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Summer 2020

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If you are reading our magazine
you have a "global heart"—your giving
has made an impact around the world.
Your giving, under normal conditions,
has changed lives. You have helped
the homeless find a safe place to
sleep, helped refugees find solace in
a time of distress, helped farmers
learn new ways to grow crops.

But when disaster hits and normal
isn't normal, your gifts are the very
source of our ability to provide
lifesaving help to those most in need.
Thank you from Divine Word
Missionaries around the world.



Your gifts make
an **IMPACT**
around
the world!



'Here am I, send me.' ...

Every year on the next-to-last Sunday of October we celebrate World Mission Sunday. It is the one Sunday when people in parishes around the globe hear of the works and needs of the Church's missionaries.

In his address for this year's World Mission Sunday, Pope Francis said: "In this year marked by the suffering and challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic, the missionary journey of the whole Church continues in light of the words found in the account of the calling of the prophet Isaiah: 'Here am I, send me.' ... This invitation from God's merciful heart challenges both the Church and humanity as a whole in the current world crisis."

Divine Word Missionaries know well the anxieties and sorrows that have spread alongside this pandemic. In countries that have been hit hard by COVID-19—Brazil, India, Ecuador, Indonesia and others—our missionaries were on the front lines from the very beginning, delivering food and hygienic and medical supplies to impoverished communities. Our missionaries have been meeting the challenges of COVID-19.

But our missionaries haven't been the only ones to meet those challenges. So have you.

At the start of summer, we here at the Techny Mission Center set an ambitious goal of \$100,000 toward an emergency fund to help our missionaries around the globe alleviate the suffering caused by COVID-19. Our generous benefactors rallied to our call. We not only met our goal, *we exceeded it!*

I cannot thank **you**—our mission friends—enough. In this difficult time, you came through for our missionaries and the people they serve. Your generosity proves that COVID-19 is no match for God's mercy.

We pray that you and your loved ones remain safe and healthy. And, we ask that you remember the needs of the poor and marginalized as this world-wide crisis continues. If you are able to help them meet those needs, please make a donation through our website, www.svdmissions.org.

Thank you, and God bless you.

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!**



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**STAY
IN TOUCH**

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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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above:
Fr. Vinh Tran SVD,
new District Superior
in Thailand, delivers
COVID-19 supplies to
parishioners in the
village of Chumpae
before leaving for his
new assignment to
Bueng Kan Province.



left:
Fr. Toub Anisong Chanthavong SVD
helping to build a home for a widow
in his parish

New Assignments, New Challenges

An Interview with
Father Truong Le SVD

By Debra Vermeer



*Fr. Truong:
The ritual of the Baci involves tying
strings around a person's wrist to
preserve good luck, and has
become a national custom.*



It's been a time of farewells and new beginnings as the Bishop of Udon Thani, Thailand, reassigned several Divine Word Missionaries to new areas of the diocese providing new challenges for all.

Divine Word Missionaries have been working in the area of Ban Dung in northern Thailand for many years, taking care of large and small parishes, and bringing life to deserted churches in several villages. New assignments will take three missionaries to the province of Bueng Kan, which borders Laos.

"The diocese is revamping its organization and structure to serve the people better," says Father Truong Le SVD, one of the three priests to be reassigned.

Fr. Truong says these changes came upon them quickly, but he is encouraged by the words he had once read: "Sent by Jesus, we leave. Led by the Spirit, we enter."

"With that in mind," Fr. Truong says, "the Thailand District believes that with change and transition come transformation and new ways of mission."

Saying Goodbye, Saying Hello

A new beginning in the province of Bueng Kan, Father Vinh Tran SVD will take over two large parish communities: Presentation of the Lord Church and St. John Neumann Church.

"In the meantime, he has had to say goodbye to his parishioners at St. James, in Chum Phae, and St. Clements, in Phuwiang," Fr. Truong says. "Vinh has been taking care of these two parishes for over a year. Although these



above:
Fr. Ben Bella SVD gives aid
during the COVID pandemic



center and above:
A parishioners in the village of Chumpae
receives food supplies.

parishes are small, Vinh serves humbly, reaching out to all who are in need, especially those who have left the church.”

Father Bernardus (Ben) Bella Nofrianto SVD says hello as he takes over as pastor for Fr. Vinh and continues the Divine Word presence in the area.

“Prior to this Ben has been working diligently to renovate the church in Ban Thin. Serving the poorest of the poor, particularly during the time of the pandemic,” Fr. Truong says. “Although this change happened quickly, Ben is ready to enter into his new assignment.”

Opportunity for Evangelization

Fr. Truong will move to Phoncharoen and oversee the local parish there. He will also be in charge of the Immaculate Conception Church in the nearby village of Sangkhom

Patthana. Already having done some minor renovations there, Fr. Truong plans to invest more time and resources to this project. He believes this church has potential as place of evangelization.

For the last two years Fr. Truong had been working in Nong Bua Lamphu, at the Mother of Perpetual Help Center, for people living with HIV-AIDS and as pastor of St. Michael the Archangel Church. Father Ha Hai Tran SVD will replace Fr. Truong as pastor.

Since the pandemic, Fr. Toub Anisong Chanthavong SVD has been stranded in Laos, unable to cross back into Thailand. He will now be resident priest at Mother of Perpetual Help Church.

Father Tuan Dinh Pham SVD is moving from the Ban Dung area to take the role of pastor at Jesus of Nazareth Church and Immaculate Conception Church in Na Sing. He replaces Father Rajasekhar Reddy Bobba SVD, who along with Father Duc Linh Nguyen SVD will go on for further studies in Bangkok.

Fr. Duc has served as pastor at Phonsungnoi for four years. “All of the parishioners will miss him,” says Fr. Truong. “He has poured sweat and blood for the growth of the parish.”

HIV/AIDS Ministry Continues

Brother Damien Lunders SVD and Brother Ron Fratzke SVD continue their ministry in Nong Bua Lamphu in Udon Thani Diocese.

Bro. Damien runs the Mother of Perpetual Help Center. Even during the pandemic, he and Bro. Ron continue to distribute school supplies to low-income families around the region as part of the center’s outreach program.

In 1998, the bishop of Udon Thani invited Divine Word Missionaries to take charge of the fledgling AIDS center. Since then, the Mother of Perpetual Help Center has been there to help care for children of HIV parents in Nong Bua Lamphu. The program started with about 40 children and has grown into helping almost 400 infants, children, teens and adults each year.

The center provides AIDS education and awareness programs that reach out to more than 20 schools each year. The center includes Ban Mae Marie Home for Teenagers that began as an orphanage for abandoned children with AIDS but now has grown to also provide assistance for teens with non-HIV-related issues and the elderly.

To view a video of the Mother of Perpetual Help Center, visit www.svdmissions.org/thailand.

Pandemic Effects

In Bangkok, as COVID-19 restrictions ease, Father Anthony Le Duc SVD and Father John Hung Le SVD are looking forward to resuming their face-to-face ministry with Vietnamese migrants. There are about 50,000 Vietnamese illegally working in Thailand. Divine Word priests carry out sacramental ministry but they also provide important social and legal support—especially in situations of emergency, such as accidents or death.



*left and below:
Welcoming ceremony
for Fr. Tuan Pham
SVD as he arrives
at his new parish in
Na Sing.*



Learn more about the Mother of Perpetual Help Center



*above:
Br. Damien Lunders SVD and
Br. Ron Fratzke SVD distribute
school supplies to students*

www.svdmissions.org/thailand



**‘We have to be
creative to
respond
effectively’**





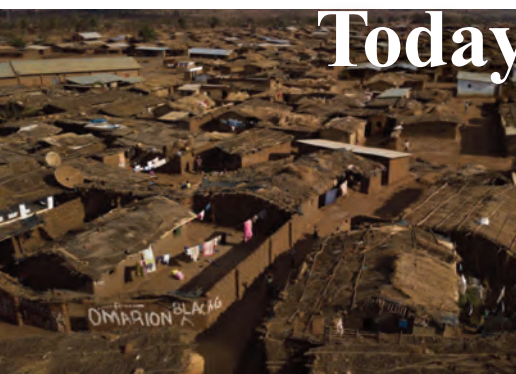
November 2019 • United Nations

The United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) has registered a total of 41,109 refugees and asylum seekers in Dzaleka Refugee Camp, located in Dowa district. The refugees and asylum seekers mainly come from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), but others fled from Burundi, Rwanda, Somali and Ethiopia amongst many others.

Fr. Jun reflects on work with refugees in Malawi

By Daisuke Narui SVD

In 2016 Father Heinz Kuluke SVD, who was then the Superior General of Divine Word Missionaries, sent a circular letter inviting confreres to work with Jesuit Refugee Service in various refugee camps. Father “Jun” Felixberto SVD, who had been serving in Liberia, responded to this call and worked in Dzaleka refugee camp in Malawi from 2018 to 2020.



Today,

Dzaleka is home to more than 41,000 refugees from five countries. Marcellin Yawo SVD, a seminarian, worked alongside Fr. Jun at Dzaleka.

I interviewed Fr. Jun after he finished his two-year term in Malawi.

What is your impression of the work with refugees after two years?

Missionary work with refugees is tough and challenging. Refugee mission requires me to be more open to the reality of refugees. We are dealing with the vulnerable, helpless and voiceless people. For me, this work is an avenue to serve them with all my heart, all my strength, and to be more creative in looking at the situation. Creative, because the need is tremendous; we have to be creative to respond effectively.

Photos on this page by William Martin.
Photos originally posted in “A Forgotten Refugee Crisis.”

*Fr. Jun and seminarian
Marcellin Yawo SVD
at Dzaleka*



**I cannot speak
all the languages
in the camp,
but as St. Josef
Freinademetz
said, it is love
that everyone
understands.**



The first thing I did was visit the refugee families. Only then could I better understand their situation. When I visit them and hear their stories, I can be more proactive. I need to broaden my missionary common sense to work for refugees. Things do not always go according to my plan. By visiting people and touching their lives, I can learn and be creative.

From the family visits, I learned there was a need to improve the camp's general hygiene. I started the "clean drive operation." I encouraged people to develop a consciousness of hygiene by recognizing Dzaleka as their home and their responsibility to keep it clean. People responded very well to the initiative, and they are happy about its effects. They still continue this project, and they have developed a sense of ownership in the camp.

Dzaleka refugee camp is a multiracial, multinational and multilingual gathering place. It can be compared to a bowl of mixed fruit. The dynamic is very diverse, and all these people hope for the best in their life.

As the pastoral care worker, I became an instrument of light so they could see the end of the tunnel. A person came to my office, and shared his story full of challenges and sufferings. I told him to hold his faith so that one day he could free himself of his suffering. After few days, he came back to my office and told me that he would be resettled soon. He thanked me for the advice and for the hope that had materialized.

I also help refugees prepare themselves to be resettled. I advise them to learn English and go through vocational training. They

need to be equipped to start new life wherever they will be resettled.

What is the impact of the work?

After the family visits, I made programs to enliven the spiritual life and strengthen the community through small Christian community Masses every Friday, as well as through the weekday and Sunday Masses. From these spiritual activities, I encouraged the people to start the healing process from the sufferings they had experienced. It was good for the people to see the importance of coexistence in the refugee camp. They are already tired of conflicts, suffering and separation from loved ones.

Though they came from different tribes, they live as one in different communities in the camp. They learn how to accept one another. For me this is very important in the camp community because they learn how to become one family and serve as the support system that allows them to approach and share the struggles in their life.

I had to learn the Kinyarwanda and Swahili languages to celebrate Mass. Although it is very difficult to celebrate in two different languages, I saw the importance of it because people are more attentive and receptive in the celebration when they hear their own language.

Through the work, what did you learn as a Divine Word Missionary?

The refugee mission opened a lot of opportunities to me as a religious missionary. First, to mingle with the

different cultures, tribes and languages. I cannot speak all the languages in the camp, but as St. Josef Freinademetz said, it is love that everyone understands.

I learned to simplify my lifestyle because I'm dealing with the people who have nothing, who left their countries for their own safety. They left everything behind, so when they reached the Dzaleka refugee camp, all they carried were the basics of survival. As a religious missionary, I serve as an example that I can also live a simple lifestyle.

Second, I became more inclusive because the motto of the Jesuit Relief Service is to serve, defend, accompany and advocate for the needs of refugees. I learned how to listen consciously so that I could give the right advice for the refugees' specific needs. I also learned to use whatever resources we have because we do not have everything in the camp. I always asked refugees, "What do you have?" and tried to find a solution from what they had.

Third, I learned my limitation and boundaries. I cannot solve all the problems. That is why networking is very important. I could accompany the refugees and bring them to the right person or agency to respond to their needs. I needed to be more humble, and I needed other people to help our refugee brothers and sisters.

Lastly, I learned to pray with them. Prayer is an important means that helps the refugee find solace in the hand of God. I am very thankful that despite all the limitations in the camp, I was able to serve our refugee brothers and sisters in their needs.



Together, we pray for those around the world who are fleeing poverty, persecution, violence and war in their homelands.

I Want to Help

Like Mary and Joseph, may refugees and migrants have faith that you never abandon them. Keep hope alive in their hearts and help them find peace, security and a new home in a new land.

A GIFT from YOU will change lives around the world

**to give a gift today use the envelope at the center of this magazine or
Call toll free 800-275-0626
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www.svdmissions.org



Fr. Marian Zelazek SVD - in the middle of the upper row

Father Marian Zelazek SVD A MISSIONARY ICON

By Andrzej Danilewicz SVD

It would not be an exaggeration to say that Father Marian Zelazek SVD is the icon of a real missionary. He spent 56 years zealously ministering in India. He was called a “father of the lepers.” He promoted interreligious dialogue. He was twice nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize. At the very moment of his death, he was hailed as a saint.

Who was he and what did he do?

Marian Zelazek was born into a large family on Jan. 30, 1918, in a small village near Poznan in the western part of Poland. Due to an economic crisis his family had to move to the city. There he soon began his education. Touched by reading a mission magazine, he longed to become a missionary. Marian entered the minor seminary of Divine Word Missionaries in Gorna Grupa and in 1937 began his novitiate in Chludowo.

On May 20, 1940, together with other Divine Word confreres, he was arrested and deported to the German concentration camp in Dachau. He remained imprisoned until April 29, 1945, when the U.S. Army liberated approximately 32,000 prisoners at Dachau. During his years in the camp he did what he could to help the weakest. He was so deeply affected by the death of his confreres, he made a promise to take on their unfulfilled missionary vocation. Even after all he had seen and been through, he never hungered for revenge or retaliation.

Now free from the camp, he went on to Rome for theological studies and was ordained a priest on Sept. 18, 1948. Two years later he was sent to India.

JOURNEY TO INDIA

Fr. Zelazek began his missionary service in the newly opened mission in Sambalpur in the north of India. For 25 years he worked among the tribal Adivasi people, campaigning for their



*Fr. Zelazek in leper colony
photos: Adam Pleskaczynski*

human dignity. He was an inspector of 171 Catholic schools. The education he promoted contributed to the peoples' social advancement. Thanks to his efforts, these schools produced five bishops, dozens of priests and many engineers, doctors and teachers. From people living in forests, completely marginalized, the Adivasi became full citizens of their own country.



photo: Piotr Zyciensi

In 1975 the provincial superior asked Fr. Zelazek to leave his post in Sambalpur and move to Puri. This was not an ordinary move. Fr. Zelazek was leaving his beloved Adivasi, among whom he felt a real missionary. Hundreds of baptisms, schools built, an ever more rooted Christian morality—all of these were to be only a memory. Going to Puri he had to give up this whole missionary success; he had to learn to be a missionary again.



Located on the Bay of Bengal, the Hindu holy city of Puri is dominated by the huge Shree Jagannath Temple. Because Puri is a Hindu sacred site, Fr. Zelazek could not openly proclaim Christ. He did manage to build a church for a small community of Catholics, but mainly he focused on evangelizing by caring for the well-being of the locals. He often said that “being good is easy if one wants to be so.”

MISSION TO THE LEPERS

Because of the thousands of pilgrims visiting Puri every day, there were also many lepers

coming. Fr. Zelazek decided it was his mission to take care of them. He established a leper colony on the outskirts of Puri.

Fr. Zelazek did not limit himself to emergency relief or temporary assistance, but sought to rebuild a sense of dignity in the lepers. He provided job opportunities in the leper colony so that they did not have to beg.

In this way, they earned enough income to support themselves and their families.

He also founded a school for children from lepers' families. Due to its high standard of teaching, the school now attracts children from all over the city and the surrounding areas. Fr. Zelazek's last work was the construction of a spirituality center.

Immediately after arriving in the leper colony, Fr. Zelazek set up a small hospital. Over the years more than 1,000 people affected by leprosy have been cured there.

When Fr. Zelazek first started visiting patients, in accordance with medical procedures, he wore rubber gloves. However, he soon realized the gloves created a distance between him and the sick, so he stopped wearing them. He wanted to be as close as possible to the leprosy patients' pain and the reason for their rejection. In this way he showed his solidarity with them and readiness to accept the consequences of their misery.

SIMPLE GESTURES OF LOVE

He did not regard his ministry as heroism. He focused on everyday, simple gestures of

love. Fr. Zelazek always came to the leper colony with a briefcase. It carried medicines for lepers and candy for children. As soon as he appeared, he was surrounded by a large group of children who came running, and not only because of the candy.

Fr. Zelazek, in order to be close to the people he lived with, mastered several local languages. He was also well known for respecting local beliefs and customs. The high priest from the Jagannath temple was his cordial friend.

In 2002 and again in 2003, Fr. Zelazek was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize for his work with lepers and interreligious dialogue.

Fr. Zelazek's dream, which he often shared with others, was to die in his shoes, not in his bed—to die while active in the ministry he loved. On April 30, 2006, the Hindu festival of Akshaya Tritiya was celebrated. Fr. Zelazek was invited to this ceremony of the leper colony as a guest of honor. After dancing, singing and eating with the people, he felt a little tired. He said goodbye and, accompanied by some lepers, he moved towards his car. After several dozen feet he fell over and soon died.

The beatification process began in 2018 as the culmination of the life and missionary service of Fr. Marian Zelazek.

MORE THAN A CHARITY WORKER

It should be remembered that Fr. Zelazek was not simply a charity worker, but a missionary. On his First Mass picture, he put the words: "May the Heart of Jesus live in the hearts of all people."

It was not just a customary expression of Divine Word Missionaries, but a sincerely expressed desire. He really wanted everyone to know Christ and be saved.

Fr. Zelazek perfectly mastered the Hindi language as well as Sadri and Oriya not only out respect for the people among whom he lived, but also for the Good News to be understood by as many people as possible.



Fr. Zelazek's love for people flowed from his intimate relationship with God, the source of all love. He was prayerful and genuinely religious from childhood. He could not imagine a day without Mass, which he celebrated with great intentness in his small chapel in the ashram. People often saw him leaning over the Holy Scriptures or praying the breviary as he strolled along the alleys near his house.

A poignant symbol of Fr. Zelazek's attitude toward the people he was sent to serve is his grave in Puri. The confreres set a statue of Father Marian there. He bends over a leprous old woman. It looks like he wants to reduce the distance between them, and, at the same time, to show her respect and tenderness. He is fixing his eyes on her as if she was worthy of all interest, as if she was the entire universe for him!

One of the elements of the anniversary of his 100th birthday, celebrated in Puri, was the unveiling of a commemorative plaque in that leper colony placed at the spot where Fr. Zelazek fell. Beneath, one can find the following words in Oriya: "He loved them to the end."



*Tomb of Fr. Zelazek SVD in Puri, India
photo:
Andrzej Danilewicz SVD*

Oppressive public perceptions toward disability in Ghana continue to permeate today. Spiritual beliefs suggest that physical disability is a punishment from God for the person's, or their family's, sins, and so it is deemed worthy of shame. Due to the shame attached, an individual with a disability is also usually considered a burden on their family. The stigma involved is not exclusive to the individual experiencing disability but can apply to anyone associated with the stigmatized person. This includes family members and caregivers.

Kassah, A. K., Kassah, B. L. L., Agbota, T. K. (2012). Abuse of disabled children in Ghana. Disability & Society, 27(5), 689–701.



photo from <https://otcghana.org/what-otc-does/>

More Than Medical Help

Orthopedic Training Center in Ghana offers a future for disabled children

by Melanie Pies-Kalkum



photo by Melanie Pies-Kalkum

Kobe was born without shins. His lower legs and feet were so deformed that he would have had to spend his entire life in a wheelchair.

People with disabilities, such as Kobe, have a hard time in Ghana. Accessibility issues are almost everywhere. Roads and sidewalks are in terrible condition. Even without disabilities, you have to be extremely careful to avoid the many potholes. Even in the capital city of Accra, wheelchair users have a difficult time finding transportation.

Worse yet, what may be inconceivable to us is reality in Ghana. Children and adults with disabilities often are considered a disgrace in Ghanaian culture. Families are ashamed of them, neglecting them and often leaving them to their own fate.

photo from <https://otcghana.org/what-otc-does/>



The OTC was started by Divine Word Missionaries in 1961, founded by Brother Tarcisus de Ruyter SVD. The primary purpose of the Center is the rehabilitation of the physically challenged in Ghana and West Africa.



Brother Tarcisus SVD,
1925 - 2013



Kobe is his mother's firstborn. His grandmother and aunt tried to convince her after his birth to get rid of him, to just to put him on the street. But his mother did not listen to them. Luckily, the doctor who delivered Kobe knew about the Orthopedic Training Center run by Divine Word Missionaries in Nsawam, southern Ghana. There he sent mother and child.

Orthopedic Training Center—help, education and a future

The Orthopedic Training Center workshop manufactures orthopedic appliances needed for the physically challenged of Ghana. Orthopedic prostheses, leg braces, artificial legs and arms, splints, etc. are manufactured for the over 6,000 patients seen yearly—in hopes of giving them an independent and productive future.

Here, with training, children learn to accept their prostheses and to deal with them in everyday life. Patients in need of long-term therapy can live at the Center. For many of these children this is the first time they have access to healthy meals, clean clothing and education.

In addition to physical therapy and care, the Center also offers job training. Young women and men can learn the skill of manufacturing and maintaining dentures. This makes the center unique throughout English-speaking West Africa.

Each year, in order to bring the possibility of these life-changing methods to as many children and adults as possible orthopedic training center employees travel more than 15,000 miles to run mobile clinics in 37 locations. During treatment in each location children and

(below) Father Xavier Alangaram SVD, Mission Secretary, visits Orthopedic Training Center in Ghana.



photos by Melanie Pies-Kalkum

Kobe (below) lives with his mother in the Orthopedic Training Center

adults receive care and training, and are made to feel safe and accepted. They learn that they can overcome their disability.

Chance for a normal life

At the Orthopedic Training Center, Kobe's mother, doctor and physical therapist discussed what was best for his future. It was determined that to spare him from life in a wheelchair, Kobe's lower legs would be amputated. A decision that was filled with fear...and hope, that seemed so very hard to imagine then...

NOW is already a reality:

Kobe can stand and move on his own.

Kobe is now 2 years old. In a few months he will get his first prostheses and with regular training will learn to walk. With patience, luck, and God's help (and maybe your prayers too), Kobe will be able to go to the local school in a few years and one day begin a self-determined life.



Together we can EDUCATE the WORLD

It is estimated that there are at least 93 million children with disabilities in the world, but numbers could be much higher. They are often likely to be among the poorest members of the population. They are less likely to attend school, have access medical services or have their voices heard in society.

Help us train more missionaries like Bro. Tarcisius who can, with your help, make the world a better place!

GIVE TODAY

www.svdmissions.org

GOAL!

St. Arnold Cup soccer tournament begins in Tanzania

By Lawrence Muthee SVD



On Nov. 16, 2019, the **St. Arnold Cup** kicked off.

The football tournament (Americans call it soccer) brought together young men from across Tanzania's Simanjiro District in the spirit of friendly competition and teamwork.

Simanjiro is unique in many ways, not just because it is predominantly a Maasai community. It is hidden from the rest of the world. Here there is no radio signal, and the majority of people cannot afford a TV. Many important world events just pass by without anyone here knowing they ever took place. Internet signals are very weak and can be found in only a few spots across this vast 62-mile district. This makes it difficult for our young people to interact with the outside world.

Shortly after I arrived, I noticed that in almost all the 25 villages that our Simanjiro Parish serves, most of the boys



and young men play football. I saw a lot of energy and talent in these young men and realized that working as a team could have a positive impact—maybe even change their lives.

This is how the idea of the St. Arnold Cup was born. With the donation of jerseys, footballs and trophies from our longtime Divine Word Missionary sister parish in Athenry, Ireland, we were able to launch the tournament. From the Simanjiro District we formed five teams from the villages of Emboret, Loiborsoit, Lenaitunyo, Nyorit and Sukro.

After an exciting season the tournament climaxed with the final match on Christmas Day. Nyorit faced off against the Emboret team. Emboret won the match 4-3.

The St. Arnold Cup tournament, fun and exciting as it was, is not just for the sake of sport. The activity is meant to help detour the youth of these five villages away from alcohol, drugs and criminal activities. For example, during the inaugural game many young people who would otherwise have been in the drinking dens came to cheer on their teams until late in the





evening. That means no drinking or drugs that day—a change for the better in the lives of these young people. If these events continue, and the team spirit grows, then those who peddle alcohol and drugs to our youth will lose their market. Criminal activities will diminish.

Our hope for 2021 is to continue league play in November and December and add a second league that will play from June through August. We also would like to expand the league to more villages, but we will have to work on getting more jerseys and footballs first.

As I write this, we are also planning a boys and girls volleyball league. The first stage of the plan was to include making the metal poles for the net myself, but my welding equipment broke. When I went into town to have it repaired, I found a net and volleyball and bought it. However, now like everywhere else around the world, all plans remain on hold until the coronavirus pandemic subsides.



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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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