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Fall 2020

# DIVINE WORD MISSIONARIES

# mission

## update

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## EDITORIAL

I am always gladdened to see this magazine form connections—connections between our readers and our missionaries, connections between our readers and the people our missionaries serve. We often call our supporters co-missionaries, and month after month I see new proof of this.

Earlier this year, in our Winter 2020 issue, we published a story by Father Lawrence Muthee SVD, one of our missionaries in Tanzania. He wrote that many of his parish's catechists had to walk many miles to their outstations because they had no other means of transportation. He wrote of his hope that his parish would be able to purchase motorcycles for the catechists.

**When our readers saw this article they give with open hearts.** Thanks to their generous donations, the Good Shepherd Parish's catechists received new motorcycles that should give a high-speed boost to evangelization in the area. Fr. Lawrence had a ceremony to bless the motorcycles.



When I first saw the images of the ceremony, I was struck by the bright red jackets the catechists wore as they sat on their motorcycles. After Fr. Lawrence sent us more photos, including close-ups of the jackets, I could see they were practical. These are rugged, heavy jackets to protect the catechists from nasty scrapes if they have a spill.

Still, I imagine those jackets will make an impression as the catechists speed through the bush country. The faithful of the outstations, especially the children, must be thrilled to see their catechist roll in wearing that bold red jacket.

Fr. Lawrence returns this issue to describe to his missionary journey and to thank *Mission Update* benefactors for supporting his community. I would like to add the thanks of the Mission Center to our benefactors for supporting all 6,000 Divine Word Missionaries and their many communities, especially during a year that has been difficult for so many of us.

I look forward to seeing you all in 2021 with the promise of better days!

Yours in the Divine Word,

*Bro. Daniel J. Holman SVD*  
Bro. Daniel Holman SVD  
Mission Director

Contact me any time, my email address is:  
**director@svdmissions.org**

**Thank you  
for your  
prayers & support!**



To become a missionary  
the examples of  
priests and parents  
set the path  
Lawrence Muthee SVD

2



6

## Promising Fields

Melanie Pies-Kalkum

## Divine Word Missionaries send Zambian women to school

Debra Vermeeri



8

STAY  
IN  
TOUCH



Instagram



DivineWord



## My Mission The Mission We All share

Arockiasamy Arulandu SVD

12

We cannot ignore that the Church is born of the mission of Jesus and his disciples. Therefore, the Church and its members have a mission.

14

## Family in Faith

Kathy Repole

the  
Fathers



HOTZE

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The Society of the Divine Word is an international Catholic missionary congregation with over 6,000 members from 84 countries.  
Divine Word Missionaries work in over 81 different lands on all continents except Antarctica.

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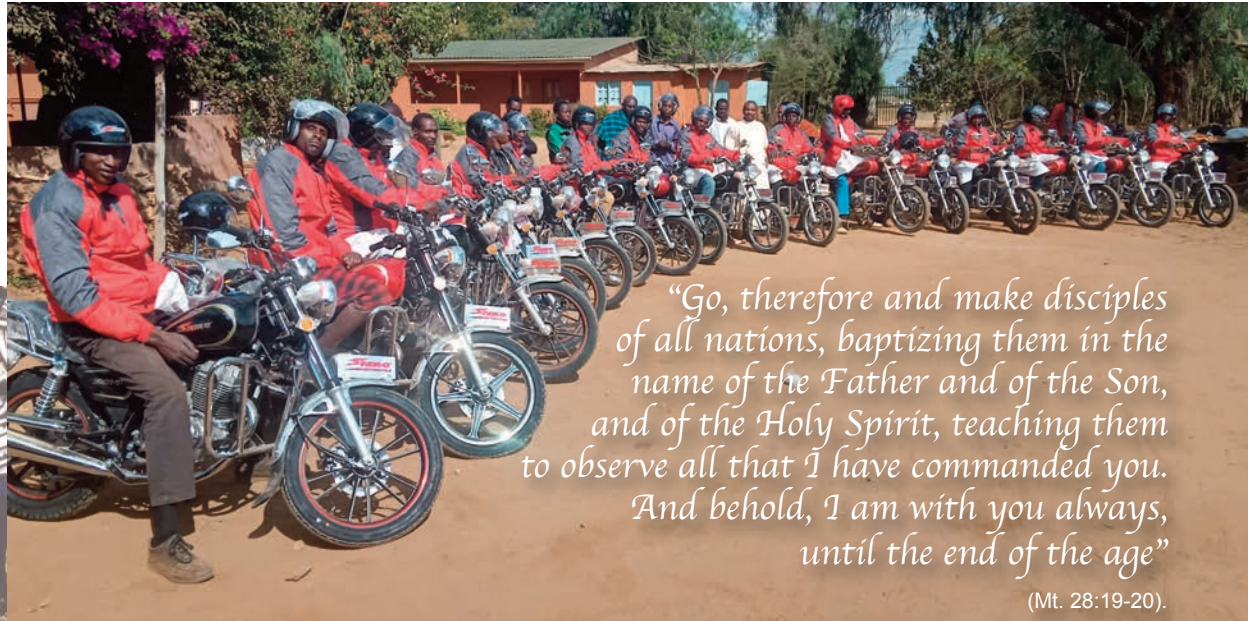
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*"Go, therefore and make disciples  
of all nations, baptizing them in the  
name of the Father and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them  
to observe all that I have commanded you.  
And behold, I am with you always,  
until the end of the age"*

(Mt. 28:19-20).





*“Go, therefore and make disciples of all nations...”*

*To become a missionary  
the examples of  
priests and parents  
set the path*

*by Father Lawrence Muthee SVD*



***Maasai mission  
Simanjiro,  
Tanzania  
28 outstations  
scattered over a  
62-mile radius.  
Our catechists’  
biggest difficulty  
was traveling long  
distances over  
terribly rough  
roads.***

My desire to become a missionary was born while I was a Mass server as a young boy in Kenya.

I greatly admired the Italian Consolata Missionaries I saw at church. Their congregation had come to our district in the early 20th century, learned our mother tongue and spoke it very well. I wanted to be like them.

From a very young age, I was endowed with many talents, especially technical ones. My parents taught my siblings and me how to work hard and learn many skills. We had a coffee plantation and cows to milk daily. My mother taught us how to farm and take care of animals. My father is a motor vehicle engineer who taught us mechanics.

With this background, I felt that I could be like the Italian missionaries who worked so hard on the farm and in the garage when they were not celebrating the sacraments or visiting the villages.



However, the desire to become a missionary was not clear until I entered the minor seminary near my hometown. That was 20 years ago. I came to understand more about priesthood and missionary life through the guidance of my spiritual directors.

After completing my secondary education in the minor seminary, I joined Divine Word Missionaries in 2004. My motivation to become a missionary was to bring Christ to all the people, especially the young people.

I did my philosophical studies in Kenya and my novitiate in Ghana. Following the novitiate I went back to Kenya for my theological studies in Nairobi. After two years I requested to do my pastoral experience in Spain, where I also finished my theological studies. While in Nairobi, I also trained in social communication and specialized in digital communications. Now I am the communication coordinator of the Kenya-Tanzania Province.



***Catechists' Motorcycle Blessing***

After my ordination as a deacon, I was sent to the Simanjiro indigenous Maasai mission in Tanzania. I wrote about this experience in an article titled "Christian Values in the Maasai Community" that appeared in the Winter 2018 issue of *Mission Update*. By the time the magazine came out, however, I was in another mission in Arusha.

The Techny Mission Center and its friends and benefactors have been my greatest support in my mission here in Tanzania. I received funds for a candle-making project that was very successful and motivated the youths to learn this craft. In the fall of 2019, I received funds to equip our new Matepes Youth Center with sewing machines and computers. The smiles this put on the faces of my youths touched the people of the Matepes community enormously.

In September 2019, my superiors asked me to take over the Simanjiro Maasai mission as parish priest as well as the administrator of the health center. This is the same mission where I did my diaconate experience five years ago. Knowing the pastoral needs of this mission and the difficulties the local people face, I accepted the call.



The Simanjiro Maasai mission is special and unique in many ways. Some of my theologian friends like to call it “Ad gentes in action.” I could not agree more.

The Maasai is the only tribe in East Africa that has held strongly to its traditions. Many of these traditions are wonderful and worthy of emulating, such as the unity of the family and the spirit of sharing. However, other traditions have caused the Maasai to lag behind economically, socially, politically and, more so, spiritually. These include polygamous marriages, marrying off little girls, and resistance to modern medicine.

There is also little development here. It was only this year that the government began connecting a few villages with electricity.

When I returned to Simanjiro, I had two main goals in my apostolate strategic plan. One was to find a way to teach the faithful about the saving love of God in all the 28 outstations scattered over a 62-mile radius. The second was to help the people and the parish become self-reliant, as we depend on donations for 60 percent of our operating costs.

To fulfill the first goal, we rely a lot on the help of our catechists. They travel very far to reach the people at the outstations. For many years now our catechists’ biggest difficulty was traveling long distances over terribly rough roads. This has been a huge challenge to evangelization.

I promised them that I would share their predicament with my friends who go out of their way to help where they can. I was referring to the benefactors of the Techny Mission Center. Thanks to their generosity (YOUR generosity!), **17 of our catechists now have brand new motorcycles.** I always tell our mission community that those who help build the faith of others—in whatever small or big way—have their share in the blessings from the Lord of the mission, who is Jesus Christ himself.

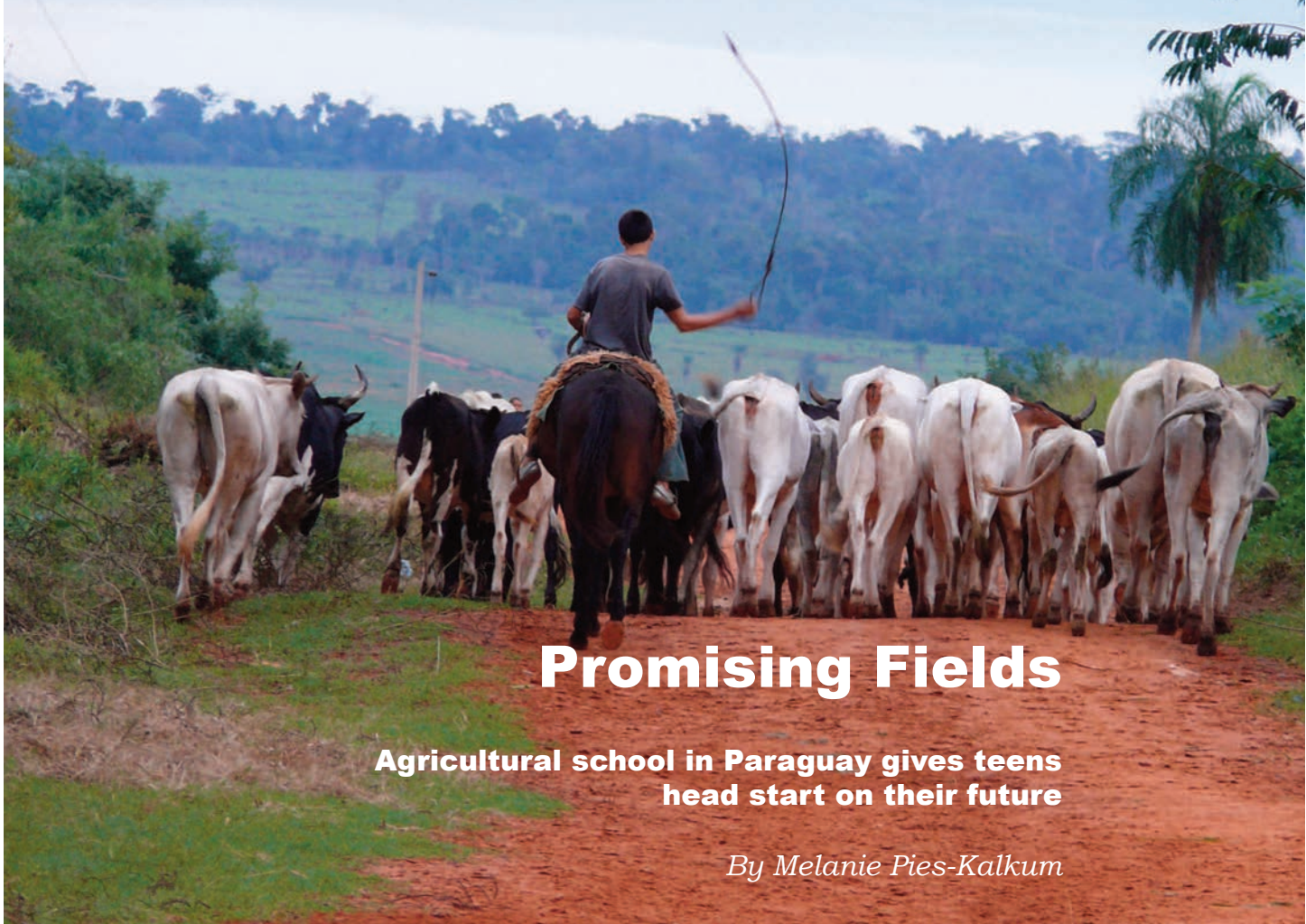
I would like, on behalf of the entire Simanjiro mission community and on my own behalf, to thank all who have helped us to take the Gospel to the interior and remote places of East Africa. You have made my ministry very fulfilling and you have transformed the lives of many people. May our good Lord continue to bless you. ♦



*“Go, therefore  
and make disciples  
of all nations...”*







# Promising Fields

**Agricultural school in Paraguay gives teens  
head start on their future**

*By Melanie Pies-Kalkum*







Paraguay is one of the poorest and most underdeveloped countries in South America. Young people in particular struggle to learn the skills that will land them a decent job that will keep them out of poverty.

Seventeen-year-old Sofia is one of 130 students at Escuela Agricola San Benito (San Benito Agricultural School), which is one of two agricultural schools operated in this country by Divine Word Missionaries. "It's a privilege to learn here in San Benito," Sofia says.

Sofia attends San Benito Agricultural School seven days a week. She has learned how to cultivate fruits and vegetables and how to raise livestock.

The school gives teenagers a head start on finding a career in a country that historically has had high unemployment. Eighty percent of young people here come from broken families. Alcohol problems are all too common. Families often cannot afford the school fees for their children. In addition, the quality of education is usually very low.

Since it opened in 1960, Escuela Agricola San Benito has been helping such families. The school offers room and board as well as quality education to young people. The degree Sofia and other students will earn is the equivalent of a high school diploma in Paraguay and is recognized by the state. In addition, they will return to their villages with the talent and knowledge to raise healthy food so their communities are fed.

"Being able to go to such a good school in San Benito, compared to other schools in the area, makes me and my parents very proud," Sofia says. ♦





# **‘Whoever educates a woman, educates the whole world’:**

## **Divine Word Missionaries help young women around the world to gain education and skills**

Educational opportunities for women in developing nations are few and far between. These women often live in a male-dominated society, are seldom informed of their rights, and are plagued with health issues. They have little or no education or understanding to protect themselves. Poverty, early marriage and pregnancy continue to be major barriers to staying in school. An investment in educating these young women will make for a safer world and will provide returns for generations to come.



**In rural areas of Zambia, 27 percent of women are not educated, compared to men at 18 percent. For generations poverty, war and cultural stereotypes have continued to get in the way of a young girl’s access to education. See how a hospitality course can help poor and vulnerable women change their livelihood—change their future—with vocational training.**

# ‘Whoever educates a woman...’

## Divine Word Missionaries send Zambian women to school

*By Debra Vermeer*



“I promise to study hard, and with all my efforts, by the end of these studies, I will feel empowered and I will support my family and everyone who needs my help.”

These are the words of 22-year-old Banda Triphonia from Zambia, describing how she believes her studies in catering and hospitality will lift her from a life of poverty. She is the beneficiary of a Divine Word Missionary project to fund the education of women from Holy Family Catholic Parish in the township of Linda, which is in Zambia’s Chilanga province—about 12 miles from the capital city of Lusaka.

Holy Family’s pastor, Father Lawrence Likulano SVD, says the parish is located largely in a slum. “Crime, violence and drug abuse are rampant within Linda compound,” he says, adding that deaths related to HIV/AIDS are common.

Most of Fr. Lawrence’s parishioners support themselves and their families as day-workers on local farms. Others work as maids in the farmers’ homes. “The rest don’t have any meaningful employment,” he says.





### **THE NEED FOR EDUCATION**

Fr. Lawrence says the parish, which was established in 2011, is made up of many young families and a large number of youth. “The level of education among the parishioners is generally low,” he says, “hence the need for ongoing education and laity formation.”

Fr. Lawrence says “the severe economic difficulties” faced throughout Zambia are especially felt in the Linda parish. Most of his parishioners are hit by the increasing cost of living, but those with children are hit hard by the increasing cost of education.

Poverty is a huge barrier to education. Divine Word Missionaries want to improve the education of young women and break that barrier and allow hope into their future.



That is the goal of the project to train Banda and other young women in the hospitality industry. Six young women from the parish were selected for a training course in hotel and catering services “to empower them and their families,” Fr. Lawrence says.

### **EMPOWERING WOMEN**

Fr. Lawrence cites an African adage: “Whoever educates a woman educates the whole world.” He adds, “In this case, we would like to empower the young women so that they can empower their families within the Holy Family Parish.”

The course should benefit the women in several ways, Fr. Lawrence believes. First, the women—who all come from poor families—will receive training that should lead to a meaningful source of income. Tourism in Zambia has been accelerating at a fast pace, leading the government to announce that hospitality services have become its leading generator of income.

Second, just taking the course will raise the young women’s level of education. Third, as a bonus, they will



be able to teach their families how to prepare more nutritious meals at home.

The hospitality course is taught at the Auxilium Skills Training Center, which is run by the Salesian Sisters of John Bosco. It was established in 1986 to empower young people through by teaching life skills that enable them to earn an honest living.

“Our courses are designed to foster innovative, creative, and analytical skills in our graduates,” the Sisters say. “To facilitate learning, the institution has modern facilities, including a library, kitchen, production unit, computer laboratory and lecture room.”

#### **GRATEFUL STUDENTS**

The first women from Holy Family Parish to benefit from the project, which has been supported by Divine Word Missionaries’ Australia Province, enrolled in early 2019.

Here is what they have to say:

Lontiya Mulenga, age 25: “After I am done with my studies, I want to have my own business so that I can also help others who are in need. I want to do this because I want others to be able to learn from me, and I also want to bless others as I have been blessed.”

Alexis Chola, age 24: “When I complete my education, I will be empowered, and, by God’s will, I have dreams of putting up my own restaurant, which will enable me to empower other youths and, of course, to help the community at large.”

Education is the only way these young women will ever have a chance at gaining the skills and resources to set up sustainable businesses and change their lives from poverty to hope. ♦



**and make the world  
safer for generations  
to come**

In remote villages around the world Divine Word Missionaries work where there are no roads, no permanent power supply, no supermarkets, no quality medical care and no qualified teachers in the schools. Drugs, prostitution and violence have a daily impact on life.

**Young women  
are especially  
vulnerable  
because their  
choices and  
opportunities  
in life are  
limited by their  
surroundings.**

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support!**



# MY MISSION: THE MISSION WE ALL SHARE

*By Arockiasamy Arulandu SVD*

The mission is of God, “Missio Dei.”

He commissions man to “cultivate and take care of” (Gn 2:15) everything that is created. This assignment includes the work of guarding his brothers and sisters. This requires man to recognize he is responsible for everything that exists on Earth and in the universe. This task will be bearable if one maintains a filial relationship with God and harmonious relationships with others.



Christ, the second person of God, became man to reveal the love of God to each living being and in a special way to man. In his earthly life, Jesus chose his disciples so that “they were to be his companions and to be sent out to proclaim the message” (Mk 3:14). The risen one, on the eve of his ascension sends his disciples to the mission. In them every Christian is disciple and missionary.

We cannot ignore that the Church is born of the mission of Jesus and his disciples. Therefore, the Church and its members have a mission. The Second Vatican Council states that the Church is missionary by its very nature. Since Vatican II, all Church documents have emphasized the missionary role of all Christians. St. Arnold Janssen, impelled by the third person of God, the Holy Spirit, founded the Society of the

Divine Word to continue the mission of announcing the Good News. The prologue to our Constitutions states that “His [Christ’s] life is our life, his mission our mission.” I consider that God gave me life, Christ fed me with his word and body and the Holy Spirit helped me to discern God’s will for me.

As a Divine Word Missionary serving in Colombia, I find myself in a continent and a culture totally different from my own in India. My life and each of my activities have a single goal, that of being a “witness of a truly Christian life” (Cons. 106). I figure that one evangelizes not only by his words and deeds but also by his mere presence in a different culture.

Over the years I have had different responsibilities in the Colombia Province and

**Give a  
monthly  
sustainer  
gift!**

## PLAN & BUDGET


To sustain our mission programs overseas, it is an undeniable necessity to use these two words "plan" and "budget." Budgeting is the only way to ensure program consistent funding.

Preaching the Gospel, feeding the poor, providing medical attention to those in need and helping families around the world become self-reliant takes a lot of planning. These long-term investments in the future of struggling Catholic faith communities can be done only with consistent and planned monies coming in.

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is the easiest  
and eco-friendliest  
way to provide  
ongoing, reliable  
support for our  
missionaries  
overseas.**



**Help us  
budget for  
their future.**



currently I am working in mission animation. This new task requires me to encourage the confreres and the laity "to keep alive the universal Church's awareness of its missionary responsibility" (Cons. 102.2).

All Christians should understand and fulfill their mission in their own environment. At the same time, it is my duty to obtain resources for the mission. I realize this by visiting the Divine Word parishes and other entities that open the doors for such work.

In short, man has the privilege of collaborating in the task of announcing the love of God to his fellow man by his words, deeds and life. When he does it faithfully, he behaves as a witness of God, a collaborator with his peers, a faithful administrator of the world's resources and a model for others. ♦



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# Family in Faith

***A niece recalls her  
three uncles, all of them  
Divine Word priests***

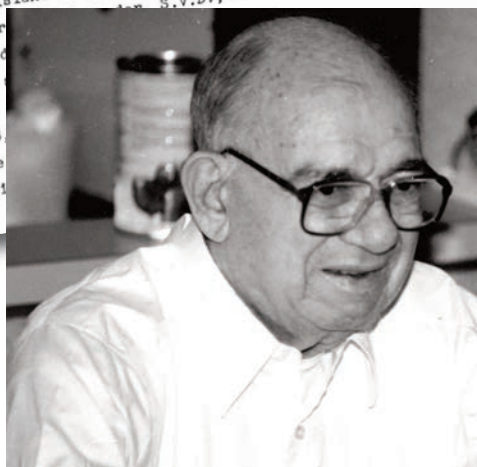
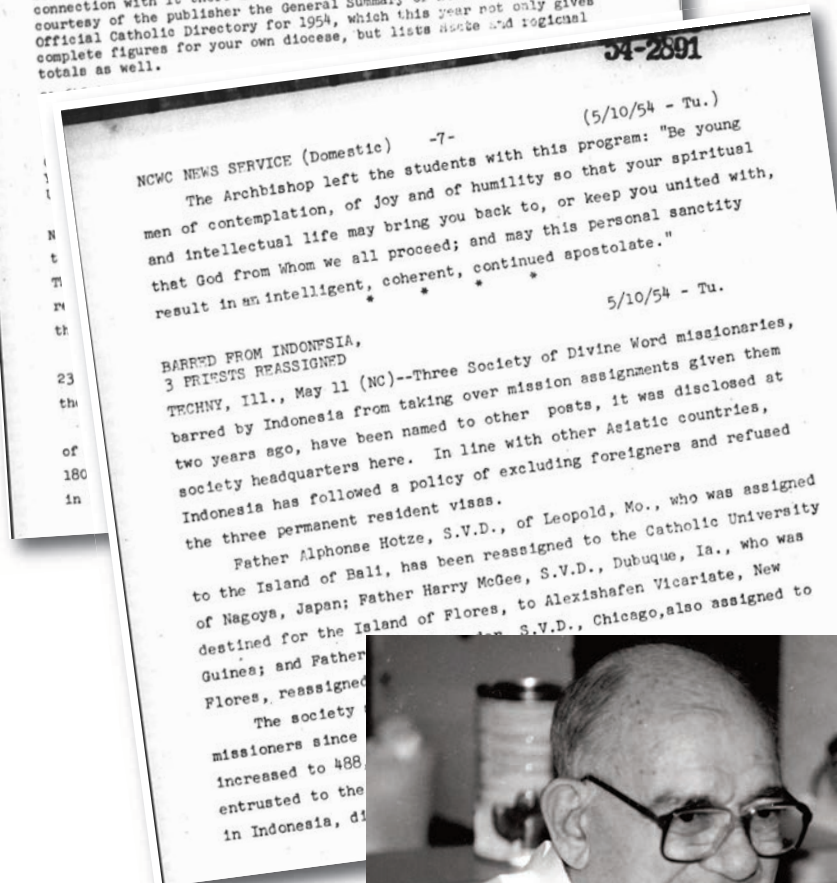
*By Kathy Repole*

I was blessed to have three  
inspiring uncles, all of them  
Divine Word Missionaries.

Father Alphonse J. Hotze SVD,  
Father Leo F. Hotze SVD and  
Clement H. Hotze SVD were the first,  
fifth and seventh of eight children  
born to Bernard L. and Anna M.  
Steinnerd Hotze of Leopold,  
Missouri.

Al was born on August 3, 1909;  
Leo was born April 10, 1916;  
and Clem was born October 6,  
1920. Of their siblings—all  
sisters—three joined the School  
Sisters of Notre Dame while the other  
two married and had children.  
The Hotze family was well respected  
in the Catholic community in  
Leopold and beyond. In 1961, the  
family was named the first National  
Catholic Family of the Year.

Fathers Al, Leo and Clem lived amazing  
lives. They traveled around the world  
and gave back to their communities,  
which they embraced both near and far.



*Father Alphonse J. Hotze SVD*



### Fr. Al's Story

In 1937, Fr. Al was the first of his brothers to enter missionary service. He was ordained a Divine Word priest on March 7, 1937. Two years later, he was assigned to Fu Jen University in Peking (now called Beijing) to teach English. On December 7, 1941, Pearl Harbor Day, the Japanese forces occupying China took Fr. Al as a prisoner of war. The Japanese detained him for nearly four years, including more than three years in internment camps. The U.S. Marines liberated Fr. Al in 1945.



*Father Alphonse J. Hotze SVD*



While he was free to return to the United States, Fr. Al's mission superior asked him to stay in China because Fu Jen University desperately needed teachers. Fr. Al chose to return to Fu Jen.

It was a tumultuous time in China, as communists were gaining power in the war's aftermath. A former student who was a communist warned Fr. Al that he was on



*Fu Jen University – Peking*



the communists' hit list. With this warning, and in fear for his life, Fr. Al escaped to Hong Kong wearing an American soldier's uniform as a disguise. From Hong Kong, Fr. Al managed to secure voyage on a ship bound for the United States.

### ***From China to Japan***

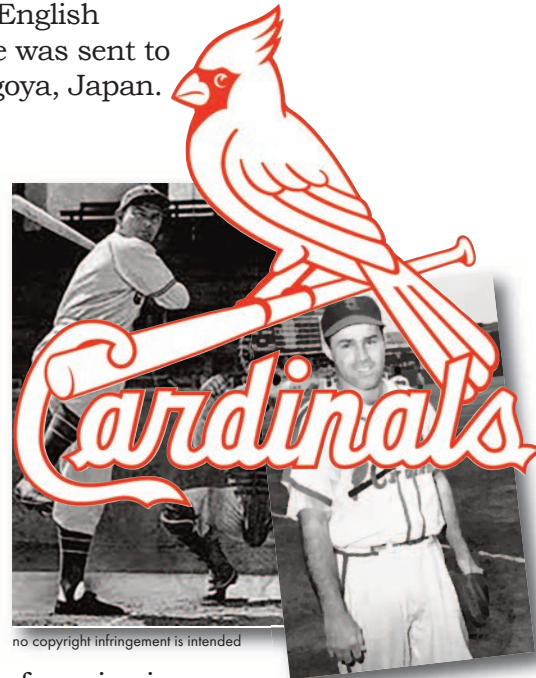
After safely returning to the United States, Fr. Al resumed his studies, receiving a master's degree in English literature and a doctorate in philosophy. In 1956, he was sent to teach English literature at Nanzan University in Nagoya, Japan.

Fr. Al was a lifelong fan of the St. Louis Cardinals baseball team. Of the many things he did for his students in Japan, Fr. Al arranged for Stan "The Man" Musial and Joe Garagiola to visit Nanzan. The visit delighted Fr. Al. While speaking to the students, Musial remarked about the high caliber of Japanese baseball and the enthusiasm for the sport in Japan.

After an illustrious 28-year teaching career, Fr. Al retired from Nanzan University on June 15, 1984. On Fr. Al's retirement day, the emperor of Japan bestowed upon him the

Fourth Order of the Sacred Treasure to extol his many years of service in Japan. Fr. Al was both honored and surprised by this significant award, as no English-speaking teacher had ever received a commendation from the emperor. Ordinarily, such commendations are issued by Japan's Ministry of Education.

After a remarkable vocation of service, Fr. Al retired to the Divine Word residence in Techny. He died on April 11, 1990, and was buried in St. Mary's Cemetery at Techny



*The Fourth Order of the Sacred Treasure*

**Fr. Leo's Story**

Following in Fr. Al's footsteps, Fr. Leo was ordained a Divine Word priest on Aug. 15, 1943. Six years later, after receiving his master's degree in English literature, Fr. Leo was charged with establishing the Brother Candidate School, for students seeking to become Divine Word Brothers, in East Troy, Wisconsin. While stationed in Techny, Fr. Leo also completed vocational work for the minor seminary at East Troy.



Fr. Leo loved music. He was responsible for all music at Techny, including community singing, orchestra, band and choir. He moved to Perrysburg, Ohio, in 1959 when he was appointed rector of the minor seminary there. Subsequently, from 1961 to 1967, he served as provincial of the Eastern Province based in Girard, Pennsylvania.



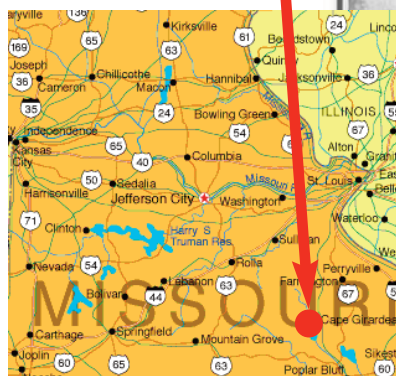
From 1967 until his retirement, Fr. Leo was the national director of vocations for Divine Word Missionaries. In these years, Fr. Leo also traveled around the country preaching weekend mission appeals.

**Family Time**

This assignment was our family's favorite. We all greatly looked forward to Fr. Leo's travels to the St. Louis area, when he would visit with us and officiate family Masses. When he went down to southeast Missouri he visited with his parents, our Grandma and Grandpa Hotze.



All of the residents of Leopold were thrilled by Fr. Leo's visits. They both financially and prayerfully supported him, along with his two brothers and all Divine Word Missionaries. Fr. Leo loved to give back to the Leopold community.



Leopold



Our family was fortunate to have Fr. Leo state-side, as he was always willing (and thrilled) to officiate family baptisms, first Communions and weddings. We always felt so blessed to have our uncle and brother officiate our special family moments. He was likewise available to comfort us in our times of need and to officiate funerals and mourn with his family.

Fr. Leo was a loving soul—he even tended an apple orchard at Techny, a skill he learned working with his dad in the family orchard. Fr. Leo died Jan. 18, 2009. He also was buried at the Techny cemetery.



*Father Clement H. Hotze SVD*

### **Fr. Clem's Story**

Fr. Clem, not to be outdone by his two older brothers, was ordained a Divine Word priest on Aug. 15, 1947.

Shortly after his ordination, Fr. Clem was sent to Ghana in West Africa. He arrived in Accra, the capital city, in December 1948, and was assigned to the Agomanya and Krobo outstations. Fr. Clem served as a missionary in neighboring villages. He would visit at a Catholic school and with villagers interested in learning about the Catholic Church. He worked with and among the people of the Lower Manya Krobo District until returning to the United States in 1952.

*Father Clement H. Hotze SVD*



Once back in the United States, Fr. Clem rededicated himself to his studies. He obtained his master's degree at St. Louis University in preparation for his next assignment as headmaster of the newly established Aquinas Secondary School in Accra. After serving as headmaster there for three years, Fr. Clem also was appointed assistant regional superior for Ghana, taking over

all pastoral duties for the Upper Krobo District outstations while remaining headmaster of the Aquinas School.

In early January 1957, Bishop Joseph Bowers of Accra met with the chief and elders of the town of Nkwatia-Kwahu. Divine Word Missionaries were invited to open a secondary school there with the full support of the community. Fr. Clem was assigned to start the school from the ground up. He organized and planned the opening of the school, held entrance exams, and located and secured classrooms and boarding rooms for the students.



On Feb. 5, 1957, classes began at St. Peter's Senior Secondary School after a tremendous effort by Fr. Clem, Divine Word Missionaries and the people of Nkwatia-Kwahu. In the years to follow, with Fr. Clem at the helm, the school and surrounding community flourished—this growth included a college church, a minor seminary and a novitiate. Not only did Fr. Clem oversee this planning, but he also physically pitched in during the construction.

Fr. Clem was tremendously proud of these accomplishments. He gave so much to the Nkwatia-Kwahu community and received even more in return.



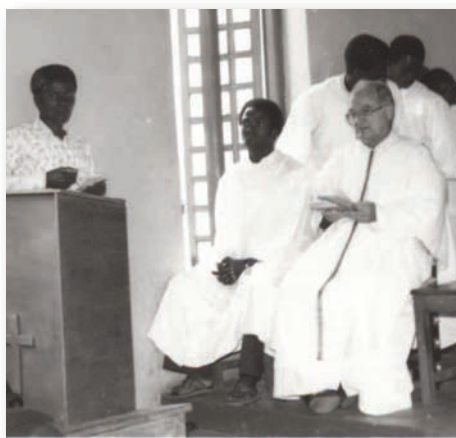


### ***From Schools To Parishes***

After many years as headmaster, in January 1972 Fr. Clem was elected regional superior for the Divine Word community in Ghana. He had to resign as headmaster, a role he loved dearly. From 1974 until his retirement in 1998, Fr. Clem served as a parish priest at various churches in Accra, Wenchi and Asesewa.



Fr. Clem routinely traveled many miles on rough roads and terrain to the parish outstations. He made these trips on a used motorcycle donated by the St. Louis Police Department—a joyously delightful image indeed. Fr. Clem found that most of the time he could successfully maneuver along the rough roads and avoid the huge holes as he journeyed to reach the outstations to say Mass and be with the people. Whenever he had a spill, Fr. Clem would simply right his motorcycle, wipe off the mud and keep on his way.



Fr. Clem was the epitome of a hands-on missionary, never afraid to get dirty or break a sweat. He worked to bring water, electricity, housing, schools, churches and—most critically—faith to the people of Ghana. He loved the country deeply, so much so that after more than 50 years of service there, Fr. Clem chose to retire in the country that had become his home.

Numerous bouts with malaria and typhoid fever over his years as a missionary took a toll on Fr. Clem's health. He died on July 19, 2001, and was buried in his beloved Ghana.

Fr. Al, Fr. Leo and Fr. Clem lived extraordinary lives. They lived lives of faith, of poverty and of charity. They helped those in need. They lived by example and embodied the Society of the Divine Word's mission: embracing their communities and sharing the Word and the love of the Lord.

Our hope is that others can learn from their example and keep their memories alive by incorporating the brothers' practices into their daily lives. As their memories live on, so do their stories and their examples of the power of faith, devotion ... and a whole lot of grit. ♦

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