated with our community, district and provincial meetings.

**Community.** There is a good community spirit among our confreres, although some live alone for pastoral reasons. Warm fraternal ties become

especially manifest in district meetings and provincial assemblies.

**Finances.** The province is taking steps towards self-reliance with the optimization of resources. Mainly this is done through investment in projects that generate income to support our missionary and pastoral activities. Most of the revenues now come from the Roque Gonzalez Institute and the San Jose Bookstore, as well as from rentals and plantations of some land

properties. The vast majority of the confreres are supported by the parish communities they serve.

**Formation.** The province has no formation house, but it does well in recruiting vocations for the Society. We still have young candidates coming from the rural parishes of the province. Because of the dwindling number of vocations, we focus on the ministry of promoting vocations in collaboration with other congregations and dioceses. ♦

## ARGENTINA SOUTH PROVINCE



Argentina was one of the first countries to which our Founder sent the first SVD missionaries in 1889. Our congregation has been in Argentina for over one hundred years and has offered an important support for evangelization in the country.

In 2004, the former provinces of North Argentina and South Argentina started the process of consolidation and reconfiguration. After going through several processes, the new ARS province came about with the election of a new leadership team that formally started on 18 December 2007.

### 3. Sharing Intercultural Mission

those in final vows

**IN ACTIVE MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012**

Parish Ministry	36.5	42.1	45.6
School/Education	5.6	4.0	12.4
Other Apostolates	15.7	11.8	6.7
SVD Vocation/Formation	3.4	0	6.7
Administration/Support	11.8	6.6	4.2

those in final vows

**NOT IN MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012**

Studies/Orientation	0	0	4.2
Retired/Sick	19.1	32.9	12.6
Other	0	2.6	7.6

### PLATFORMS FOR PROPHETIC DIALOG

The province opts for three preferred partners in dialogue:

- the poor: We understand that our service is dedicated to social ministry such as Caritas, the health ministry, Aboriginal ministry and prison ministry,
- Youth: Our current service to the youth is in the SVD Schools, also youth ministry in parishes and vocation promotion,
- Family: We understand that our service is dedicated to family catechesis, family ministry, and ministry for those separated and divorced.

These preferential partners in dialog serve as the backbone of our missionary options identified in the new provincial mission statement.

The members of the province are at work in the Archdioceses of Bahia Blanca, Buenos Aires, Cordoba, Mendoza, Santa Fe and Parana, and the dioceses of Jujuy, Lomas de Zamora, Neuquen, Quilmes and Zarate Campana.

## THE SVD CHARACTERISTIC DIMENSIONS

**Mission Animation.** Efforts are directed toward groups of young missionaries in formation through summer and winter missions, children of the Holy Name, and to the benefactors through visits. Courses are also offered in different SVD communities and dioceses where we are not present.

**Biblical Apostolate.** We are present in some “encounters with the Word of God” in daily life, within the social and church milieu, and through workshops, retreats and courses in different parts of the province. We collaborate with the Biblical Course on Distance (online) with a pastoral orientation. In the PANAM Zone there is a relation in terms of biblical animation and promotion with the SSpS. We also provide biblical animation for the diocesan clergy and religious alike, and in ecumenical encounters. The Editorial Guadalupe publishes biblical resources and our bookstores serve as distributors for them.

**Communication.** There is no communication coordinator in the province, but several confreres collaborate in the publication of the provincial bulletin, the magazine *Misiones del Mundo*, and the zonal bulletin *Lazos*. Other confreres team up to offer workshops in our formation houses. Se-

veral institutions in the province provide information through their respective websites.

**JPIC.** The Province engages in joint social services in behalf of the poor and the marginalized. To mention just three:

- the Adolf Kolping School of Crafts (Rafael Calzada),
- the Mother Teresa of Calcutta Home (Quilmes) for children and youth,
- the COLOBA Association (Mendoza) for pastoral and social services.

In our parishes we provide different kinds of social services mainly through the Caritas, whose director in the Diocese of Quilmes is a confrere. The JPIC ministry in the province gives importance to the organization of workshops for pastoral agents. The Province has also recently set up the non-governmental organization VIVAT Argentina.

## 4. Sharing Intercultural Life

### MEMBERSHIP 2000 2005 2012

Clerics	69	67	88
Brothers (final vows)	13	9	12
Brothers (temporal vows)	0	0	3
Scholastics	5	2	14
Novices	0	0	3
TOTAL	88	78	120

### AGE and COUNTRY 2000 2005 2012

Average Age	67.9	62.8	57.7
Nationalities	12	11	15*

\* ZONAL ORIGIN of province members

ASPAC	32	16isa, 7phi, 5ind, 3vie, 1ton
EUROPE	23	12pol, 4esp, 4ger, 1den, 1ned, 1ita
PANAM	65	60arg, 2chi, 2par, 1mex

**Spirituality.** *Lectio Divina* is commonly practiced among our confreres. Also, the provincial leadership organizes annual retreats and encourages all confreres to participate. In the same way each district organizes a periodic day of communal recollection. Some confreres take part in retreats organized by the dioceses or ecclesial movements that they serve in.

**Community.** Many confreres are oriented to intense pastoral activity and fail to spend time for one’s community. We want to ensure that all the confreres are more interested and animated in sharing life and mission of the ARS Province. For this we feel the need to animate and nurture teamwork that brings out the best of interpersonal and

intercultural sharing among us. That, however, stands as our ongoing challenge.

**Finances.** The issue of poverty in the world and the reduced economic resources in the Province generate a greater awareness of our responsibility towards the economy. Efforts are made to achieve self-reliance through revenues coming primarily from one of our colleges, rental of buildings, the Editorial Guadalupe and bookstores. Some minor income, such as pensions of retired confreres, contributes to the running of our retirement house in San Javier.

**Formation.** We strive to ensure that the training of our formandi, confreres and lay associates is comprehensive, holistic and responsive to our needs. For this reason we organize courses and workshops. We try to ensure continuity from initial formation to ongoing formation through living insertion in local cultures and intercultural learning. With these efforts we reach a better understanding ad intra, i.e., the various cultures from which we come, and ad extra, those whom we serve in mission work. ♦



# BOLIVIA REGION



(July 2011 est.)

## Religious Profile %

Population	Christian	Catholics	Others
10,118,683	97.0%	83.47%	3.0%

## Age Structure %

0-14	15-64	65
34.6	60.7	4.6

## Fertility Rate

(babies per woman)
3

## Median Age

22.5
------

## Life Expectancy

67.57
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## Below Poverty Line

30.3%
-------

## GDP Output %

1	2	3
12	38	50

## Labor Force %

1	2	3
40	17	43

1=Agriculture, 2=Industry, 3=Services

## Urban Population

67%
-----

## Urban Rate of Change

2.2%
------

## Migrant(s) per 1000

-0.92
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## Total Literacy: 86.7%

male	female
93.1	80.7

## Youth Literacy: 97.3%

male	female
98.5	96.1

## Mass Media per 1000 persons

Newspaper	Radio	TV
779.2	518.8	88.9

## Interactive Media per 1000 persons

Mobile	Internet
709.5	109.01

- Official Language: **Spanish**
- Visa: It is increasingly difficult to get a residence visa, especially for our confreres from Asia. The process can last several months. This is mainly due to the worsening relationship between the Church and the government in recent years.

## 1. Intercultural Setting

Bolivia has been a rural country, with most of its Quechua- and Aymara-speaking peasants living in the highlands. At the turn of the present century, however, it is going through rapid urbanization while its population maintains its youth and fertility. Quechua and Aymara are still the dominant languages in

the rural highlands, while Spanish is gaining more and more speakers beyond the urban centers.

In ethnic terms, one may trace the racial roots of Bolivians in three main strands: the indigenous Amerindians, the European (mainly Spanish) descendants, and the mestizos of both races more popularly called creoles. Intermarriages down the centuries, however, make it now difficult to estimate the proportion of each. Attempts at it state that those of European ancestry account for some one-tenth minority, the creoles for about one-third of the total population, while the indigenous peoples form the three-fifth majority.

This indigenous majority –for being poor peasants and miners– has been virtually excluded from the country’s history of nation-building. The war of independence against Spain that won in 1825 was led by the creoles. The latter reinforced the exclusive social order that privileged a tiny group of mine- and landowners. Since then the country went through a series of almost 200 coups and countercoups –until democratic civil rule was established in 1982.

In 2005 Evo Morales ran for presidency on a promise to dethrone the traditional ruling class and to empower the poor indigenous majority. Since taking office, however, his controversial strategies have worsened racial and economic tensions between the indigenous peoples of the Andean west and the non-indigenous settlers of the eastern lowlands.

## 2. Ecclesial Setting

The Aparecida Conference of 2007 brought not only renewed zeal to the Church in Bolivia

but new directions to explore. The Church has started to lay the foundations of a “missionary church” by forming lay leaders to assume important roles in evangelization. The sense of belonging and partnership in the Church’s mission is reinforced in the catechetical program and youth formation. The Church in Bolivia is renewing its commitment to the suffering people of the country in response to the local and current signs of the times.

One grave challenge that the Church in Bolivia is facing is the dearth of local vocations. Besides, it still depends largely on foreign subsidies. Only a handful of dioceses are fully self-reliant.

## 3. Sharing Intercultural Mission

*“We believe that God has called us to live in Latin America to help build the Kingdom.*

*We believe that we can live in communion, without violence and oppression.*

*We believe that the poor and the indigenous peoples, the children and those who mourn are especially loved by the Father.*

*We believe that the Holy Spirit animates our holy Church, which journeys in this continent as a great people on the road to liberation.*

*We believe that Mary, the Mother of Jesus encourages us to share our bread with the hungry and to lift up the lowly.*

*We believe deeply in the coming of the new heaven and the new earth.”*

–BOL Mission Statement

**those in final vows****IN ACTIVE MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012**

Parish Ministry	40.6	44.4	38.9
Education	7.8	7.4	5.5
Other Apostolates	17.2	22.2	16.8
SVD Vocation/Formation	3.1	7.4	5.5
Administration/Support	12.5	7.4	11.2

**those in final vows****NOT IN MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012**

Studies / Orientation	9.4	3.7	5.5
Retired/Sick	0	0	0
Other	9.4	7.4	16.6

**PLATFORMS FOR PROPHETIC DIALOG**

Our missionary presence in Bolivia is as diverse as our multicultural communities. We are working in five dioceses. In the highlands of the diocese of El Alto we have two SVD communities. In the subtropics of the Archdiocese of La Paz, we have a parish populated mostly by people with African- Amerindian roots. In the central region of the country, we serve the Mother of Divine Word parish in the city of Cochabamba. In the tropical region of the country, we serve two parishes: San Miguel and San Ignacio in Chiquitania, near the old Jesuit missions. In the city of Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia's largest city, we have established a community upon the invitation of the archbishop. A new parish has been erected that embraces four distinct suburbs of the city.

In our urban parishes our preferential dialog partners are the poor, middle-class people, employees, and migrants. In our parishes where traditions are cherished, our dialog partners are the Aymaras, an indigenous people among whom the Gospel has not been fully preached. We are also blessed with parishes where diverse pastoral activities serve as platforms for prophetic dialog with lay men and women, children and youth.

**THE SVD CHARACTERISTIC DIMENSIONS**

**Mission Animation.** This task remains a great challenge because the local Church is asking us as missionaries to take initiative in promoting worldwide mission awareness and concern. We hope to form a team to strengthen the mission animation on a national level.

**Biblical Apostolate.** Our efforts to promote the Word of God are made through the elaboration and diffusion of simple biblical materials and the preparation of a Bible course for the radio. *Lectio Divina* is being promoted in our own communities. Some confreres offer their services by doing biblical animation in the dioceses of El Alto and San Ignacio.

**Communication.** Through *Editorial Verbo Divino* we have published materials with themes such as the different SVD characteristic dimensions. In some dioceses we have managed to incorporate these dimensions as part of the diocesan pastoral plan. The *Editorial Verbo Divino Estella* is a great

help to the Church of Bolivia by providing biblical, catechetical and missiological materials.

**JPIC.** There are several initiatives in the field of JPIC throughout the region. They are as diverse as child care with a dining area, a welcome house for street children, grant programs for rural youth and health programs at the grassroots. In 2009 the first VIVAT workshop for the sub-zone Cono Sur was held in Bolivia.

#### 4. Sharing Intercultural Life

*"We want our religious communities to become a living witness to the fraternity that God desires, not only for our country, but for all humanity. We know that Jesus opted for persons. He evangelized by means of encounter, table-fellowship and dialog. We make this missionary attitude and practice our own."*

–BOL Vision Statement

MEMBERSHIP	2000	2005	2012
Bishops	0	0	1
Clerics	25	24	36
Brothers (final vows)	3	3	3
Brothers (temporal vows)	0	1	1
Scholastics	7	3	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>42</b>

#### AGE and COUNTRY 2000 2005 2012

Average Age	38.1	40.8	43.6
Nationalities	14	12	17*

#### \* ZONAL ORIGIN of province members

AFRAM	3	2tog, 1ken
ASPAC	12	7isa, 2phi, 1ind, 1chn, 1png
EUROPE	17	8pol, 6slo, 1ger, 1esp, 1ire
PANAM	10	4brz, 3arg, 1bol, 1ecu, 1mex

**Spirituality.** The personal practice of *Lectio Divina* is encouraged. And when communal or regional gatherings arise, we hold faith and biblical sharing.

**Community.** As a region we have two occasions each year where we gather together either for fraternal sharing or having some common formation and workshop.

**Leadership.** Different teams and committees have been formed to help the regional council in making decisions and putting them into practice.

**Finances.** We have taken steps towards self-reliance in the region. This has impacted the way we annually plan and evaluate our services and programs. ♦

# THE BRAZILIAN PROVINCES



- Official Language: **Portuguese**
- Visa: The government easily and promptly grants work and residence visas to foreign missionaries as soon as the required documents are submitted in full.

However, to work among the indigenous peoples (as our confreres in Amazonia do), one further needs a special permission from the FUNAI (Fundação Nacional dos Povos Indígenas).

(July 2011 est.)	<b>Religious Profile %</b>		
<b>Population</b>	<b>Christian</b>	<b>Catholics</b>	<b>Others</b>
<b>203,429,773</b>	90	84.5	10

<b>Age Structure %</b>			<b>Fertility Rate</b>
<b>0-14</b>	<b>15-64</b>	<b>65</b>	(babies per woman)
26.2	67	6.7	2.18

<b>Median Age</b>	<b>Life Expectancy</b>	<b>Below Poverty Line</b>
29.3	72.53	26%

<b>GDP Output %</b>			<b>Labor Force %</b>		
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
5.8	26.8	67.4	20	14	66

1=Agriculture, 2=Industry, 3=Services

<b>Urban Population</b>	<b>Urban Rate of Change</b>	<b>Migrant(s) per 1000</b>
5.8%	26.8%	67.4

<b>Total Literacy: 88.6%</b>		<b>Youth Literacy: 96.8%</b>	
<b>male</b>	<b>female</b>	<b>male</b>	<b>female</b>
88.4	88.8	95.78	97.9

<b>Mass Media</b>			<b>Interactive Media</b>	
per 1000 persons			per 1000 persons	
<b>Newspaper</b>	<b>Radio</b>	<b>TV</b>	<b>Mobile</b>	<b>Internet</b>
38.8	349.01	179.4	997.6	373.5

## 1. Intercultural Setting

Brazil is the fifth most populous nation on Earth and accounts for one-third of the total Latin American population. And, since its long colonial era marred by exploitation of the Amerindian natives and the traffic of African slaves, it has long been

a melting pot for peoples of differing colors and cultures.

Simplistic as it may sound, one may classify Brazilian citizens into three main ethnic groups –first among which are the Brazilian Indians. By the last mid-century they were believed to

Almost three-fourths of Brazilians are self-declared Catholics, thus making Brazil appear to be the single country with the largest Catholic population in the world.

be going extinct as they had been reduced to just about 120,000 survivors. But thanks to improved health care, better resistance to diseases, declining infant mortality, and a higher fertility rate –the indigenous population has by now increased to estimates ranging from 280,000 to 300,000.

The second group consists of the Afro-Brazilians, the descendants of millions of slaves mainly from West Africa who were abducted to Brazil through an inhuman trafficking that lasted a little more than three centuries. At the start of the 21st century, whether *negro* (entirely African) or *pardo* (mulatto or partly African)–, Afro-Brazilians accounted for at least 45% of the population.

The third group consists of the mestizos, partially of Portuguese or European ancestry. About one-third of the Brazilian population professes to have some Amerindian blood mixed into their ancestry. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries Brazil welcomed many immigrants from Italy,

Germany, and Spain and fewer ones from Eastern Europe and the Middle East. Mestizos are also the Asian-Brazilians, the descendants of Japanese immigrants early in the 20th century, and Korean immigrants who began arriving in the 1950s.

Regional migration and extensive intermarriages have made Brazil one of the most racially diverse nations on earth. What further makes Brazil stand out as unique in the Americas is that, after gaining independence from Portugal, it did not fragment into separate countries as did British and Spanish colonies in the continent. Rather, a national identity emerged despite varying forms of political regimes and retained Portuguese as the national language now spoken throughout this vast country –except among the Brazilian Indians isolated in its jungles. In 1985, after five decades of populist and military government, power was ceded to civilian democratic rule. Today Brazil is the leading economic power in South America as it continues to bridge the highly unequal income distribution among its citizens and to solve other social problems rooted in poverty.

## 2. Ecclesial Setting

Almost three-fourths of Brazilians are self-declared Catholics, thus making Brazil appear to be the single country with the largest Catholic population in the world. But the National Conference of Brazilian Bishops (CNBB) openly states that, at best, only 20% of baptized Catholics are frequent or faithful churchgoers. In fact, a good number among the clergy believe that many Catholics are



leaving the Church at an alarming speed for new religious affiliations or no affiliation at all. This trend is partly explained by the massive migration of rural folks to cities, as the country is rapidly industrializing and modernizing. Rural Brazil had been the Catholic stronghold, whereas the burgeoning towns and cities are where plural creeds converge and compete with the Catholic faith.

A recent survey may help round up the wider picture of Brazilian religiosity today. The Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life found that more than one out of five of Brazilians who grew as Catholics have meantime become Protestants or non-affilia-

ted believers. In contrast, two-fifths of those raised as Protestants have meantime changed affiliation (religious or non-religious) –and 16% of them have become Catholics. In short, religious belonging is not waning in Brazil, but has become vibrantly fluid. And in the frequent change of religious affiliation, the Catholic Church still shows the best retention of membership. The solid and continuing credibility of the Brazilian Church in public life is based mainly on two stands: its revitalized evangelization of the poor and marginalized through basic ecclesial communities, and a dialogical yet prophetic interaction of the CNBB with the civil government on vital social-moral issues. ♦



BRAZIL – AMAZON  
REGION



3. Sharing Intercultural Mission

*“We, Divine Word Missionaries in Amazonia, make a preferential commitment to the poor and the youth at the margins of contemporary Brazilian society by accompanying them out of fraternal solidarity in their struggle for integral liberation, human dignity, cultural identity, common good for all, and stewardship over Creation.”*

–BRA Mission Statement

those in final vows  
IN ACTIVE MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Parish Ministry	66.7	64.3	54.0
Schools and Education	0	0	5.0
Other Apostolates	13.3	15.7	17.5
SVD Vocation/Formation	3.3	2.9	5.0
Administration/Support	3.3	5.7	5.3

those in final vows  
NOT IN MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Studies/Orientation	10	5.7	0
Retired/Sick	3.3	0	7.9
Other	0	5.7	5.3

PLATFORMS FOR PROPHETIC DIALOG

The pioneers of our SVD region forged inland into Amazonia and centered their presence among the indigenous peoples of Amazonia. Internal flows of migration tending toward urban centers have now radically changed that situation, so that confreres are now present and active in five mission spheres that correspond to our preferential missionary options:

- among the Oiapoque and Xingu peoples,
- among the ribeirinhos (riverbank settlers) ethnically named as Alenquer, Oriximina and Arapiuns,
- among the migrants in Trairao, Ruropolis and Placas,
- among urban people in Santarem and Santarenzinho,
- and among the youth.

Through continual evaluation of how we have worked in the region, we have come up with our own policies of mission praxis. First, confreres joining the region go through five years of pastoral teamwork among the non-indigenous population. Second, in teams of four confreres, each one is made to opt for one of the four SVD characteristic dimensions and for which he is to serve as main animator. Third, prior in the action plan of every pastoral team is to recruit and train lay leaders who are to share our intercultural mission from praying and planning to action and evaluation. Fourth, after five years of pastoral immersion in the region, a confrere may volunteer or be assigned to work among the indigenous peoples –a work which entails learning their languages and religious cultures with respect and empathy.

## THE SVD CHARACTERISTIC DIMENSIONS

**Mission Animation.** We give importance to the special feasts of the Congregation by organizing congresses and encounters with the laity in an SVD parish. We give importance to the active participation of the laity in various apostolates.

**Biblical Apostolate.** A confrere dedicates himself fully to animating ongoing formation in the biblical ministry in the Brazil Amazon Region and the Brazil South province. The Region also seeks the services of *Centro Biblico Verbo* of the BRC for the

formation of the laity in our parishes and communities.

**Communication.** There are confreres who make use of the opportunities offered by the dioceses for communication apostolates such as the Radio Rural de Santarem. Some confreres are also involved in the production of materials based on workshops on social justice issues especially by bringing to light injustices inflicted against the indigenous peoples of Amazonia.

**JPIC.** The JPIC ministries of the region are channeled through VIVAT, the *Comissão Pastoral da Terra* (CPT), and the *Conselho Indigenista Missionario* (CIMI). These groups support farmers, indigenous peoples and Afro-Brazilians in their struggle to defend themselves from all sorts of injustices. We engage the youth in our mission to reach out to the poor and the marginalized by helping them cultivate their talents and express themselves through art exhibits on JPIC themes.

## 4. Sharing Intercultural Life

*“Called by the Holy Triune God from diverse nations and cultures to give witness to the universality of God’s Reign, we nourish within and among ourselves a missionary spirituality that is*

- *Bible- and community-based,*
- *enriched by interreligious dialogue,*
- *in tune with the integrity of Creation.”*

–BRA Vision Statement

## BRAZIL – CENTRAL PROVINCE



### 3. Sharing Intercultural Mission

*"We are missionaries who come from many peoples and cultures, gathered in São Paulo and Rondonia, to serve the people of God and the Church in a mission to announce and build up the Reign of God."*

*Wherever we are at work, we consciously live as brothers committed to a missionary project inspired by prophetic dialog and marked by the four SVD characteristic dimensions."*

–BRC Mission Statement

#### Those in final vows IN ACTIVE MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Parish Ministry	35.5	39.9	46.3
School/Education	8.0	8.8	8.6
Other Apostolates	22.5	13.5	14.5
SVD Vocation/Formation	4.4	5.4	8.3
Administration/Support	8.7	6.1	5.5

#### Those in final vows NOT IN MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Studies/Orientation	4.4	3.4	4.3
Retired/Sick	9.4	12.2	7.2
Other	7.2	10.8	5.3

### PLATFORMS FOR PROPHETIC DIALOGUE

For more than 30 years the province has carried out periodic evaluations of its activities in order to improve the planning of its life and mission. Above all, it wishes to define a clearer pastoral presence and service in the local Church –chiefly in the dioceses of Santo Amaro, Campo Limpo, Santo André, Greater São Paulo, Registro, Ji-Paraná and São José dos Campos. The most recent parish assumed in May 2005 by the province is situated in the municipality of Diadema, São Paulo.

### THE SVD CHARACTERISTIC DIMENSIONS

A comprehensive view of the SVD characteristic dimensions among our confreres amounts to an awareness that they are not simply taken as forms

of apostolate but they are our ways of being SVD, a way of living our spirituality in harmony with the four-fold prophetic dialogue. The province stresses certain apostolates in line with our characteristic dimensions.

**Biblical Apostolate.** The *Centro Biblico Verbo* in Sao Paulo serves as main animator of the biblical apostolate of the province. It offers biblical courses and workshops for religious and laity alike in Brazil and from other parts of Latin America.

**Communication.** *Verbo Filmes* works principally in the production of pastoral, catechetical and biblical videos, including the yearly Lenten Campaign for Fraternity (*Campanha da Fraternidade*) organized by the Bishops' Conference.

**JPIC.** The promotion of JPIC activities is carried out by several confreres engaged in the defense of the natural environment, in the Afro-Brazilian ministry in the Ribeira River Valley, in the Pastoral da Terra, the street dwellers in Sao Paulo, etc.

#### 4. Sharing Intercultural Life

*"Our fundamental characteristic is our international and intercultural presence in a social and human context that is also plural and diverse. In this situation, our way of being and acting becomes a rich evangelizing gift that we are called to share with all peoples, especially with those who are excluded."*

—BRC Vision Statement

MEMBERSHIP	2000	2005	2012
Bishops	2	1	1
Clerics	57	64	69
Brothers (final vows)	8	9	7
Brothers (temporal vows)	0	0	2
Scholastics	25	20	15
Novices	9	5	2
TOTAL	101	99	96

AGE and COUNTRY	2000	2005	2012
Average Age	44.1	48.1	51.8
Nationalities	13	15	17*

#### \* ZONAL ORIGIN of province members

AFRAM	4	2tog, 1ken, 1zam
ASPAC	23	12isa, 7ind, 2jpn, 1phi, 1vie
EUROPE	18	5pol, 4ger, 3ned, 3ita, 2ire, 1por
PANAM	51	48brz, 2par, 1mex

**Community.** The districts offer warm fraternal bonds of mutual acceptance and encouragement for personal growth.

**Finance.** To achieve provincial self-reliance, some confreres have begun the practice of financial sharing in the spirit of solidarity. Of help in promoting this initiative is the existence of a Finance Committee representing the districts and each characteristic dimension.

**Formation.** Our houses and districts participate in ongoing formation through enriching sharing of personal experiences and ideas. The province also organizes periodic workshops and retreats. The province runs a novitiate and a theolocate. ♦



# BRAZIL – NORTH

## PROVINCE



### 3. Sharing Intercultural Mission

*“Enlightened by the Divine Word made flesh and empowered by the Spirit of the Risen Lord, we Divine Word Missionaries of the Brazilian Northern Province preferentially commit ourselves*

- *to the poor and marginalized in both urban and rural areas,*
- *to the children and youth who have no access to education,*

- *to Catholics at the margins of ecclesial life for having been baptized with little opportunity for maturing in the faith.”*

–BRN Mission Statement

### Those in final vows

#### IN ACTIVE MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Parish Ministry	32.4	46.4	52
School/Education	6.2	13.9	11.4
Other Apostolates	17.0	13.9	3.4
SVD Vocation/Formation	5.1	3.0	6.9
Administration/Support	16.5	3.6	10.3

### Those in final vows

#### NOT IN MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Studies/Orientation	5.1	2.4	5.4
Retired/Sick	10.8	14.5	5.2
Other	6.8	2.4	5.4

### PLATFORMS FOR PROPHETIC DIALOG

The province is situated in three regions of the country, namely: Central West, Southeast and Northeast. We are working in 8 different states including Minas Gerais, Rio de Janeiro, Espírito Santo, Bahia and the Federal District. Because of the great territorial expanse of the province, it takes much time and energy to bridge the distances between our mission stations. For instance, the North District covers 4 states with 5 parishes. The confreres are present and active in 23 parishes and chaplaincies.

Furthermore, the province administers four schools of basic, primary and secondary education and



also two universities that together have 20 faculties or specialized departments. The province has recently started a new strategic plan to integrate all the programs of our educational institutions. At present our schools are facing financial challenges and constraints as the number of their students declines. The main solution foreseen is to wisely invest the funds from the sale of properties. Finally, the province needs confreres able and willing to serve as academic administrators, but the response from among us remains minimal.

### THE SVD CHARACTERISTIC DIMENSIONS

**Mission Animation.** The Mission Center is located in Juiz de Fora. Locally, the Mission Secretary is responsible for missionary animation in the Archdiocese. At the provincial level, the Mission Secretary is responsible for raising funds for missions. An example is the "Divine Word Missionary Sunday." This campaign helps SVD provinces and missions abroad.

**Biblical Apostolate.** Biblical formation of the laity is a vital need in our parishes and districts. But no confrere is presently available full time for this specialized apostolate. We still are searching for ways to structure this important dimension anew at the district level.

**Communication.** There are many media initiatives in the province, but they remain isolated and sporadic initiatives. They consist mainly in the production of radio broadcasts, TV masses, parochial and school websites and blogs, books and newsletters,

etc. Awaiting realization is a plan to create a center for diffusing information within the province as well as for training confreres and lay collaborators in the communication apostolate.

**JPIC.** There are some JPIC projects and programs taking place in our parishes –e.g., councils of elders, care for children in vulnerable situations, environmental education, and ministry among Afro-Brazilians. So far, however, no confrere is put in charge as provincial coordinator for them.

### 4. Sharing Intercultural Life

*"Called from diverse countries and cultures to form missionary communities that give witness to the Holy Triune God, we strive*

- *to promote fraternal harmony and intercultural teamwork among ourselves,*
- *to groom confreres fit for higher studies and to carry on the educational apostolate,*
- *to intensify vocation promotion in our districts,*
- *to form a committee of confreres and lay experts to guide the province in its path to financial self-reliance."*

–BRN Vision Statement

MEMBERSHIP	2000	2005	2012
Bishops	2	2	2
Clerics	71	71	77
Brothers (final vows)	12	10	8
Brothers (temporal vows)	0	0	1
Scholastics	4	5	6
TOTAL	89	88	94



**AGE and COUNTRY 2000 2005 2012**

Average Age	52.8	55.6	53.4
Nationalities	13	12	14*

**\* ZONAL ORIGIN of province members**

AFRAM	5	4cng, 1tog
ASPAC	22	11isa, 6ind, 3phi, 2vie
EUROPE	21	14pol, 4ger, 1cro, 1ire, 1ned
PANAM	46	43brz, 2par, 1arg

**Spirituality and Community.** The confreres in the province meet three times a year: a retreat, a provincial assembly, and a festive fraternal gathering. We make use of these meetings also as op-

portunities for ongoing formation on select topics of current mission or pastoral relevance.

**Finances.** For many years the province has been able to support our confreres and their diverse projects without any help from the generalate. Of late, however, the whole province is affected by the financial difficulties presently besetting our schools.

**Formation.** The province has two stages of initial formation namely: propaedeutic (8 candidates) and philosophate (19 candidates). For these, we have a team of formators and a vocation promoter. The propaedeutic community is integrated in a parish located in Belo Horizonte, MG. Our philosophy students, on the other hand, are also integrated in two other parishes: the one in the city of Juiz de Fora, and the other in the state of Minas Gerais. ♦

## BRAZIL – SOUTH PROVINCE



### 3. Sharing Intercultural Mission

*“The deepest and best understanding of our particular call to mission is expressed in the term prophetic dialog. Dialog is not so much a separate activity as it is an attitude of solidarity, respect and love which permeates all of our activities.*

*In creative fidelity to our charism and on the basis of our ongoing reflection on our concrete situation, we commit ourselves to missionary service in our parish activities and other apostolates by forming communities of life and mission.”*

–BRS Mission Statement

### Those in final vows IN ACTIVE MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Parish Ministry	54.7	52.0	56.0
School/Education	2.7	2.0	1.5
Other Apostolates	11.5	9.5	6.6
SVD Vocation/Formation	6.8	6.1	4.0
Administration/Support	9.5	8.8	5.3

### Those in final vows NOT IN MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Studies/Orientation	2.7	0	4.0
Retired/Sick	9.5	16.2	16.0
Other	2.7	5.4	6.6

### PLATFORMS FOR PROPHETIC DIALOG

The SVD were the pioneers in the evangelization of the State of Paraná. The missionary work extended from the headwaters of the River Iguaçu to its confluence with the River Paraná, 700 kilometers westward. This huge territory, which was once one single SVD parish, has now been divided into seven separate dioceses! The SVD mission in the Amazon Region was also an initiative of BRS. In order to free confreres to staff this new mission in the Amazon, we had to give up several well-established parishes in the south.

At present most of the confreres in the province work in parishes, both in rural and urban areas. In the rural parishes our dialog partners are the landless and new settlers. In the urban parishes, our preferential dialog partners are the poor and unemployed. Some of our parishes also serve as bases

for mission outreach to indigenous peoples (e.g., in Guarapuava) and ethnic groups (e.g., in Dourados).

*expression of unity and diversity, conscious of the need for more young missionaries from Brazil.”*

–BRS Vision Statement

## THE SVD CHARACTERISTIC DIMENSIONS

**Mission Animation.** Every year the provincial mission secretary organizes the SVD Mission Sunday for animating awareness and raising funds for the worldwide mission of the Church. The province also has a group of laity called SVD Friends who share in our SVD spirituality and our local mission work.

**Biblical Apostolate.** Two confreres work full-time in offering biblical workshops and courses wherever their service is needed in the province. The bible ministry is currently in demand on account of the increasing need of dioceses for lay ministers and co-workers whose leadership formation is firmly grounded on the knowledge of the Bible.

**JPIC.** After some neglect of this characteristic dimension, a confrere is now working full time to animate concern for JPIC issues starting with parish communities. Another confrere is working with Kolping Social Agency, whose mission is to provide professional training to poor young people in Paraná. In the same state, the province has a formation center (*Centro de Formação Juan Diego*) meant for indigenous peoples.

## 4. Sharing Intercultural Life

*“We give witness to our internationality and spirituality through prophetic dialog as an*

MEMBERSHIP	2000	2005	2012
Bishops	2	2	1
Clerics	69	67	65
Brothers (final vows)	3	5	3
Scholastics	1	4	4
TOTAL	75	78	73

AGE and COUNTRY	2000	2005	2012
Average Age	56.1	56.0	55.5
Nationalities	14	11	13*

### \* ZONAL ORIGIN of province members

AFRAM	3	2gha, 1cng
ASPAC	24	14isa, 9ind, 1vie
EUROPE	20	12pol, 2ned, 2urs, 1ger, 1ire, 1ita, 1oes
PANAM	26	26brz

**Spirituality.** The province works with the SSpS in the area of spirituality. Both congregations meet every month for communal reflection on the Word of God. The SVD-SSpS Spirituality team also animates assemblies and meetings.

**Finances.** Transparency in financial accountability has greatly improved in the province in the last years. The sale of the seminary building of Ponta

Grossa and the land of the seminary in Toledo to the local government lifted the province from the long financial crisis it went through. Among the confreres there is now greater solidarity that is bringing about greater financial stability.

**Formation.** The province has two formation houses, namely: a propaedeutic in Toledo and a

philosophate in Curitiba. The former has six seminarians and three confreres, two of them working in vocation promotion. The latter has seven students and two formators. It is a challenge for the Province to look for confreres who are willing to work in formation and along with it to provide an adequate preparation to assume this role in the future. ♦

# CENTRAL AMERICAN REGION

Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama



- Official Language in all three countries: **Spanish**
- Visa: So far, no confrere yet has been denied a residence visa to work as missionary in all three countries. But the process of applying for one makes complex demands in documentation and usually lasts a few months before being granted.

(July 2011 est.) **Religious Profile %**

	Population	Christian	Catholics	Others
Costa Rica	4,576,562	90.7	76.3	9.3
Nicaragua	5,666,301	81.7	58.5	18.3
Panama	3,460,462	92.0	84.6	8.0

**Fertility Rate** (babies per woman) **Age Structure %**

		0-14	15-64	65
Costa Rica	1.93	24.6	69.1	6.4
Nicaragua	1.9	31.7	63.8	4.5
Panama	2.45	28.6	64.2	7.2

	Median Age	Life Expectancy	Below Poverty Line
Costa Rica	28.8	77.72	16%
Nicaragua	22.9	71.9	48%
Panama	27.5	77.79	25.6%

**GDP Output %** **Labor Force %**

	1	2	3	1	2	3
Costa Rica	6.5	22.5	71	17.6	8.8	73.6
Nicaragua	18.5	25.9	55.6	28	19	53
Panama	4.6	16.7	78.7	17.6	8.8	73.6

1=Agriculture, 2=Industry, 3=Services

	Urban Population	Urban Rate of Change	Migrant(s) per 1000
Costa Rica	64%	2.1%	0.87
Nicaragua	57%	2%	-3.54
Panama	75%	2.3%	-0.42

	Total Literacy %		Youth Literacy %	
	male	female	male	female
Costa Rica	94.7	95.1	97.2	98.04
Nicaragua	67.2	67.8	83.63	88.82
Panama	92.5	91.2	96.53	91.25

	Mass Media			Interactive Media	
	per 1000 persons			per 1000 persons	
	Newspaper	Radio	TV	Mobile	Internet
Costa Rica	60.09	214.1	114.7	663.2	324.5
Nicaragua	n.a.	218.8	56.4	665.5	35.2
Panama	n.a.	235.5	147.4	1887.2	277.4

1. Intercultural Setting

NICARAGUA has a population of which more than three-fifths is mestizo (of mixed European and Amerindian ancestry) and Spanish-speaking. African and European descendants together constitute about one-fifth of the population, whereas the Amerindian or native indigenous peoples have by now been reduced to a minority composed of several ethnic groups.

The people of this land went through a history marked by civil wars, natural disasters and political corruption. A chaotic economy has caused much poverty and unemployment. Many families in rural areas have been reduced to daily survival. In cities, the quiet despair of people to earn a decent livelihood results in alcoholism, prostitution, drug addiction, familial disintegration, abandoned children and street crimes. Thousands of families search for better work opportunities by migrating to neighboring countries, especially to Costa Rica and the United States.

PANAMA is a former Spanish colony with a racially and ethnically mixed populace. Those who pride themselves as the “real Panamanians” are the *interioranos* (“interior people”), *mestizos* of Spanish-Amerindian descent. Among themselves,

some are outwardly perceived to grade into Amerindian features and are nicknamed as *cholos*, though the latter prefer to be identified as *naturales* (natives). Together, these two groups constitute 70% of the population.

In fact, fewer than 200,000 people belong to the ethnic groups aboriginal to the land –the Kuna, the Guaymi or Ngawbe, the Embera, and the Waunan. The *afro-coloniales*, descendants of African slaves imported in colonial times, account for 15% of the population. Counted among them are the *afro-antillanos*, African descendants from the Caribbean islands who came to work on the construction of the Panama Canal and eventually settled in the country.

The United States, though represented by just a few residents, has made a strong and lasting formative impact on the economy and culture of present-day Panama. Other migrants of minor number are the Chinese, East Indians, Middle Easterners, and Jews. The Jewish community in Panama began much earlier with Jews fleeing the historic Inquisition in the Iberian Peninsula; other Jewish migrants from the West Indies subsequently came to reinforce their presence. This multi-ethnic minority plays an indirect influence on the political life in Panama for its weighty role in helping commerce and industry prosper there.

COSTA RICA has nearly four-fifths of its population to be of Spanish descent. The next largest group representing close to one-fifth of the country’s inhabitants consists of mestizos of mixed European and Indian descent. The remai-

ning minority of just about 1% jointly consists of indigenous peoples and descendants of African slaves.

Economic problems and armed political conflict in Nicaragua and other Central American countries drove thousands of refugees (mainly mestizos) into Costa Rica, thus altering the ethnic mixture of the country. Many of these immigrants meet with tough barriers in gaining access to decent housing, health care, and schooling. Nationwide polls show that many Costa Ricans have negative stereotypes of Nicaraguans. Costa Rica has also become a haven for retirees from the United States, tens of thousands of whom now live there.

## 2. Ecclesial Setting

**NICARAGUA.** The Church continues to have a vital presence in reconciling political conflicts and rallying popular sympathy to promptly rescue and help victims of natural disasters. One of its challenges, however, is the hierarchy's partisan involvement in the public forum, as for instance, actively supporting and endorsing candidates for government offices.

**PANAMA.** Though most Panamanians profess to be Catholics, active participation and involvement in the life of the local Church is minimal. The more active Catholics are the poor and those who live at the urban margins. The proliferating number of fundamentalist sects is prompting the Episcopal Conference of Panama to work out an integral approach to new evangelization that reaches out especially to no-longer practicing

Catholics. Despite the small number of its local clergy, the Catholic Church continues to play an important role in the public sphere of the country. Two promising trends are the increase in priestly vocations and the lay involvement in ecclesial life and apostolates.

**COSTA RICA.** Because Catholicism is the official religion of the country, the maintenance of religious properties often gets help from the government. As globalization increasingly impacts on the Costa Rican people, the Catholic Church faces the pastoral challenges of growing religious indifference as well as of pluralization, as is shown in the increase of Protestant and Pentecostal groups. The Catholic Church continues to play an active presence and role in the public life of the country.

## 3. Sharing Intercultural Mission

*"As Divine Word Missionaries, we come from diverse countries and cultures to proclaim the Good News –in communion of life and mission– to all persons who desire to welcome the Lord Jesus and to follow his teachings."*

–CAM Mission Statement

### Those in final vows

IN ACTIVE MINISTRY (%)	2005	2012
Parish Ministry	57.5	43.6
School/Education	5.0	0
Other Apostolates	10.0	7.7
SVD Vocation/Formation	12.5	5.2
Administration/Support	10.0	10.2



Those in final vows

NOT IN MINISTRY (%)	2005	2012
Studies/Orientation	0	20.5
Retired/Sick	0	2.6
Other	5.0	10.2

PLATFORMS FOR PROPHETIC DIALOG

Since the opening of the region we worked hard to organize mission work in three distant districts in these three Latin American countries. We tried to forestall that one district subordinates the other two, as each one had its own character. Working on a common mission statement had helped us achieve the desired unity and balance.

The region has assumed eight parishes in three countries. In Nicaragua we have a suburban parish in Managua; a parish in Palacagüina where the majority of the population is comprised of farmers; and a parish in an area populated mostly by indigenous peoples in Río San Juan.

In Panama our confreres are working in two parishes: one located at the outskirts of the capital city, and another attending to farmers as well as and middle-class suburbans in David City.

In Costa Rica we have a parish at the frontier of Upala that is beset by immigration issues. We also have a parish in Barranca at the periphery of Puntarenas City. The third parish in the tourist zone of

Hermosa attends to a fishing community as well as welcomes tourists.

THE SVD CHARACTERISTIC DIMENSIONS

**Mission Animation.** Mission animation is concentrated in different groups in the parishes where we work. The mission secretary of our region has formed a group called Misioneros Laicos del Verbo Divino and accompanies its members in their plans and activities.

**Biblical Apostolate and Communication.** Our biblical center in Managua not only offers bibles and related resource materials at popular prices, but also organizes bible courses and workshops, and produces radio broadcasts. Its staff also offers the same service to parishes and dioceses that invite them. Our book store in Costa Rica offers similar services.

**JPIC.** Our Casa de Migrantes (House for Migrants) located in Upala, Costa Rica attends to the needs of the migrants who recently crossed the border to Costa Rica to seek a better livelihood and future.

The house of migrants provides different services to those who have recently arrived. In David City the region runs a comedor infantil (children’s canteen) to feed poor children from marginal areas, mostly members of the indigenous tribes of Ngöbe and Buglé. The region intends to reinforce its commitment and service to indigenous peoples in the three countries where we are. But we await the increase in the number of our personnel.

#### 4. Sharing Intercultural Life

*“Our being religious and missionary finds authentic expression through living together in fraternal harmony, giving witness to personal and communal prayer, and readiness to go and work wherever promoting the Reign of God demands our service. We strengthen our community by respecting and appreciating the uniqueness of every confrere while striving after harmony in diversity.”*

–CAM Vision Statement

MEMBERSHIP	2005	2012
Clerics	20	35
Brothers (final vows)	0	1
Scholastics	5	3
TOTAL	25	39

AGE and COUNTRY	2005	2012
Average Age	40.3	43.5
Nationalities	10	14

#### \* ZONAL ORIGIN of province members

AFRAM	2	2gha
ASPAC	16	8isa, 4phi, 2ind, 1chn, 1vie
EUROPE	12	8pol, 2esp, 2ire
PANAM	9	4pan, 2brz, 1bol, 1mex, 1nic

**Spirituality.** During district meetings and regional assemblies special time is dedicated to the ce-

lebration of the Eucharist, spiritual reflection and prayer sharing.

**Community.** Community life and fraternal sharing take place mostly in the outings, retreats and gatherings of the different districts. The elaboration of CAM Mission Statement provided the region an ample period of communal reflection on our local sociocultural setting and our corresponding missionary responses to its challenges and opportunities.

In forming our communities we try our best to make their membership as international and intercultural as possible. We want to make this feature to characterize our region, because we believe that it gives visible and credible witness to the universality of the Church for the people whom we serve.

**Finances.** The District of Nicaragua still depends much on subsidies coming from the generalate. This makes us aware that we need to orient the financial management of our region towards self-reliance, as prescribed by our general leadership.

**Formation.** We have a House of Formation for the students in philosophy and postulancy. The novices and theology students from Panama and Nicaragua go to Mexico for their formation and studies. The OTP program not only provides the OTP candidates an experience in the region but it has also brought in fresh air for our communities that received them. Our region now has a vocation promoter who makes his rounds in schools and colleges and offers retreats to promising young people.



# CHILE PROVINCE



- Official Language: **Spanish**
- Visa: For foreign missionaries it is relatively easy to obtain residence visas in the country. One submits a letter of invitation from the provincial superior in Chile to the Chilean Embassy of one's country of origin. Once in Chile, an annual renewal of the residence visa is required. A month after arriving in Chile, one normally is issued an identity card.

(July 2011 est.)

**Population****16,888,760****Religious Profile %****Christian****Catholics****Others**

87.2

70.0

12.8

**Age Structure %****0-14****15-64****65****Fertility Rate**

(babies per woman)

22.3

68.1

9.6

1.6

**Median Age****Life Expectancy****Below Poverty Line**

32.1

77.7

17%

**GDP Output %****1****2****3****Labor Force %****1****2****3**

5.1

41.8

53.1

13.2

23

63.9

1=Agriculture, 2=Industry, 3=Services

**Urban Population****Urban Rate of Change****Migrant(s) per 1000**

89%

1.1

0

**Total Literacy: 95.7%****male****female****Youth Literacy: 97.9%****male****female**

95.8

95.6

97.5

98.4

**Mass Media**

per 1000 persons

**Interactive Media**

per 1000 persons

**Newspaper****Radio****TV****Mobile****Internet**

n.a.

306.7

185.5

1175.5

62.5

## 1. Intercultural Setting

In striking contrast to many other Latin American nations, Chile has not experienced strong conflicts resulting from regional or cultural identities. A national culture is dominant, but some distinct regional traditions linger on. In the northern provinces bordering Bolivia, Aymará Indians still

preserve many aspects of their Andean culture. In the southern region the Mapuche Indians form a large group that still exercise a strong cultural influence there. Off the coast of Chile lies the remote Easter Island, inhabited by natives who still live by their Polynesian cultural traditions.

Though the term *mestizo* is not in use in Chile, more than half of the Chilean population is of mixed European-indigenous descent. Some 25% of Chileans are of European ancestry (mainly from Spanish, German, Italian, British, Croatian, and French origins, or combinations thereof). Chile also has a large Palestinian community (some 300,000 persons, the largest outside Palestine). The indigenous population represents some 7% of the population. There are about 500,000 Mapuche Indians in Chile, constituting the country's largest Amerindian population. Since the late 1980s, the country's economic prosperity and sociopolitical stability have attracted an increasing number of immigrants from Korea and from other Latin American countries.

2. Ecclesial Setting

The Church has continued emphasizing social issues such as salary levels, mediation of the Mapuche conflict, the bi-centennial indult and environmental issues. For the majority of Chileans, the Church is a respectable institution and continues to be an important point of reference, being consulted and requested to mediate in conflicts. The Church is conscious of its social place and intervenes in due time with her declarations which are supported by her doctrines.

However, denouncements of child sexual abuse have seriously affected the Church lately. The local church is now only moderately viable in terms of finance and personnel. In terms of vocations there is a great loss in the numbers of candidates to the priesthood.

3. Sharing Intercultural Mission

*"In the conflict-ridden society in which we live, we want to be bridges facilitating people to come together in dialog and communion. We therefore commit ourselves:*

- to be inserted in the local culture where we live and work, in an attitude of prophetic dialog, rooted in the richness of our intercultural communities;*
- to work decisively in favor of human dignity wherever it is trampled;*
- to promote the formation of the laity that leads to a shared mission with them."*

–CHI Mission Statement

Those in final vows

IN ACTIVE MINISTRY (%)	2000	2005	2012
Parish Ministry	34.6	34.3	31.4
Education	27.6	20.2	22.9
Other Apostolates	13.5	18.7	21.4
SVD Vocation/Formation	5.8	1.5	2.9
Administration/Support	5.8	10.4	4.3

Those in final vows

NOT IN MINISTRY (%)	2000	2005	2012
Studies/Orientation	3.8	0	0
Retired/Sick	6.4	7.5	11.4
Other	2.6	7.5	5.7

## PLATFORMS FOR PROPHETIC DIALOG

At first look the SVD Province of Chile appears to be engaged mainly in running large urban schools whose students come mainly from the middle and upper classes. A closer look, however, will reveal a growing option for the poor and the indigenous populations. Our preferential dialog partners are undoubtedly the marginalized and the poor. This is verified in our parochial endeavors, social ministry services, attention to the indigenous groups and three of our school institutions. Recently the province has formed a new team to re-orient and better plan our commitment to the indigenous ministry. We work primarily among the Mapuches of the Southern part of Chile. In addition, we have a confrere who sporadically attends to the pastoral needs of the Aymaras in Huara in the northern part of Chile.

## THE SVD CHARACTERISTIC DIMENSIONS

**Mission Animation.** As an important entity in the province, mission animation promotes the work done in the Province as well as those of Chilean SVDs and SSPs in foreign missions. A missionary magazine is also published four times a year to promote missionary awareness. Mission animation in the province seeks and creates support networks among our parishes and schools to optimize and facilitate missionary activity. Our schools and parishes organize missions for the youth during summer and winter. In places where we work, a special collection is made as part of Mission Sunday to help support the SVD Missions.

**Communication.** In the province the Divine Word Communication Center coordinates the diverse activities related to diffusing information among confreres and lay collaborators. Furthermore, it produces radio programs, bulletins and magazines.

**Biblical Apostolate.** The biblical apostolate is present in almost all areas of work in the province. A prepared radio program is distributed to different radio stations in the country with a daily Bible reflection and a reflection on the Sunday readings. A team of priests and seminarians prepares and records the daily reflections. This program has been operating now for over 20 years. The biblical ministry organizes and provides courses and workshops including the traditional "Month of the Bible." *Libreria Verbo Divino* distributes biblical materials and other related publications.

Our preferential dialog partners are undoubtedly the marginalized and the poor.

**JPIC.** Our commitments in this area have solid foundations in some of our institutions such as the *Fundacion Hogares de Menores* (Home for Minors) serving children (boys and girls) coming from dysfunctional, poor and vulnerable families. The foundation has family homes in Santiago, Coronel, Osorno, Puerto Varas and Puerto Montt. The *Vocational Institute El Carmen*, located in Santiago, facilitates the access of mostly poor women into the labor market through specific formation and training courses offered. We also have the *Fundacion Niños en la Huella* in the northern part of Chile helping children from poor, dysfunctional and marginalized families. An SVD Brother collaborates with the church of Iquique.

Workshops for ongoing formation in JPIC issues are offered in the districts, local communities and for lay volunteers who do social work. Confreres are supplied with materials on certain issues to support their JPIC initiatives in their respective ministries or apostolates. For example, they are given liturgical materials focusing on themes such as poverty, human trafficking, etc.

#### 4. Sharing Intercultural Life

*“Today, more than ever, we feel challenged to unite in one spirit and to cultivate our identity as Divine Word Missionaries, living in intercultural communities. We therefore commit ourselves:*

- *to make the Word of God ever more the backbone of our community life and of our evangelizing service;*
- *to encourage intercultural communication among us, cultivating open and sincere dialog;*
- *to fortify our community life through shared planning and concerted action in realizing our provincial mission project.”*

–CHI Vision Statement

MEMBERSHIP	2000	2005	2012
Bishops	1	1	3
Clerics	67	63	70
Brothers (final vows)	4	3	4
Brothers (temporal vows)	1	0	0
Scholastics	9	5	5
Novices	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>82</b>

#### AGE and COUNTRY 2000 2005 2012

Average Age	50.6	55.0	56.4
Nationalities	16	15	17*

#### \* ZONAL ORIGIN of province members

AFRAM	4	2gha, 1cng, 1tog
ASPAC	23	1Sisa, 4ind, 3phi, 1vie
EUROPE	23	9ger, 9pol, 2esp, 1ita, 1oes, 1swi
PANAM	32	2Schi, 4col, 2arg, 1par

**Community.** The province stresses the need of teamwork especially at the district levels. This is reflected in the elaboration of the Missionary Project on the district levels. The regular meetings and assemblies also provide moments of sharing and reflection.

**Finances.** The province is economically self-sufficient. To ensure the continuity of our self-sufficiency, investment income, maintenance of buildings, external loans, etc. are regularly reviewed and re-evaluated. Internal and external loans obtained to help fund the various projects of the province are evaluated and re-financed as needed.

**Formation.** In the area of ongoing formation, special sessions are organized at the district level with specific and relevant topics addressed by experts. A confrere has been designated full-time to direct and supervise the ongoing formation in the province.



Through the new entity “Lifelong Learning and Spirituality” a theoretical framework for reflection has been developed to lay out a concrete program of formation. It emphasizes the formation of a team

that will study the feasibility of a longer course for neo-missionaries (1-2 weeks), 3-day quarterly meetings, retreats for lay people on the weekend and various activities in parishes and schools. ♦



# COLOMBIA PROVINCE

Colombia, Venezuela



- Official language in Colombia and Venezuela:

**Spanish**

- Visa: In Colombia and Venezuela, residence visa is easily granted for confreres coming from Latin American countries. As for other nationalities, facility or difficulty depends on mutual diplomatic accords. So far, however, no confrere from other continents has yet been denied entry and residence.

(July 2011 est.) **Religious Profile %**

	Population	Christian	Catholics	Others
Colombia	44,725,543	97.6	87.2	2.4
Venezuela	27,635,743	98.0	87.3	2.0

**Fertility Rate** (babies per woman) **Age Structure %**

		0-14	15-64	65
Colombia	2.15	26.7	67.2	6.1
Venezuela	2.42	29.5	65.1	5.4

	Median Age	Life Expectancy	Below Poverty Line
Colombia	28	74.55	45.5%
Venezuela	26.1	73.93	2.42

	GDP Output %			Labor Force %		
	1	2	3	1	2	3
Colombia	9.2	37.6	53.1	18	13	68
Venezuela	3.9	36.1	60	13	23	64

1=Agriculture, 2=Industry, 3=Services

	Urban Population	Urban Rate of Change	Migrant(s) per 1000
Colombia	75%	1.7%	-0.67
Venezuela	93%	1.7%	0

	Total Literacy %		Youth Literacy %	
	male	female	male	female
Colombia	92.3	89.7	97.5	98.4
Venezuela	93.3	92.7	96.3	98.1

	Mass Media per 1000 persons			Interactive Media per 1000 persons	
	Newspaper	Radio	TV	Mobile	Internet
Colombia	24.4	469.5	102.6	970.5	503.9
Venezuela	n.a.	388.9	148.3	1008	322.6

## 1. Intercultural Setting

**COLOMBIA.** As place and people, Colombia presents a country of striking contrasts. The cordilleras towering above equatorial forests and savannas are where some 50 Amerindian tribes survive and live by their ancestral traditions. Before the Spanish conquest, they numbered as many as two million; today they represent only 1% of the Colombian population. The cooler mountains of lower heights are where modern cities lie close to rural areas where mestizo farmers cultivate their

small plots of coffee, corn, and other crops. About three-fifths of the population is *mestizo*, while one-fifth –clustered mainly in the coffee-raising region of the country– has remained European white out of reluctance to mix with *indios* or *negros*. Lastly, the more accessible Atlantic lowlands are where owners of large livestock haciendas live amidst a tri-ethnic populace that has developed a distinct cultural character of its own. Nearly one-fifth of the population, mainly concentrated in the coastal states and sugar-growing areas, consists of African descendants and *mulattoes* of mixed African and European ancestry.

Unlike its neighboring countries, Colombia had never been welcoming to foreign immigrants, although small numbers from the Middle East, non-Iberian Europe, and East Asia managed to integrate with the wider society. But internal migration in the recent decades is now turning this

most populous nation of Spanish-speaking South America into an intercultural society. People from the rural areas and mountains are moving into the cities and plains –partly hoping for better wages and living conditions, and also partly driven away by the guerrilla warfare upland and inland. As the cities expand, unemployment also rises faster than the economy can offer jobs. So, a good number of Colombians are opting to go abroad, especially to oil-rich Venezuela or to the United States –a demographic trend causing a grave loss of skilled workers at home and the risk of inhuman exploitation in the countries to which they enter as illegal migrants. Lastly, covertly riding on these migratory flows is the international drug traffic that remains a disruptive social scourge to the Colombian people.

**VENEZUELA.** Similar to many Latin American countries, Venezuela has a population with four main racial strands: the *mestizos* or *pardos* of mixed European and indigenous ancestry (comprising 67% of the population); the whites of European descent –mainly Spanish, Italian, and Portuguese (21%); the blacks of African and Caribbean descent (10%), and the Amerindian or indigenous people (2%). These same groups tend to be regionally localized: the whites and *pardos* live in the cities, the indigenous peoples in remote inland areas, and the Afro-descendants along the Caribbean coastline.

In recent decades the largest immigrant group comes from Colombia, followed very closely by those from Ecuador, Chile, and the Caribbean islands. This new influx since the 1960s from

neighboring countries was due to the lifting of immigrant restrictions on nonwhite populations in view of recruiting more workers for the boom of the oil industry. An alarming trend, however, is the unchecked human trafficking for which the country is source, transit and destination. Girls and women are lured from inland to urban and tourist areas for sexual commerce. To a lesser extent, Brazilian and Colombian female victims are forced into prostitution within the country, whereas Venezuelan women are transported to the Caribbean islands for the same criminal ends.

## 2. Ecclesial Setting

**COLOMBIA.** Most Columbians profess to be Catholics, but few are regular churchgoers. Many non-practicing ones are won over by other Christian churches, especially those of pentecostal and fundamentalist spirituality. There are also small contingents of Muslims and Jews, and a few indigenous communities in remote areas still follow their ancestral religions.

In response to this pluralizing situation, the Bishops' Conference of the country has called for renewed pastoral zeal and approach with the emphasis on the formation of basic ecclesial communities solidly grounded on the Word of God. In general the hierarchy maintains a traditional apolitical stand in the public sphere. But in recent years some religious men and women have led the prophetic struggle for human rights and justice in solidarity with the poorest stratum of Colombian society. A number of them had to pay for their courageous stand with their lives.

**VENEZUELA.** The Catholic Church in Venezuela has not been a major force in national politics. It is all the more weakened from within by the long-standing dearth of native vocations. Many priests and religious in pastoral service in Venezuela are foreign-born. Consequently, the local Church disposes of insufficient funds and personnel. In recent decades a number of progressive religious, priests and bishops have been agitating for economic and social reforms on behalf of the poor people at the grassroots. But the Catholic hierarchy remains traditional and apolitical.

## 3. Sharing Intercultural Mission

*"We Divine Word Missionaries of Colombia and Venezuela commit ourselves to prophetic dialog preferentially with*

- *the indigenous peoples,*
- *migrants displaced by armed violence,*
- *the baptized distanced from the Church.*

*In fostering our mission we work closely with*

- *parish communities*
- *biblical apostolate teams*
- *the readers of the Fundación Editores."*

–COL Mission Statement

### Those in final vows

#### IN ACTIVE MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Parish Ministry	47.2	42.9	43.4
School/Education	1.4	5.7	0
Other Apostolates	18.1	12.9	15.6
SVD Vocation/Formation	8.3	10.0	12.5
Administration/Support	8.3	8.6	12.3

**Those in final vows****NOT IN MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012**

Studies/Orientation	0	0	0
Retired/Sick	0	0	0
Other	16.7	20.0	16.2

**PLATFORMS FOR PROPHETIC DIALOG**

In our diverse areas of ministry and apostolate, our confreres in the Province preferentially engage in prophetic dialog with

- indigenous peoples and African descendants – they who often are the poor eking out a living in urban slums and semirural zones,
- and those baptized Catholics who are distanced or away from the Church.

We reach out to them through our parish ministries and teams of biblical apostolate. Prophetic dialog demands that we grow in knowledge and respect for our preferential dialog partners and their diverse situations of life.

**THE SVD CHARACTERISTIC DIMENSIONS**

**Biblical Apostolate.** In collaboration with the *Federación de los Editoriales del Verbo Divino* (consortium of SVD publishing houses), we diffuse bibles and related biblical resources at popular prices. We further organize study groups and workshops for deeper understanding of the Bible. We hold these where we unfold our ministries or wherever our biblical apostolate teams are invited.

Our seminarians participate in bible courses offered at a national level, while other confreres have gone through the biblical courses offered in Ecuador.

**JPIC.** We live in a violence-ridden society. In such a setting, we choose to work in communities where social injustice and environmental destruction demand structural reforms and protection of the integrity of creation.

**4. Sharing Intercultural Life**

*“Called from diverse countries and cultures, ages and outlooks, to serve God’s People in Colombia and Venezuela, we religious missionaries of the Divine Word*

- are followers of Jesus and evangelizers*
- who live on the Word and the Eucharist*
- in fraternal communities modeled after the image of the Trinity.”*

–COL Vision Statement

**MEMBERSHIP 2000 2005 2012**

Bishop	1	0	0
Clerics	34	35	41
Brothers (final vows)	0	0	2
Brothers (temporal vows)	0	2	2
Scholastics	13	16	7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>52</b>

**AGE and COUNTRY 2000 2005 2012**

Average Age	38.7	38.2	44.4
Nationalities	12	14	14*

\* ZONAL ORIGIN of province members

AFRAM	4	4gha
ASPAC	18	8isa, 6ind, 2phi, 2vie
EUROPE	11	5pol, 3esp, 2ger, 1slo
PANAM	19	12col, 3brz, 2bol, 1arg, 1ecu,

In July 2011, in preparation for the celebration of the golden jubilee this year, our province reviewed and revised its mission statement and action plan in line with the directions specified by the 16th General Chapter of 2006. We make sustaining community life and renewing formation as our top priorities during the current triennium. ♦





# ECUADOR PROVINCE



(July 2011 est.)

Population	Religious Profile %		
	Christian	Catholics	Others
14,483,499	99.0	91.37	1.0

Age Structure %			Fertility Rate
0-14	15-64	65	(babies per woman)
30.1	63.5	6.4	2.42

Median Age	Life Expectancy	Below Poverty Line
28.74	75.73	28.6%

GDP Output %			Labor Force %		
1	2	3	1	2	3
6.4	35.9	57.7	8.3	21.2	70.4

1=Agriculture, 2=Industry, 3=Services

Urban Population	Urban Rate of Change	Migrant(s) per 1000
63%	2%	-0.52

Total Literacy %		Youth Literacy %	
male	female	male	female
92.3	89.7	96.38	96.49

Mass Media per 1000 persons			Interactive Media per 1000 persons	
Newspaper	Radio	TV	Mobile	Internet
81.3	333.1	166.6	984.9	223.4

- Official Language: **Spanish**
- Visa: The Ecuadorian Ministry of Foreign Relations easily grants residence visas for missionaries, thanks to the mediation of the Bishops' Conference in the country.

## 1. Intercultural Setting

What makes Ecuador an unusual country in Latin America is that it has two major centers of populace and commerce: the port city of Guayaquil, and the capital city of Quito on the Andean highlands. Both metropolitan areas vie for control of the nation's wealth and power.

For Ecuadorians ethnic identity is a fluid matter of self-chosen belonging. One of indigenous descent who adopts modern western ways may claim to be *mestizo*. On the other hand, there are those who can speak only Spanish and yet take pride in identifying themselves as Amerindian. In any case, most Ecuadorians consider themselves *mestizo* of Amerindian-European descent, prefer to speak Spanish if bilingual or bicultural in upbringing, and more spontaneously identify with their respective regions of birth.

The Amerindian or indigenous peoples distinguish themselves by their native languages — of which the main ones are Quichua in the Sierra, and Huaorani in the Amazonia. The so-called *afro-ecuato-rianos*, descendants of enslaved Africans, live mainly in the northwest coastal region of Esmeraldas and in the Chota River valley in the northern highlands. Well-informed guesses estimate the indigenous peoples to comprise 7% of the nation, whereas also about 7% are the Afro-Ecuadorians.

Since the start of the 21st century, Chinese and East Asians have begun migrating in trickles to Ecuador. Thousands of Peruvians have also come in search of better wages since the year 2000, when Ecuador adopted the US dollar as its national currency. But still more numerous are Colombian peasants, mostly displaced from their homeland because of sprays

destroying their crops or escaping the frequent crossfire between military and guerilla forces.

Further sad to note is that these migratory flows within and outside the country include covert human trafficking. Within the country, women and children from border areas and central highlands are abducted to urban centers to work as prostitutes, servants in homes, or vendors and beggars on streets. Male victims forcedly end up in mines and factories, or even in criminal activities such as drug trafficking, theft or robbery. Young Ecuadorian women are further reported to have been smuggled out for prostitution in Colombia, Peru, and Western Europe. To a lesser extent, Ecuador is also a destination country for Colombian, Peruvian, and Chinese women and girls forced into the same sex trade.

## 2. Ecclesial Setting

Though about 90% of Ecuadorians profess to be Catholic, at best only 20% are regular churchgoers. Just the same, the local Church continues to play a significant role in education and charitable institutions among the poor and suffering. Because of this, priests and religious are held in high respect, and the moral views of the hierarchy carry weight in the public forum.

Traditional institutions and practices of popular religiosity (e.g., processions, pilgrimages and patronal feasts) are more visible than socially committed forms of living the faith. The basic ecclesial communities that formed a popular religious movement in the decades following Vatican II have

dwindled in number and energy. It seems that the Church is not able at present to be credibly prophetic, nor is it able to promote ecumenical dialog in a rapidly pluralizing society.

### 3. Sharing Intercultural Mission

*“Led by the light of the Gospel, we commit ourselves to adopt a missionary approach*

- *responsive to the concrete situations of the people we serve,*
- *marked by the method of See-Judge-Act,*
- *oriented toward changing structures that trample on human dignity.*

*We encourage people to desire fraternity, peace and justice. We seek to evangelize, both individuals and all dimensions of human life and environment. We strive to foster respect for nature and ecological protection.”*

–ECU Mission Statement

#### Those in final vows

#### IN ACTIVE MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Parish Ministry	43.2	48.8	46.5
School/Education	0	0	0
Other Apostolates	25.0	20.9	16.2
SVD Vocation/Formation	6.8	4.6	6.9
Administration/Support	11.4	10.5	9.3

#### Those in final vows

#### NOT IN MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Studies/Orientation	6.8	4.6	6.9
Retired/Sick	0	3.5	4.6
Other	6.8	7.0	9.6

### PLATFORMS FOR PROPHETIC DIALOG

In Ecuador our missionary presence is at the service of the local Church. We run 17 parishes where we integrate the children and parents in family catechesis, give care to the sick and elderly, reach out to migrants and the poor at the margins of society. In our pastoral approach, stress is given to giving solid training to our catechists and lay ecclesial leaders. Two of our parishes enact our equal concern for indigenous peoples and the African descendants of the country's population.

### THE SVD CHARACTERISTIC DIMENSIONS

**Mission Animation.** Thanks to the mission secretariat of the province, one major fruit of mission animation has been the rise and spread of SVD-linked lay missionary movements, namely: MILVED (*Misioneros Laicos del Verbo Divino*) and JOMVER (*Jóvenes Misioneros Verbitas*). These groups animate Christian living in their parishes by volunteering for ministries and apostolates. Courses related to mission animation are offered to lay groups from other dioceses.

**Biblical Apostolate.** The Bible Apostolate in the province is currently organizing Bible-based catechetical courses especially for the youth. Other biblical resources are produced for popular diffusion. Exhibits on the history of salvation have been put up for display at several parishes and made available for other Spanish-speaking provinces. The *Editorial Guadalupe* has published an

introductory course on the Bible and has distributed 500,000 copies in ten countries.

**Communication.** The Hispano-American Edition of the magazine *Spiritus* is published in Quito under the juridical name of the Society of the Divine Word.

**JPIC.** This characteristic dimension permeates all our ministries and apostolates. A periodic section of our provincial newsletter is devoted to sharing experiences and reflections on current JPIC issues. We actively support the initiatives of the Justice and Peace Commission of the Association of Religious of Ecuador. Some confreres have taken part in the World Social Forum and World Conferences on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth. Years ago, some members of the province dedicated themselves to accompany and support the Colombian refugees in collaboration with other agencies.

In 2010 a VIVAT workshop attended by people from eight countries was held in Quito. In Guayaquil the *Proyecto Arnaldo Janssen* helps to foster unity and harmony among neighboring families struggling to eradicate drug addiction and domestic violence in their homes. We also reach out to the migrants, especially the victims of human trafficking.

#### 4. Sharing Intercultural Life

*"We work in teams and live out in community our religious-missionary vocation of giving witness to the Word made flesh."*

– ECU Vision Statement

#### MEMBERSHIP 2000 2005 2012

Clerics	41	40	43
Brothers (final vows)	2	3	1
Scholastics	4	3	4
Novices	3	0	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>50</b>

#### AGE and COUNTRY 2000 2005 2012

Average Age	43.1	48.8	46.7
Nationalities	14	17	14

#### \* ZONAL ORIGIN of province members

AFRAM	3	2gha, 1ken
ASPAC	21	8isa, 8ind, 3vie, 2phi
EUROPE	14	6esp, 6pol, 1bel, 1ger
PANAM	12	8ecu, 2arg, 1par, 1peru

**Spirituality.** A spirituality team has been formed to animate, organize and encourage communal spiritual practices –to be enriched by dialog with popular religiosity in Ecuador and the intercultural membership of our province.

**Community.** Internationality and interculturality are distinctive traits of our life in common. A fraternal atmosphere and mutual dialog is found among the members of the province. However, considerable work is needed to share our mission of dialog by expressing ourselves well in disagree-

ments and in constructive, responsible and honest criticisms.

**Leadership.** A more systematic ongoing formation at the district level is a challenge for the province. We see the need for an annual leadership workshop for members of the Province.

**Finances.** Thanks to the investments made during the last 35 years, the financial situation of the province is quite stable. More recently we have begun

the diversification of our funding. A lay professional staff helps in financial guidance and management.

**Formation.** We have full time formators in our houses of formation. Vocation promotion remains a challenge for the province in recent years. The Province is committed to inter-provincial novitiate formation as an opportunity for intercultural experience as early as during initial formation. Once a year we organize a formative meeting on current affairs of the Church at the national level. ♦





# MEXICO PROVINCE

Mexico, Cuba

- Official Language in Mexico and Cuba: **Spanish**
- Visa: **MEXICO** — Foreign missionaries are easily granted work and residence visas three months before travel, if the required documents are complied with.
- **CUBA** — An annual quota of working visas are granted to foreign missionaries. Waiting for such a visa to be granted depends on whether the given quota has been reached or not. Till now, however, no confrere has yet been denied a visa—despite at times a year of waiting.

## 1. Intercultural Setting

**MEXICO.** Mexican national culture slowly emerged from three centuries of acculturation between the indigenous peoples and the immigrant Spanish colonizers. Mexico gained independence in 1821. But unstable government, military revolts and foreign invasions followed and gravely hindered nation building. In those chaotic years Mexico ceded against popular will almost half of its original territory to the United States: that which now is comprised of Texas, California, New Mexico, and Arizona. Since then political ties between the two nations have remained one of love-and-hate.

Internally, the forging of a national identity at first revolved around the issue of race. Liberalism in Mexican polity of the 19th century constitutionally declared the equality of all racial groups. But social practice betrayed it. It was then popularly believed that national identity could only emerge among a racially homogeneous popula-



		(July 2011 est.)		
		Religious Profile %		
		Christian	Catholics	Others
		Population		
Mexico	113,724,226	94.5	91.9	5.5
Cuba	11,087,330	85.0	52.9	15.0

		Fertility Rate		
		(babies per woman)		
		Age Structure %		
		0-14	15-64	65
Mexico	2.29	28.2	65.2	6.6
Cuba	1.44	17.3	71.1	11.0

	Median Age	Life Expectancy	Below Poverty Line
Mexico	27.1 years	76.47	18.2%
Cuba	27.1 years	76.47	18.2%

		GDP Output %			Labor Force %		
		1	2	3	1	2	3
Mexico		3.9	32.6	63.5	13.7	23.4	62.9
Cuba		4	20.9	74.2	20	19.4	60.6

1=Agriculture, 2=Industry, 3=Services

	Urban Population	Urban Rate of Change	Migrant(s) per 1000
Mexico	78%	1.2%	-3.24
Cuba	75%	0%	-3.56

		Total Literacy %		Youth Literacy %	
		male	female	male	female
Mexico		86.9	85.3	97.5	97.6
Cuba		99.8	99.8	99.9	99.9

		Mass Media			Interactive Media	
		per 1000 persons			per 1000 persons	
		Newspaper	Radio	TV	Mobile	Internet
Mexico		179.0	272.6	225.1	803.4	27.3
Cuba		105.1	351.8	238.1	9.04	14.5

tion. Hence, racial marriage was promoted as the mestizo grew in esteem as the authentic Mexican. This then gave rise to the ideology of *mexicanidad*.

In recent years, however, the quest for Mexican national identity has gone through a radical change. Although the absolute majority of the population is mestizo, its pre-Columbian or *indio* ancestry and history is appreciated anew. And as the indigenous peoples emerge in cultural respect, national identity is being re-defined in pluri-cultural terms.

Despite that trend, indigenous peoples in Mexico remain the poorest and most marginalized groups. This situation has given rise to militant indigenous movements clamoring for greater civil rights and political participation in nation decision-making. Most significant has been the outbreak of armed indigenous rebellion in the state of Chiapas, where the Zapatista Army for National Liberation declared war on the government in January 1994.

**CUBA.** The Cuban nation has arisen from a violent history of foreign domination. In 1492 Christopher Columbus claimed the island for Spain. A decade later Spanish colonizers then came to divide the lands among themselves and to enslave the indigenous people as miners and planters. Brutally treated as beasts of burden, many indios died of malnutrition, overwork or suicide so that they became virtually extinct within fifty years of Spanish conquest. To make up for the loss of laborers, Africans were trafficked into the island. Since then the main inhabitants consisted of *peninsulares* (those born in Spain), *creoles* (colonists of

European descent who were born on the island), and African slaves.

The protracted struggle between these three main groups eventually gave rise to a revolutionary movement against Spain. But in 1898 the United States preempted its victory by invading the island and subduing it as a *de facto* colony. It took half a century further, on 1 January 1959, before Cuba became truly independent for the first time after the triumph of the revolution led by Fidel Castro.

More than half of Cubans today are *mulattoes* of mixed European and African lineage, and nearly two-fifths are descendants of white Europeans, mainly from Spain. For centuries whites ruled and directed the economy as well as monopolized access to education and other public services. Although *mulattoes* have become increasingly prominent since the mid-20th century, 'colored' people African lineage are still discriminated against.

## 2. Ecclesial Setting

**MEXICO.** After the Spanish conquest Mexico's indigenous peoples readily accepted Catholic beliefs and practices, but they did so on the basis of their pre-Hispanic religious beliefs. The Virgin of Guadalupe, for example, was associated with the pagan goddess Tonantzin.

Because the Catholic Church has been a powerful institution in Mexican history, its relationship with the state has at times been tense and sometimes openly hostile. In fact, the constitution imposes a strict separation between church and state.

In recent decades, Protestant missionaries have been particularly active in southern Mexico and among the urban poor. A significant proportion of indigenous peoples practice a syncretic religiosity –visible in many village fiestas where ancestors, mountain spirits, and other spiritual forces may be venerated side by side with Catholic saints.

For this reason the Church in Mexico has been shifting in recent years from traditional 'sacramentalization' to 'new evangelization' in its pastoral approach. This is creating frictions and fissures between the more conservative bishops and those guided by the spirit and principles of Vatican II and the CELAM documents.

**CUBA.** Prior to the revolution, the Catholic Church was dominant in Cuba. In the 1960s, however, the open clash between the new government and the mainline churches –especially the Catholic Church feared as anti-revolutionary– led to the expulsion or exodus of more than 70% of Catholic priests and nuns together with most Protestant ministers and rabbis. The constitution of 1976 proclaimed scientific materialism as the basis of the state and of the educational system while guaranteeing limited religious freedoms. After a decade religious groups and the government began a period of reconciliation. In 1992 explicit references to scientific materialism were removed from the constitution. With the legal banning of all forms of religious discrimination, Catholics could join the Cuban Communist Party. Since then an in-

Prior to the revolution, the Catholic Church was dominant in Cuba.

creasing number of Cubans have been returning to the Catholic Church.

In the absence of precise statistics, perhaps Santería is the religion in the country today with most adherents –ranging between half and two-thirds of the population. It is a syncretic blend of West African traditional religiosity and Catholic folk piety. Prayers are directed to *orishas* (divine mediators) formally identified with Catholic saints. Because of its apolitical focus and organization in small groups rather than in large assemblies, Santería practically escaped strict government restrictions and spread easily among the rural folks. Beyond this religious movement, a good number of the Cuban population remains non-religious or ‘un-churched’.

3. Sharing Intercultural Mission

*“In Mexico our principal dialog partners are:*

- ♦ *indigenous peoples who*
  - *are poor and marginalized, often politically manipulated and divided...*
  - *belong to cultures different from the dominant one in the country...*
  - *live by a vision of God and the Church different from the official view...*
  - *emigrate and suffer familial separation and fragmentation...*
  - *are young with low education and high unemployment.*
- ♦ *urban and semi-urban dwellers who are*
  - *of the middle and lower middle class*
  - *rural migrants among whom are indigenous peoples.*
  - *distant from any faith community.*

*In Cuba our principal dialog partners are:*

- ♦ *faith-seekers*
  - *coming from uprooted families and searching for God,*
  - *distant from the Catholic faith and Church and deprived of freedom of expression, because of the political system.*
- ♦ *adherents of other religious traditions – especially Santería and traditional African beliefs.”*

MEX Mission Statement

Those in final vows

IN ACTIVE MINISTRY (%)	2000	2005	2012
Parish Ministry	44.5	52.3	54.2
School/Education	2.0	1.6	0
Other Apostolates	6.2	7.8	15.2
SVD Vocation/Formation	9.6	10.2	11.8
Administration/Support	5.5	12.5	5.1

Those in final vows

NOT IN MINISTRY (%)	2000	2005	2012
Studies/Orientation	17.1	4.7	8.5
Retired/Sick	4.1	0	3.4
Other	11	10.9	1.8

PLATFORMS FOR PROPHETIC DIALOG

In every place where the SVDs work, we are firmly embedded in the plan of the local diocese. This is promoted through frequent attendance at meetings of the clergy. Thus, aspects of pastoral care are given more or less emphasis depending on the

different local situations and pastoral thrusts. It is not possible to speak of specifically SVD pastoral work at the provincial level. But within the local pastoral frameworks we want to offer the characteristic dimensions of the SVD. The confreres in Cuba collaborate with the Diocesan Pastoral Plan.

The people with whom we interact most and consider our preferential partners in dialog are the poor, the indigenous groups, lay missionaries, the lower and middle class people and, to a lesser extent, the middle and professional class. Among the poor we have those coming from indigenous communities such as the ethnic groups like the Otomi, Zapotec, Chol and Tzeltal. The economic situation of the lower classes in Mexico and throughout Central America provoked the large numbers of migrants who leave their homeland to seek better living conditions in the United States of America. These people, both men and women, suffer many indignities on their path, including kidnapping, assault, rape and other forms of aggression. Especially among the Otomi, we enter into dialog with the families of those who have emigrated.

In the parishes of Mayari, Sagua and Yara in Cuba our preferential dialog partners are the people with Down Syndrome, relatives of prisoners, youth and families, the elderly and the infirm.

## THE SVD CHARACTERISTIC DIMENSIONS

**Mission Animation.** We are primarily committed to *Misioneros Auxiliares del Verbo Divino*, accompanying and encouraging them in their different activities. We also have a remarkable group

of friends and benefactors who generously help us with their prayers and financial support.

**Biblical Apostolate.** In all our SVD parishes we have bible groups. The different Bible study groups sometimes form a network of shared meetings and workshops. An SVD is assigned full time as the Coordinator of the Biblical Apostolate, and he also works for the Archdiocese of Mexico teaching Bible courses and participating in the planning of the Archdiocesan Biblical Apostolate. We also have the *Libreria Verbum* located in Mexico City and Guadalajara. In addition to the promotion and sale of Bibles, they also promote biblical courses throughout the year.

**Communication.** We have not yet managed to consolidate our presence in the Mass Media of Social Communication (MCS). Occasionally some confreres have accepted radio interviews about their work. The province, the mission office and many parishes publish a variety of newsletters for their friends and benefactors.

**JPIC.** There is currently a boom in the number of governmental and non-governmental organizations that promote human rights and ecological issues. This situation has raised awareness among members of the province to support these initiatives. In some urban and indigenous parishes actions related to social ministry are taken into account. Continued efforts to raise awareness among members of the province are being taken. In the fifty years of our presence in Mexico, we have not produced confreres who mastered the indigenous language of any of the four ethnic groups with whom we work.

#### 4. Sharing Intercultural Life

*"We come from different nations and continents, gathered together by the love and grace of God to participate in the life and mission of Jesus. We are called as international and multicultural communities to give witness and to cultivate communion and unity in diversity."*

–MEX Vision Statement

##### MEMBERSHIP 2000 2005 2012

Clerics	65	61	74
Brothers (final vows)	2	3	1
Scholastics	16	14	11
Novices	4	5	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>86</b>

##### AGE and COUNTRY 2000 2005 2012

Average Age	42.5	42.1	47.2
Nationalities	16	17	22*

##### \* ZONAL ORIGIN of province members

AFRAM	4	2gha, 1ken, 1tog
ASPAC	28	11isa, 10ind, 5phi, 1van, 1vie
EUROPE	18	5pol, 4esp, 4ire, 2ger, 2slo, 1cze
PANAM	36	22mex, 3arg, 3nic, 2brz, 2esa, 2par, 1ecu, 1usa

**Spirituality.** During meetings and assemblies, common spaces for prayer and reflection are provided. The confreres are also encouraged to participate in the annual retreat but participation could be better. We are a province of wide international membership, and our spirituality has been enriched by the varying faith expressions that each one brings.

**Community.** The community aspect is promoted through fraternal meetings at all levels in the province, interviews and an evaluation of the general disposition of the members to share and help in the work and mission of the province.

**Leadership.** The province is presently experiencing a new dynamism coupled with creativity among the confreres. Meetings are better prepared and pave the way for the resurgence of potential committed leaders.

**Finances.** We are still struggling to achieve full self-sufficiency, transparency and solidarity. We discovered that as the honesty in accountability progresses there is a greater disposition among the confreres for transparency.

**Formation.** Although we have good basic training programs, the future is uncertain because we have experienced sharp declines in vocations. With two confreres engaged in full-time vocational ministry, the results have not been promising. With regards to ongoing formation, there are many possibilities but very few confreres who take advantage of them. ♦



# PARAGUAY PROVINCE



(July 2011 est.)

## Population

6,459,058

## Religious Profile %

Christian	Catholics	Others
96.9	91.4	3.1

## Age Structure %

0-14	15-64	65
28.5	65.4	6.1

## Fertility Rate

(babies per woman)

2.11

## Median Age

25.4

## Life Expectancy

76.19

## Below Poverty Line

18.9%

## GDP Output %

1	2	3
24.9	21.2	53.9

## Labor Force %

1	2	3
26.5	18.5	18.5

1=Agriculture, 2=Industry, 3=Services

## Urban Population

61%

## Urban Rate of Change

2.5%

## Migrant(s) per 1000

-0.08

## Total Literacy: 94%

male	female
94.9	93

## Youth Literacy: 95.56%

male	female
95.9	95.21

## Mass Media

per 1000 persons

Newspaper	Radio	TV
n.a.	143.2	153.2

## Interactive Media

per 1000 persons

Mobile	Internet
915.7	171.07

- Official Languages: **Spanish and Guaraní**
- Visas: Missionaries applying for residence visas meet no major difficulty, though granting one may take longer (less than a year) for certain nationalities from the continents of Asia and Africa.

## 1. Intercultural Setting

Paraguay is one of the more homogeneous countries in South America. 95% of its population is *mestizo*, of mixed European and Guaraní ancestry. Almost 90% of Paraguayans readily speak *Guaraní*, as this native language is a proud reminder of their native roots and one strong trait of their national identity.



Most immigrants to the country in the course of its history have assimilated to the mestizo population –except for four minority groups that remain culturally distinct. The first is the indigenous population dispersed into 17 ethnic groups from 5 linguistic families. Despite the Spanish-Guarani alliance that gave rise to the nation, the surviving indigenous peoples (who by now add up to less than 3% of the population) remain at the margins of the national society.

Two other immigrant groups are the Mennonites of German origins who settled in the western and northern regions early in the twentieth century,

In spite of the persistent efforts at promoting religious and priestly vocations, perseverance among candidates in formation houses is very low.

better economic resources as they autonomously run their own institutions of economic and social solidarity. Intermarriage with the wider population is rare and is disliked.

The fourth immigrant group of distinct cultural identity consists of the brasiguayos. In the 1960s and 1970s, some 300,000 Brazilian farmers moved to the eastern frontier region of Paraguay where land was then cheaper. They became the backbone

of the soybean export sector of the Paraguayan economy. By now descendants of the earliest Brazilian immigrants have started to intermarry with the local population.

Since the 35-year military dictatorship of Alfredo Stroessner ended in 1989, political infighting has been rocking the nation. But since then regular presidential elections have been taking place with relative calm and freedom. Just the same, the current national leadership is struggling to raise its people from nationwide poverty due to a heavily indebted economy, a fledgling democracy, a corrupt judicial system, and still deficient social services.

## 2. Ecclesial Setting

Because of its Spanish colonial heritage, most of the people in Paraguay identify with the Catholic Church. Among the 3.1% religious minorities are a few evangelical Protestant churches and small groups of the Baha'i, Buddhist, and Jewish religions.

Since the independence of Paraguay from Spain two centuries ago, various religious congregations came to intensify the missionary presence of the Church among rural communities and indigenous minorities in areas where material development was poorest and popular education was lowest. There are now 17 dioceses –whose small number of local clergy is reinforced by religious orders and congregations of international membership. The Church also suffers the lack of pastoral agents among the laity. This critical situation is further worsened by the recent loss of priests due to certain scandals. In spite of the persistent efforts at promoting religious

and priestly vocations, perseverance among candidates in formation houses is very low.

### 3. Sharing Intercultural Mission

*"With our missionary spirituality centered on the Divine Word made flesh, we commit ourselves to prophetic dialog and solidarity with:*

- *the peasant communities areas who struggle for decent livelihood and possession of the land they cultivate;*
- *the indigenous peoples who struggle for self-subsistence and protection of the natural environment;*
- *the urban migrants who identify with the best of their respective traditions while seeking integration within the wider society;*
- *the youth in our schools and parishes who strive to grow in human maturity, moral integrity and Christian faith."*

—PAR Mission Statement

#### Those in final vows

#### IN ACTIVE MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Parish Ministry	53.3	48.6	47.5
School/Education	10.7	12.2	8.5
Other Apostolates	6.7	10.8	5.0
SVD Vocation/Formation	3.3	7.4	3.7
Administration/Support	11.3	8.1	7.4

#### Those in final vows

#### NOT IN MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Studies/Orientation	9.3	4.7	6.1
Retired/Sick	4.0	1.4	9.5
Other	1.3	6.8	12.3

### PLATFORMS FOR PROPHETIC DIALOG

**Parishes.** As a missionary congregation we serve the local Church through our parish ministries both in the rural and urban areas of the country. They serve as our bases for reaching out to those who are marginalized by poverty, those displaced by the supposed projects for material progress, and those hampered by a corrupt judicial system. We try our best to empower the laity as pastoral agents and our mission partners.

**Schools.** We are further involved in the field of education with our five high schools and two agricultural schools. In our schools we reach out to the students and their families, the teachers and the mentors.

### THE SVD CHARACTERISTIC DIMENSIONS

**Mission Animation.** Our mission secretary is also the Director of the Pontifical Mission Societies in Paraguay. His office facilitates the diffusion of information and the distribution of mission animation materials to the confreres. It further supports the formation of mission-minded lay groups in our parishes.

**Biblical Apostolate.** The province has appointed a full-time coordinator for the biblical apostolate. Animation for this apostolate unfolds in parishes, those run by confreres as well as by the diocesan clergy. We also have a center for fostering the reading of the Bible as well as for selling copies of the Bible nationwide at popular price. This center is a branch of the *Editorial Verbo Divino* of Estella, Spain. It also is at the service of both the Bishops' Conference and the Conference of Major Religious Superiors in Paraguay.

**Communication.** The province is still searching for an able and willing confrere to serve as full-time coordinator for this dimension. In the meantime one among us manages the newly acquired AM and FM commercial stations whose broadcasts are parish-based. The provincialate itself runs a third radio station and a provincial website.

**JPIC.** Our JPIC apostolates offer formation for raising and promoting responsible civic awareness at the grassroots. Two special emphases of the province for this dimension are the protection of the natural environment and the mission outreach to Afro-Americans.

#### 4. Sharing Intercultural Life

*"Grateful for the grace of God that has called us to consecrated and missionary life, and inspired by our Trinitarian spirituality, we together resolve:*

- *to nourish ourselves and one another through regular meditation and communal prayer based on the Word of God,*
- *to live in fraternal communities that welcome one another's personal and cultural differences,*
- *to work in teams by putting our respective talents at the service of God's Kingdom,*
- *to lead together a simple lifestyle and share our financial resources through transparent and accountable management,*
- *to promote religious vocations wherever we unfold our pastoral and educational ministries.."*

—PAR Vision Statement

MEMBERSHIP	2000	2005	2012
Bishops	1	1	0
Clerics	70	66	71
Brothers (final vows)	7	7	9
Scholastics	6	9	14
TOTAL	84	83	94

AGE and COUNTRY	2000	2005	2012
Average Age	48.5	50.8	52.2
Nationalities	21	20	26*

#### \* ZONAL ORIGIN of province members

AFRAM	7	2gha, 2zam, 1cng, 1ken, 1tog
ASPAC	24	10isa, 5ind, 4vie, 2phi, 1aus, 1chn, 1png
EUROPE	25	10pol, 6ger, 3esp, 2ita, 2swi, 1ire, 1slo
PANAM	38	25par, 7arg, 2chi, 1brz, 1col, 1ecu, 1mex

**Spirituality and Community.** Apart from common prayers and sharing of the Word of God in our small communities, and during district meetings, we create an atmosphere of community life and a sense of belonging. Through conferences we also interact with the diocesan clergy and other religious congregations.

**Finance.** The province went through a financial disaster in 2006. Thanks to the responsible and efficient management that followed, our provincial finances have achieved safety and stability—especially regarding the care of the sick and elderly whose number is increasing among us. With additional revenues, each community is urged to contribute to a common fund to support the internal needs of the province. ♦

## THE NORTH AMERICAN PROVINCES



- Official Language: **English**
- Visas for religious work in the USA and Canada involve a costly and complex process that usually lasts 6 to 8 months. Yet applications coursed through the provincial leadership have so far been successful.
- In the small Caribbean nations, requirements for granting visa and work permit are generally easier than those of the USA and Canada.

(July 2011 est.)

	Population	Religious Profile %		
		Christian	Catholics	Others
USA	313,232,044	78.4	23.9	21.6
Canada	34,030,589	70.3	42.6	29.7

	Fertility Rate (babies per woman)	Age Structure %		
		0-14	15-64	65
USA	2.06	20.1	66.8	13.1
Canada	1.58	15.7	68.5	15.9

	Median Age	Life Expectancy	Below Poverty Line
USA	36.9	78.37	15.1%
Canada	41	81.38	9.4%

	GDP Output %			Labor Force %		
	1	2	3	1	2	3
USA	1.2	22.2	76.6	0.7	20.3	79.1
Canada	2.2	26.3	71.5	2	22	76

1=Agriculture, 2=Industry, 3=Services

	Urban Population	Urban Rate of Change	Migrant(s) per 1000
USA	82%	1.2%	4.18
Canada	81%	1.1%	5.65

	Total Literacy %		Youth Literacy %	
	male	female	male	female
USA	99	99	99	99
Canada	99	99	99	99

	Mass Media per 1000 persons			Interactive Media per 1000 persons	
	Newspaper	Radio	TV	Mobile	Internet
USA	170.4	1751.7	667.2	850	746.4
Canada	151.8	949.1	631.8	706.3	79.2

## 1. Intercultural Setting

The United States is perhaps the country that has the widest range of racial, cultural and religious diversity in the world. This diversity has resulted from massive and sustained global immigration since the 1830s. The American national identity has been enriched by this multicultural influx of people in search of economic opportunities and political liberties greater than what they had or could have in their respective countries of origin.

The term "ethnic" is frequently applied to recent immigrants whose common ways of expression

American society today struggles with social problems resulting from affluence –such as drug abuse, soaring cost of living, air pollution, high divorce rates, AIDS, and excessive litigation.

Native Americans and the descendants of Africans trafficked as slaves to the subcontinent, there are the diverse immigrant groups of European-Americans, Hispanics or Latinos, and Asian-Americans.

What further turn the United States into a vast intercultural "melting pot" have been concurrent internal migrations. In the 19th century people

and behavior stand out as different from those of the greater population. Its broader meaning, however, applies to any group unified by a cultural heritage and a common history in the so-called "New World". In this latter sense, one can distinguish at least five major ethnic groups in the United States. Besides the presence of surviving

began migrating from the east to the west coast and from rural to urban areas. In the 20th century the migratory tide flowed earlier from the South to the Northeast and Midwest, then later shifted from the aging northern metropolises (cities with a million inhabitants or more) to the growing urban agglomerations of the South, Southwest, and West. Since the 1950s, a new major trend has been the progressive migrations from cities to suburbs that are making those same cities fuse into megalopolises ("conurbations" with 10 million inhabitants or more). To give just three examples of such super-cities: one on the east coast stretches along the Atlantic from Portland, Maine, to Richmond, Virginia; another in the Great Lakes region is centered on Chicago and extends as large slices through Illinois, Wisconsin, and Indiana; a third in southern California reaches from Santa Barbara, through Los Angeles, to the Mexican border.

At the dawn of the 21st century the United States has achieved a high level of material progress and prosperity, though residual poverty persists. Thus, on the one hand, American society today struggles with social problems resulting from affluence – such as drug abuse, soaring cost of living, air pollution, high divorce rates, AIDS, and excessive litigation. On the other hand, many Americans perceive social unrest as resulting from the failure of their polity to make the "American Dream" (of equal opportunity for all people) truly within the reach of every striving citizen. Thus, much of civil concern and advocacy revolves around the privation of human rights such as inequities or inadequacies in housing, health care, education, and employment.



## 2. Ecclesial Setting

In its latest extensive survey the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life portrays the religious landscape of the USA as a vast spiritual super-market where very diverse belief systems are competing for adherents. As a result, religious affiliation has become extremely fluid. About 28% of American adults have left the faith in which they were raised in favor of another religion –or no religion at all.

A case in point is the Protestant majority, now barely 51% of the population and standing on the verge of turning into a fragmented minority. The many Protestant churches are even shifting in sizes of membership. They can be broadly grouped around three distinct Christian traditions in this diminishing order: evangelical Protestant churches (26.3% of the overall adult population), mainline Protestant churches (18.1%) and historically black Protestant churches (6.9%).

Catholicism registers the highest rate of net loss due to shifts of affiliation. In the last quarter of the last century, nearly 1 of 3 Americans was raised in the Catholic faith; today less than 1 of 4 identifies with the Catholic Church. This decline of membership would have been even more pronounced were it not for foreign immigration. The survey finds that among the foreign-born adult population, the Catholics outnumber the Protestants by nearly a ratio of 2 to 1: 46% Catholic in contrast to 24% Protestant. Among native-born Americans, on the other hand, Protestants outnumber Catholics by a wider ratio: 55% Protestant in contrast to 21% Catholic.

What these changes show to have grown in number are the Americans who prefer not to affiliate with any particular religion. Yet this loose grouping (16.1% of the total population) equally shows a surprising diversity. Only a quarter of it describe themselves as either atheist (1.6%) or agnostic (2.4%). The majority of the unaffiliated (12.1%) simply describe themselves as belonging to "no religion in particular." They may be further subdivided between the "secular unaffiliated" who say that religion is not important in their lives (6.3%), and the "religious unaffiliated" who say that religion is important in their lives in varying degrees (5.8%). A striking feature of people not affiliated with any particular religion is their relative youth in comparison with mainline churches: 31% are under age 30 and 71% are under age 50.

Catholicism registers the highest rate of net loss due to shifts of affiliation.

Against this background one may understand internal factors at play in the Catholic Church as it unfolds its mission today in North America.

**Effects of the Clergy Sexual Abuse Crisis.** The clergy sexual abuse crisis continues to have its effects on the life of the Church in the United States, and to a lesser extent in Canada. While the number of claims has slowed in recent years, cases of clergy sexual abuse are still coming to light. The betrayal of the public trust has done significant damage to the morale of laity and clergy alike.

**Vocations to Priesthood and Religious Life.**

There are 1,700 fewer diocesan priests now than six years ago and 1,372 fewer religious priests serving in the United States. One-third of diocesan priests currently in active ministry are 65 or older. The number of Brothers has declined by about 760 and the number of Sisters by 11,090. During the same period, the Catholic population has increased by approximately 1.5 million.

**Shifts in the Catholic Population.** The rapidly growing number of Hispanic Catholics and the sizeable presence of African-American and Asian-Pacific Catholics present wide opportunities for re-creating parishes of intercultural character.

The effect of immigration on the Catholic Church is particularly strong in the United States where, in contrast to the Canadian reality, the majority of new immigrants come from predominantly Catholic countries.

Our own SVD parishes have become increasingly multicultural, with the presence of diverse ethnic and racial communities in so many areas of North America. A challenge for us is perhaps to go a step

further by helping our parishes become more intercultural –i.e., to enable various communities to transcend ethnic and racial barriers and create a single parish community.

**Interreligious Dialog.** American Muslims come from various backgrounds, and are one of the most racially diverse religious groups in the United States. Native-born American Muslims are mainly African Americans who make up 24% of the total Muslim population. The significant presence of Muslims in the African American community, one in which the SVD has traditionally worked, opens avenues for engagement in intercultural and interreligious dialog.

**Preferential Option for the Poor.** The investment of SVD personnel is generally among the poor and marginalized. Half a million Jamaicans live in poverty, some 17% of the population. The islands of the Eastern Caribbean, where most SVDs work, are also marked by significantly high percentages of the population living below the poverty line, usually between 15% and 20%. In the United States, poverty rates for blacks and Hispanics greatly exceed the national average. ♦



## UNITED STATES CHICAGO PROVINCE

Canada, Jamaica, West Indies



### 3. Sharing Intercultural Mission

*"We, Divine Word Missionaries of the Chicago Province, serve the Kingdom by*

- *Proclaiming the Word of God*
- *Inviting collaboration in Mission*
- *Journeying with our Dialog Partners*
- *Caring for one another*
- *Calling and training new members."*

*–USC Mission Statement*

#### Those in final vows

##### IN ACTIVE MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Parish Ministry	26.8	26.7	25.7
School/Education	2.2	2.1	4.7
Other Apostolates	8.9	10.6	14.0
SVD Vocation/Formation	6.2	9.7	6.5
Administration/Support	21.9	16.8	12.1

#### Those in final vows

##### NOT IN MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Studies/Orientation	1.8	2.3	3.3
Retired/Sick	27.2	29.0	31.8
Other	4.9	2.8	1.9

### PLATFORMS FOR PROPHETIC DIALOG

Our largest district is the Caribbean, serving in islands marked by poverty and economic turmoil. The Appalachian district serves the rural poor of the depressed coal-mining region of the United States. Parishes in the Midwest, Southern, and New Jersey districts continue the Society's historical dialog with the U.S. African American population, serving in communities of urban economic depression and reaching out to those impacted by racism and poverty. Latino parishes and outreach efforts in the New Jersey, Southern, Midwest, and Canada districts open out to the Spanish-speaking populations, also struggling with economic and social hardships.

**Parishes.** Our parish ministries in the Chicago Province are the anchor of our mission as pro-

phetic dialog. While other specialized ministries do this as well, our parish involvement connects us to the grassroots of the missionary church. Our dialog partners include faith-seekers, for our parish communities always invite others to join them. Our outreach to faith-seekers also happens through retreat and spirituality ministries at Granby, Miramar and Techny. The parishes we serve are generally located in contexts of urban or rural poverty, reaching out to the poor and marginalized as our dialog partners. All of our direct apostolates

Parishes communicate the Word through preaching, liturgy, and print and electronic media.

in the province focuses on dialog with people of diverse cultures. Increasingly, we work in multicultural parish contexts, where diverse cultural communities come together to form an intercultural parish.

Many of our parish contexts are situations where the Catholic population is a minority; dialog with people of other faiths and cooperation with other Christian denominations is critical in addressing the social issues of the people. Particular contexts give rise to dialog with other faith traditions as well, such as Islam in the African American community or the Rastafarians in the Caribbean.

## THE SVD CHARACTERISTIC DIMENSIONS

**Mission Animation.** Some parishes call for creativity and wider community involvement, beyond the pastoral care of the Catholic parishioners to address the issues of poverty: gangs, drugs,

unemployment, lack of housing, etc. The Mission Center for the three North American provinces located at Techny, is engaged in fund-raising for the worldwide Society, as well as programs for mission animation. The province also collaborates with the Volunteer Missionary Movement (VMM), having had lay missionaries in parish locations and having a confrere serve on VMM Board of Directors. More recently, the province has strengthened its relationship with PAX-SVD, an association of Filipinos in the United States and Canada who were members of the SVD in the Philippines. Both the Alumni Association and the Vocation Office sponsor short-term missionary service projects in the province.

**Biblical Apostolate.** The biblical apostolate is essential to our parish-based ministries and particularly through the biblical center in Granby. Bible sharing has been introduced in our parishes, along with biblical courses and study. Bible-based retreats, revivals, and workshops are done both in our parishes and by the Bowman-Francis team, as well as other confreres reaching out to diverse cultural and language communities. Multicultural bible festivals have been held.

**Communication.** Efforts at evangelization are done especially through the website and via YouTube, Facebook, and other social media. Vocation promotion also uses all these communications technologies. Parishes communicate the Word through preaching, liturgy, and print and electronic media. A confrere operates a Catholic radio station in Antigua, including programs that promote biblical awareness, JPIC, and mission animation.

**JPIC.** The promotion of JPIC is done on local and province levels. The province gives special focus on addressing issues of racism and immigration. Educational efforts and collaboration with various organizations working to bring structural change in the political and economic policies of the USA are done at the province level. The internet and storytelling projects of Angels Studio, as well as collaborative efforts at Catholic Theological Union, also promote interfaith empathy and dialog.

#### 4. Sharing Intercultural Life

*“We give witness to the Kingdom of God through our community life, working with and caring for one another across cultural and age boundaries. We animate the people of God to engage in mission in our parishes and with our benefactors and collaborators.”*

–USC Vision Statement

MEMBERSHIP	2000	2005	2012
Bishops	2	2	3
Clerics	174	179	176
Brothers (final vows)	48	36	33
Brothers (temporal vows)	7	3	2
Scholastics	41	48	25
Novices	11	6	7
TOTAL	283	274	246

AGE and COUNTRY	2000	2005	2012
Average Age	57.2	57.8	62.8
Nationalities	30	33	29*

#### \* ZONAL ORIGIN of province members

AFRAM	8	3tog, 2gha, 1ben, 1cng, 1lib
ASPAC	76	45vie, 11phi, 7ind, 6chn, 5isa, 1aus, 1tai,
EUROPE	28	15pol, 4ire, 2por, 1cro, 1fra, 1hun, 1ned, 1oes, 1slo, 1wal
PANAM	134	115usa, 7can, 4brz, 3mex, 2pur, 2dca, 1par

**Community and Spirituality.** More and more local communities are engaging in bible sharing. The Province and the SSpS Province co-sponsored four retreats by AJSC team members in July 2009. Also, there were two workshops given by the team. Some districts have changed the format of their gatherings, so as to promote more interaction with each other and not just quick “business” meetings.

**Finance.** We continue to move toward mutual accountability and transparency in the area of finances. We challenge ourselves, many of us living in the midst of a consumerist culture, to live more simply. We continue to learn how some financial aspects, such as family expectations, are also shaped by one’s cultural background.

**Formation.** Our formation houses are lived experiences of intercultural life: Theologate community members are from ten different countries of origin; the Divine Word College has students from more than fifteen nations.

Ongoing formation is promoted in the province, with many confreres taking part in workshops,

courses of study, and especially learning Spanish. All confreres of the province engage in ongoing education on the prevention of sexual abuse of minors and in maintaining safe environments for children. All members also are engaged in ongoing formation in maintaining healthy celibate sexuality, through community workshops and discussions. We are developing a more substantial

cultural orientation program for new members of the province. As part of leadership development, the annual local superiors' meeting has included a workshop component that addresses various aspects of leadership, such as dealing with difficult confreres. We have been trying to involve all confreres in vocation promotion, especially those working in parishes. ♦

## UNITED STATES SOUTHERN PROVINCE



### 3. Sharing Intercultural Mission

*"We, the confreres of the Society of the Divine Word in the Southern Province of the United States of America, are called to work primarily among the African American community and with the poor and the marginalized, in particular the Hispanic and Vietnamese communities."*

–USS Mission Statement

### Those in final vows

#### IN ACTIVE MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Parish Ministry	50.8	42.4	73.7
Education	0	0	0
Other Apostolates	15.4	23.7	5.3
SVD Vocation/Formation	0	2.5	0
Administration/Support	12.3	10.2	5.3

### Those in final vows

#### NOT IN MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Studies/Orientation	0	5.1	3.5
Retired/Sick	16.9	14.4	12.2
Other	4.6	1.7	0

### PLATFORMS FOR PROPHETIC DIALOG

In all our many ministries we reach out in prophetic dialog to families, especially in our parishes, such as the faith seekers, those from other cultures such as the Hispanics who are experiencing tensions between their culture and the African Americans. We reach out to those brothers and sisters who need to understand the culture of the country they settled in, to those who need to know racism and the damage it continues to do to the country and to the Church.

### THE SVD CHARACTERISTIC DIMENSIONS

All our ministries and commitments in the Province are biblically based, mission animated, com-

municative of the Word and prophetic. The SVD characteristic dimensions are at the heart of our life together and of our missionary outreach.

**Mission Animation.** There has been a concerted effort to bring the SVD charism to our parishes. There is also more outreach taking place in the various dioceses we serve by actively participating

in the Mission Co-op program. Our Retreat Center provides retreatants with printed materials and visuals highlighting the missions and the SVD charism. Multi-cultural parishes that we staff in the various dioceses also provide us with an opportunity to animate people towards mission awareness.

**Biblical Apostolate.** In our Province there is a strong emphasis on Bible in the parishes. Just about every parish has a Bible sharing program. The Retreat Center in Bay Saint Louis provides monthly Bible workshops.

**Communication.** The publication of *In a Word* has been an active voice in promoting dialog and awareness of the gifts and talents of African American Catholics. The writings of Fr. Jerome LeDoux have been engaging and thought-provoking for readers throughout the United States. Video documentaries on African American Catholics and special events have earned the SVD much respect. Without the SVD video productions the im-

portant events such as the National Black Catholic Congress meetings would have been entirely forgotten. We have initiated a social networking policy to make members aware that what and how they communicate via the Internet can be good and can sometimes be damaging to themselves and our Society.

**JPIC.** Our work with Justice and Peace takes place on the local level. Since we staff parishes that are primarily African American and Hispanic our men work in ensuring the dignity of the minority and are active in ensuring that dioceses respond to their needs and respect their voices.

#### MEMBERSHIP 2000 2005 2012

Bishops	3	3	2
Clerics	50	50	54
Brothers (final vows)	8	6	4
Scholastics	3	7	4
TOTAL	64	66	64

#### AGE and COUNTRY 2000 2005 2012

Average Age	59.7	56.2	54.7
Nationalities	12	11	13*

#### \* ZONAL ORIGIN of province members

AFRAM	6	5gha, 1cng
ASPAC	25	13isa, 7vie, Sind
EUROPE	8	4pol, 2ire, 1ger, 1sco
PANAM	25	22usa, 1can, 1brz, 1pan

**Spirituality.** Spirituality among the members is strong. Older and younger confreres exhibit a strong spiritual life.

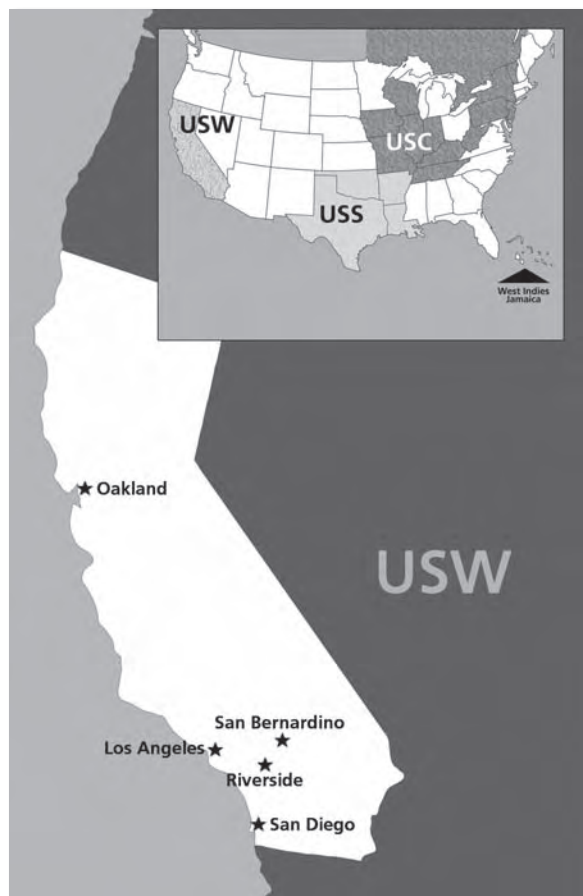
**Community.** Our Province seeks to have men live in community as much as possible. Members have a strong sense of SVD community shown by

their faithful attendance at district gatherings, assemblies, and other events.

**Finance.** Financial accountability is demanded and formation of newer members is constantly addressed. Efforts towards attaining financial stability have brought encouraging results. ♦



## UNITED STATES WESTERN PROVINCE



The USA Western Province is located in California, in the southwestern part of the United States of America. The SVD communities are in the dioceses of Oakland, Los Angeles, San Bernardino and

San Diego. The Province office is in Riverside. Today we are a multi-ethnic missionary community that gives witness to the Word and responds to the current needs of the local church. Our confreres are responding to various pastoral needs. They are working as pastors, teachers in schools, chaplains in schools, chaplains in hospitals, chaplains in prisons, retreat ministry, diocesan offices, special ministries such as pastoral care of the Polish Catholics, preaching the Word of God through Mass media, etc.

### 3. Sharing Intercultural Mission

*"As an international religious using on the poor and marginalized and promoting unity in diversity, we are bridges among peoples."*

–USW Mission Statement

#### Those in final vows

##### IN ACTIVE MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Parish Ministry	37.9	29.8	46.9
Education	5.2	7.3	3.1
Other Apostolates	12.1	18.6	7.5
Administration/Support	7.8	8.9	7.5

#### Those in final vows

##### NOT IN MINISTRY (%) 2000 2005 2012

Studies/Orientation	1.7	0	1.5
Retired/Sick	19.8	14.5	20.3
Other	15.5	21.0	13.2

## PLATFORMS FOR PROPHETIC DIALOG

Our international character helps us to respond effectively to meet the needs of various ethnic groups as well as the illegal immigrants who struggle for justice and dignity. We reach out to the youth to train them in leadership roles. We reach out to faith seekers and our parishioners and help them grow in their social consciousness and their commitment to concrete social change. We reach out to the youth of the Catholic schools to inculcate within them the Christian moral values. We care for the sick and their relatives. We reach out to those who are in jails.

## THE SVD CHARACTERISTIC DIMENSIONS

**Mission Animation.** In an effort to make people aware of the stupendous work that our missionaries carry out in different parts of the world, the mission secretary, in collaboration with the Riverside community, has established a Mission Exhibition Center. Due to this effort, there is a better appreciation of our missionary activities. The mission secretary organizes the preaching by which we raise money to help the needy missions. Two of our parishes have ventured to establish SVD Lay Mission groups. One of the SVD Lay Mission groups has opened a Catholic Book Store which also serves as a place for Catholics to come together to share their faith experience.

**Biblical Apostolate.** The province is making the Bible available to the needy Spanish speaking people. The purchase of a property in the heart of

the city has spearheaded a rapid development in the sale of Bibles and Bible related books. We also offer a Bible course obtained from the website of *Editorial Verbo Divino*. However, the participation of the people has not been to the level of our expectation. We hope to enroll many more people in the future.

**Communication.** The communication ministry of the Western Province mainly centers on *Wordnet Productions* which produces a weekly half hour program. The program, in addition to relating the Bible to everyday life, interviews Catholics who tell the story of their faith in Jesus. These programs are aired nationally and internationally on the *Trinity Broadcasting Network*, on seven Catholic Diocesan channels and finally on the US Armed Services Network. The center airs scripture reflections four times a day on Sirius radio's national network called "Father Mike's Minute." The *Wordnet* also produces documentaries related to Christian faith, morals and vocation promotion. At present three of our confreres are fully involved in the communication ministry.

**JPIC.** A confrere is working as a chaplain in the Tijuana jail which is at the border of USA and Mexico. The inmates of this jail are some of the hard core criminals of the world. They are in jail

We reach out to faith seekers and our parishioners and help them grow in their social consciousness and their commitment to concrete social change.

due to their involvement in drug trafficking, human trafficking, kidnapping, murder etc. Ministering to these inmates requires courage and plenty of spiritual stamina.

#### 4. Sharing Intercultural Life

MEMBERSHIP	2000	2005	2012
Clerics	53	55	65
Brothers (final vows)	5	7	6
Brothers (temporal vows)	0	2	0
Scholastics	0	0	1
TOTAL	58	64	72

AGE and COUNTRY	2000	2005	2012
Average Age	57.5	58.2	58.6
Nationalities	14	16	16*

#### \* ZONAL ORIGIN of province members

AFRAM	4	4gha
ASPAC	27	10vie, 8phi, 5ind, 3isa, 1chn
EUROPE	11	3eng, 3pol, 2ned, 2ire, 1slo
PANAM	30	25usa, 2arg, 1ecu, 1mex, 1pan

**Spirituality.** To build up a strong spiritual foundation among the confreres, the province organizes yearly retreats at the province level and recollections at the district level. The participation is very good. Confreres also actively participate in the retreats and recollections organized by their respective dioceses.

**Community.** Our internationality and our ability to live together is a source of inspiration to many people. In most of our parishes we have confreres coming from different countries. The common celebration of Christmas and other SVD feasts is eagerly awaited and well attended.

**Finance.** The province is self-reliant. Confreres contribute to the general fund of the province. During the Province meetings the income and expenditure of the Province, as well as its current financial position are made known to the confreres.

**Formation.** Newly arrived confreres are given the opportunity to learn Spanish. They are sent to one of the Spanish speaking countries to study the language. The week long, internationally known Religious Education Congress is a major source of on-going formation for many of our confreres. Each diocese also organizes several clergy study days during the year to help priests update on current issues of the Church. The mission secretary helps newly assigned confreres to the province to get enculturated into the American way of life, language and beliefs.

USW accepts CTP seminarians. A multi-cultural pastoral site is chosen for a particular seminarian so that he has an opportunity to learn, develop and deepen his own religious vocation through living and working with our SVD priests and Brothers. The CTP seminarians also have opportunity to learn both English and Spanish on site with the people with whom they are working. The Provincial Administration provides the needed guidance and direction to the confreres. ♦



In an age compressing peoples  
of diverse colors and cultures  
into a vast global neighborhood,

the 'catholic' or universal mission  
of the Church is better advanced  
by building intercultural bridges  
than by serving on just one side  
of some estranging divide.