

{ Words from Provincial }

## Back to the Fundamentals of our Religious Life - Three Vows

Fr. Provincial John Chang



As you are quite aware that we are living in a post-modern world. One of the characteristics of post-modern world is its pluralistic nature. There are more choices that humankind has ever experienced in history.

For instance, in purchase of a mobile phone, there are so many brands that one can choose, Iphone, Sony, Samsung, Huawei, etc. and so many packages from different wireless companies that one can select, eg. 499NT\$ monthly no limit. This pluralistic phenomenon creates a pseudo impression that everything is relative and nothing is absolute. One might be tempted to jump to the conclusion that there is no absolute value. While it is true that there are so many choices available, however, the moral values remain. Certainly, the life style of religious life is also facing a challenge that comes along with this post-modern world. How to live out the traditional value of a religious life is a challenging issue to be pondered.

We SVDs belong to a missionary religious congregation. In its essence, we are religious. In carrying out our missionary task, we have to mingle with the post-modern world. It is inevitable one has to face this pluralistic phenomenon, the consumerism, the individualism, the seeking of sensual pleasure, the convenience and efficiency, and the accumulation of temporary goods, all of which are part of the post-modern world. It is a true challenge. How are we going to situate ourselves?

I would say that we should go back to the fundamentals, to the basics of our religious vocation. Above all, one has to answer the question, why did I become a religious and why do I continue to remain as a religious. The renewal of one's motivation in pursuing the values of religious life will help one to face the constant challenge. Moreover, the three vows, chastity, obedience and poverty, that play a crucial part of religious life, will help us to hold on to the essence of religious life and its value. It is a good yardstick to measure and to evaluate the quality of our religious life. Therefore, I would like to invite each one of you to review your religious calling and to review your response to that calling. How am I living out my vows? Do I keep them as jewels that will help me to live up to the value of religious life? No doubt, everyone will have his own interpretation of vows and his response to that interpretation. However, it is precisely based on the religious vows that we identify ourselves and exercise to subdue the ego and to focus our spiritual growth. Only this will give us an everlasting satisfaction and a sense of fulfillment.

The challenge is there., We cannot deny it nor can we do much to change it. However, we certainly could do something to protect ourselves and to live up to the expectation of our religious calling. That is our religious vows, chastity, obedience and poverty. By holding up our faithfulness to the three vows, we equip ourselves to stay in better shape and bear a true witness to the secular world. Back to the basics, to the fundamentals and rekindle the essence of religious life. I believe those who are called to live the religious life will always be a minority. However, though small in number, if they could live out the essence of a religious life, they could be a living symbol, a witness and a sign for the post-modern world. ■

# Provincial Chapter, Taipei, Jan. 22 - 26, 2018 - A Short Report

Br. Norbert Ruf

*This Provincial Chapter convened in the evening of January 22, 2018 at the Chinatrust Hotel in Dapinglin, New Taipei City, Taiwan. Calculating from the years the China Province was re-established in Taiwan, this may well have been our 18th Provincial Chapter.*

## January 23:

Fr. Provincial John Chang (張日亮) welcomed all the 33 participants to this Provincial Chapter, in preparation for the 18th General Chapter, July 2018. It was the first time for many many years that a Provincial Chapter was held again in Taiwan. All the Confreres from Mainland China were able to get their visas on time. Most confreres could stay in rooms provided by Chinatrust Hotel, just next door to the venue of this event, the "One World Community Services Center" (OW) in Dapinglin, New Taipei City. The OW staff together with the provincial secretary arranged the meals, and provided snacks during tea breaks, as well as the usual little services like photocopying, assisting with phone calls, confirmation of tickets, and much more.

After everybody had briefly introduced himself by name and place of work, the time schedule was agreed upon: Generally, each day started with Morning Prayers and Mass, followed by breakfast. The sessions were for four and a half hours in the mornings and afternoons, respectively, with tea breaks in between, followed by supper,



Evening Prayers and social gatherings. It was also agreed that the main language of the Chapter would be English (for the sake of the Non-Mandarin speakers) with simultaneous translation provided by Brs. Steve W. and Leo L. for those few not fluent in English.

The Chapter opened with a spiritual input by former provincial, Fr Frank Budenholzer. In his talk, Fr Frank stressed the need for conversion in everybody, to see new directions and horizons, and to open oneself up for the other, an important attitude for such a three-day event, where much time is spent by listening to others and deciding new directions.

The first two points of business, so-to-say, were a general report by the Provincial on the China Province and by the Provincial Procurator on the financial situation of the Province. After a short tea break, the reports of the two Taiwan Districts (North and South) followed.

## January 24:

The District reports continued with the reporting on the Mainland China district and the Hongkong/Macao district. Other topics on this day were Formation, conveyed by the Formation Directors of the four areas, Characteristic Dimensions by the respective coordinators, and some future directions of the Province, elaborated by the Provincial .

## January 25:

This (last) day had already the feeling of wrapping up: Resolutions (old and new) were discussed, reviewed, re-worded and finally voted upon. The last meeting of this day ended with a special



session: the election of the delegate to the General Chapter, in Rome. Br Steve W. was elected to be the delegate (Fr Dominic N. as replacement in case Steve could not make it). Fr Provincial then officially declared the Chapter to be closed, and the whole congregation moved to the Dapinglin parish church for the solemn closing Mass, presided by Fr Provincial. Since it was the Feast of the Conversion of St Paul, the beginning (Fr Frank's input) and the end (Conversion of St Paul) - sort of enveloped the Chapter spiritually.

The Mass and the following meal / Arnoldus-Family-Feast were attended by all the delegates of this Chapter, all members of the Northern District plus some SSpS sisters from FuJen University and their Hsinchu community, as well as our confrere, Bp John Hung.

## January 26:

For those interested, Fr A. Chiu, the District Superior of Taiwan North, had organized an outing including some sightseeing through Taipei, visiting the former residence of Chiang Kai Shek

in Shilin ( 士林官邸 ), continued by a fine meal on top of Yangmingshan ( 陽明山 ). 15 confreres took part in the outing which lasted until late in the afternoon.

*The general feeling of the Chapter throughout the sessions was one of congeniality and friendship. Although the four areas of the China Province are quite different in terms of apostolates, social and political environment, struggles, successes and failures, there was never a feeling of hostility, opposition or superiority. All one big happy family! This was at least partly due to the fact that the delegates of this Chapter were well-known to each other. Furthermore, there was no real controversial issue to be discussed this time. And it was also due to the good preparation by the Provincial, the District Superior and his team, the committees (liturgy, steering, resolution, secretaries etc) and the warm reception in the OW. May St Joseph Freinademetz continue to bless us from above until we meet again. ■*

# SVD Joy in Diversity

Fr. Syrianus Poto Sola

## *Province Chapter*

The 2018 SVD China province chapter took place at the One World Community Services Center in the Xindian District of Taipei. As our China province covers Taiwan, Macau, Hong Kong and Mainland China, confreres came from many different districts to represent their local communities at the chapter. This large group of SVDs included the provincial superior and his council, district superiors and various elected delegates, as well as confreres in charge of special commissions, ministries, or projects. The province chapter is very important for many reasons, one of which is that confreres there discuss, decide and recommend on issues related to our mission priorities and various SVD directions on the whole, with consequences for the three years to come.

## *Feast Day*

The feast day of our founder St. Arnold Janssen and the closing of the province chapter at a special ceremony coincided with the celebration of Mass at Holy Trinity Parish in Xindian and a relaxing dinner that followed, complete with a warmly applauded musical program. Because of the combination of events, SVD confreres were not the only attendees. The various celebrations marking these special days of the chapter and feasts welcomed the participation of the SSpS (Holy Spirit Sisters), particularly from Taipei and Hsinchu. Participation included several members of our wider "SVD family," our staff workers. In his homily, Father Provincial rekindled our founder's spirituality when he emphasized that St. Arnold's feast day is a graced moment of reflection on the topics of mission and solidarity, option for the poor, and our presence among and active care for the marginalized of society within the very diverse territory of the China province. Mission work needs discernment, openness and perseverance on one side, and on the other, deep understanding, interpretation, and involvement in societal and missionary needs.

## *Joy in Diversity*

The joy of our encounters at the final dinner and musical program was very down to earth. In the beginning, groups based on their nationality, were asked to offer a performance. And then, sure enough, there appeared on the stage different groups such as brothers and sisters from Germany, Indonesia, the Philippines, Taiwan, and so on. Besides grouping according to nationality, there were also groups in the context of relationships such as confreres from the China mainland, alumni of CTU (USA), and local mission centers at Tagatay (the Philippines), and so on.

As a result brothers and sisters in the family of St. Arnold voluntarily came forward. They sang in different languages, Taiwanese, German, Indonesian, Chinese, English and so on. Joy was obvious and authentic, if also simple. Through it all, we felt an atmosphere of blessing and grace. Joy in diversity is a characteristic of the SVD - SSpS wider family relationship. Although we come from different cultural heritages, we find unity in the Incarnated Logos – the Divine Word.



# Thoughts on attending the Provincial Chapter

## 參加中華省省參議會的感受 孟維君 修士



From January 22nd to 26th 2018, I was honored to participate for the first time in the Provincial Chapter of SIN Province in Dapinglin, as the representative of Taishan Formation Community.

At the beginning of the Chapter, our former provincial Rev. Fr. Francis Budenholzer led the introductory prayer. He led all of us to reflect about the Gospel and the Constitutions of the SVD, and helped us to understand clearly the principles and attitudes of the apostolic work, as well as how to integrate the SVD spirituality with our service to the Church.

During the Chapter, all district and formation representatives successively reported about the challenges they face in the process of evangelization and formation. I was also very happy to meet the confreres from Hong Kong and Macao District. Their sharing and reports led me to more deeply understand the progress of evangelization in these two regions.

During the Chapter, we reviewed the Society's development plans and achievements of the past three years. Through the reports presented by the various regional groups, we got to know the challenges of our mission service during the past three years. I am so proud to be an SVD missionary and to have had the opportunity to attend this Chapter.

We have successfully chosen the delegate for the 18 General Chapter. We have formulated new resolutions and action plan.

At the end Rev. Father Provincial John Chang gave thanks to all the participants and the working staff, and announced the Chapter to be successfully concluded.

作為修士代表，我深深地體會到，傳教真的是每個人都需要肩負的使命。這個使命不僅僅是置於在傳教區工作的弟兄們肩膀上，更重要的是對於我們年輕的會士們，應當學習如何肩負，或者未來該如何擔任修會中的職務，為修會的發展貢獻自己的力量。

聖言會作為一個年輕的修會、作為一個潛力無限的修會，能夠在中華省這樣一個龐大的地區做福傳，這是天主給我們修會的恩典和照顧，以及天主聖神的默默引導。透過大家在會議中的分享，我看到天主聖三在我們有限的努力當中，源源不斷地分施恩寵，使我們有力量在遇到困境時，仍能分辨出聖神的聲音，堅持不懈地為基督信仰作證。

另一點讓我很感動的是，大家能夠不遠萬里相聚在一起參加會議，這樣的機會實在難得，也很珍貴。我很高興看到曾經耳聞的弟兄們也都開始了他們的福傳使命，開闢了福音的道路。他們是我學習的榜樣，也是我學習如何福傳最美好，最標準的教科書。

因為他們是真正地活出了修會的會規和福音的精神，特別是在總結會議的內容時，我們大家齊心協力，用最恰當地詞彙，給團體呈現一個清晰的使命計畫，總結過去的不足，迎接美好的未來。我很感謝泰山團體的弟兄們選我當修士代表，給我這樣的機會出席省參議會。我們聖言會的國際性特色和福傳特色表達出了作為傳教修會應有的使命和責任感，作為一名聖言會會士，我為此感謝天主。不僅是現在，將來也願意一輩子在團體服務，以一顆積極和開放的心，為團體貢獻自己的微薄力量。

我對於這次省參議會有一點小小的建議：我觀察到，在會議中，弟兄們在做報告和分享彼此的看法時，由於話筒設備的不足，導致分享的中斷，影響了會議的氣氛。我的建議是會議中可否配置更多的話筒和足夠的備用電池，這樣可以保障會議的順利進行，讓會議的氣氛更加濃厚和諧。的氣氛更加濃厚和諧。■



## 賴宏毅神父的晉鐸典禮 巴明志 修士

賴宏毅神父出生於印尼的 Palue 島上。他在聖言會已經很多年，在小修院就開始他的聖召培育。2005 年入初學後，賴宏毅就正式加入聖言會的陶成培育。2011 年離開印尼後，先在美國的 Iowa 學了一年的英文。2012 年來台後就開始在中華省的培育，先在輔仁大學的語言中心就讀 2 年的中文，然後轉入中華省，繼續他的陶成培育。OTP（海外陶成培育）的第三年他原本想要留在台灣作實習牧靈年，不過簽證的問題使他必須回印尼，在雅加達的華人堂區完成了他的牧靈實習。隨後，拿到學生的簽證，2015 回到台灣繼續讀神學。

2016 年 9 月 8 日宣發終身願。2017 年畢業後，8 月 5 日就與兩位中國籍會士一起晉升執事。那時讓他最煩惱的事——簽證——還沒解決。他那時所持的是學生簽證，照往例，平

常很難馬上拿到傳教士簽證。儘管爲了簽證他夏天去菲律賓一趟，不過也是空手而回。以後就回印尼，過了一個多月，終於如願拿到了傳教士簽證。他回來台灣後就在樹林耶穌聖心堂繼續他執事的服務與實習。

因此 2 月 3 日在樹林耶穌聖心天主堂，我們很榮幸參加賴宏毅的晉鐸典禮。當天很冷又下雨，都澆冷不了我們暖暖的喜樂與興奮。我們也很高興看到他的父母親以及他的堂哥特地從印尼來臺灣參加他晉鐸的典禮。他的媽媽親自縫製了新鐸的祭披。我們也很榮幸，這典禮由我們聖言會會士、洪山川總主教主禮，當場有 20 多位神父共祭。洪總主教在最後致辭時分享了他自己的晉鐸故事，以及敘述他母親怎麼參加兒子的晉鐸典禮。洪總主教對賴神父的父母表示感謝，他們的照顧與支持，包括很多的

祈禱，以及聖言會陶成神長們的付出，今天終於結出了果實。我們現在的責任是繼續陪伴與鼓勵他實行新的任務，也就是做好一位善牧。新北市樹林聖心堂的合唱團以及阿美族年輕人的奉獻舞蹈，讓這次的晉鐸典禮更有著文化交流的美好。

禮儀當中賴宏毅神父給予自己的父母親與樹林的堂區主任唐家德神父新司鐸的降福，彌撒後，教友們大排長龍地接受新鐸的個別降福。本堂庭院更早已備妥餐飲，大家一起慶祝這大喜事。吃完飯，感謝阿美族原住民的熱忱，原住民帶動了不少教友加入舞蹈同歡，讓這一天更充滿著主內大家庭的喜樂。

賴宏毅神父晉鐸後回印尼，在他的家鄉舉行了首祭並與家人共度省親假，休假結束，即回台並開始在嘉義教區服務。■



# There are three new SVD in HK-Macau in 2018

Fr. Tan, Leitao

The coordinator of Communication group of SVD

The Divine Word Missionaries (Shortened Form: SVD) had one new member ordained as a priest last year, this year, two more SVD were ordained on 13th and 14th January.

These two new priests are Fr. Peter Hoang Van HIEN and Fr. Toto Kornelius BARDATA. Both of them completed their SVD Hongkong OTP program (Oversea Training Program) and went to St. Joseph Seminary of Macau to finish their philosophy and theological studies.

Fr. Toto Kornelius BARDATA chose to have his ordination in his hometown in Indonesia. The ordination took place on Saturday January 13th 2018 in Ruteng, Flores. Fr. Angel, Parish Priest of Fatima Parish of Macau went there with some parishioners from Fatima Parish because Fr. Toto have been serving this parish for many years. He also did his deacon program in this parish. The SVD China Provincial Council highly recommends Fr. Kornelius BARDATA to be assigned to the Macau SVD Community after he returns on March 7th 2018. Fr. Franz Gassner and Fr. Angel C. will talk to the Bishop of Macau regarding his assignment. We look forward to the good news of his new and first assignment.

“The biggest grace anyone can aspire for in this world is to be a priest of Christ”! This was the first response of the Divine Word Missionary Fr. Peter Hoang Van Hien after he was ordained a priest. Bishop Michael Yeung Ming-cheung ordained him a priest during a concelebrated Mass attended by large number of faithful, many of them friends and well-wishers of the Divine Word Missionaries (SVD) at the Christ the King Chapel, Causeway Bay, Hong Kong

Fr. HIEN who hails from Vietnam and his companion Fr. Kornelius BARDATA (Toto) from Indonesia finished their initial Cantonese language





courses in the Chinese University of Hong Kong before joining the St. Joseph's University of Macau for the Theology studies. Fr. Toto was ordained a priest on January 13 in his hometown in Indonesia.

Fr. John Chang Jihliang, the Provincial Superior of the China Province reminded the gathering to support the newly priest in his ministry with their continued prayers. The newly ordained, in his message for the youngsters on why the youth of today should follow the vocation to be a priest or religious, said "God's call is open to everyone. We also have the freedom to choose the way we want to move, but once God chooses me, nothing else should prevent me from responding to His selection". "My vocation is God's blessing and gift to me", said Fr. HIEN.

The Vietnamese, Indonesian and Filipino communities presented a number of cultural events during the felicitation gathering held in the premises of St. Paul's school immediately after the Mass.

Fr. HIEN celebrated his Solemn First Mass on Sunday, January 21st at the Resurrection Church, Kwun Tong where he had served as a deacon for the previous six months. And he also will be appointed Assistant Parish Priest in St. Joseph's Parish, Kowloon Bay. Congratulations to Fr. HIEN.

There is another new SVD priest in Hong Kong -- Fr. Denes Fernando Costa DA SILVA who is from Oriximiná, Brazil, and is the eldest of three brothers. He entered in the Society of the Divine Word, SVD, as a Postulant, on 28/02/2003 in Santarém, Brazil and professed the First Temporal Vows on 06/01/2008 in São Paulo, Brazil. Then he had OTP experience in The Philippines (PHC) from 2011-2012. He professed Perpetual Vows and was Ordained Deacon on 24/05/2014, in São Paulo, Brazil, and ordained to the Priesthood on 31/01/2015, in Oriximiná, Brazil. He then went to the USA to review his English from June to December 2015. Arriving in Hong Kong on 06/01/2016, he first took Cantonese language Studies in the Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) from 2016-2017.

He has been appointed Assistant Parish



Priest in St. Peter's Parish, Aberdeen, Hongkong, since 15th of Jan 2018 after he has completed his Chinese language study Congratulations to Fr. Denes.

Hong Kong and Macau district of the SVD China Province has been blessed with two new priests this year. There are over 20 SVD missionaries now working in Hong Kong and Macau and a few more are expected in the near future. ■