

Duquesne University

Duquesne Scholarship Collection

Spiritan News

CSSP Newsletter and Spiritan News

4-1-1995

Spiritan News, No. 107

Congregazione dello Spirito Santo

Follow this and additional works at: <https://dsc.duq.edu/spiritan-news-en>

Repository Citation

Congregazione dello Spirito Santo. (1995). Spiritan News, No. 107. Retrieved from <https://dsc.duq.edu/spiritan-news-en/111>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the CSSP Newsletter and Spiritan News at Duquesne Scholarship Collection. It has been accepted for inclusion in Spiritan News by an authorized administrator of Duquesne Scholarship Collection.

SPIRITAN NEWS

April 1995

N° 107

CONGREGAZIONE DELLO SPIRITO SANTO - CLIVO DI CINNA, 195 - 00136 ROMA

As we are preparing for the Enlarged General Council in Dakar, Fr Schouver gives his views on the importance, value and contribution of General Chapters and Enlarged General Councils.

Editor: What are your expectations from the meeting in Dakar?

Fr Schouver: In general, I would hope that we will make progress in areas that I consider essential, e.g. that

- our lives will more truly witness to the Gospel,
- we will respond to the real needs of the poor,
- we will be more inspired by a missionary spirituality.

And in particular that Dakar

- will accept the paper on Formation as our formation programme needs to be improved.
- will stimulate confreres to give time to personal renewal.
- will give clear indications concerning what needs to be changed in the organisation of the Congregation so that a paper can be prepared for the next General Chapter.
- will make a commitment to a greater involvement in working with refugees,
- and that we will leave Dakar with greater mutual trust, greater desire to work together and greater acceptance of our unity in diversity.

Editor: An Enlarged General Council is intended to evaluate how the decisions of the previous General Chapters are being carried out. What points from Itaici do you see being evaluated in Dakar?

Fr Schouver: Itaici took very few concrete decisions. All capitulants recognised, in the experiences presented, a certain meaning and spirit of our commitment as Spiritans today. This spirit should also be the mark of our style of leadership which is based on listening, reading our experience and dialogue.

I also believe that this leadership style and also that of Itaici, must be evaluated. You may also know that the evaluation papers of the Delegates at Itaici were lost between Brazil and Rome.

The Itaici Chapter in 1992 designated particular lines of action while leaving to the General Council responsibility for making them more precise and putting them into action. This is what we have tried to do in the areas of formation, organisation, finance, first appointments etc.

Editor: There is an opinion that each Chapter starts from a fresh beginning without evaluating sufficiently what had been

decided in previous Chapters. We are therefore locked into a system of repeating ourselves. Chapters have become "talking shops" rather than meetings for moving forward. Do you think there may be some truth in this?

Fr Schouver: As I have said already, EGC'95 can look again at the work of Itaici. The reports of the Superiors General to previous Chapters have always included an evaluation. However, capitulants have been unwilling to question radically our Chapters.

I would like to add that I don't like the words "talking shops" very much, even though I may myself, have used similar terms in the past. There has been much more in the four General Chapters of which I was part. I feel that the problem is in communicating the results and spirit of the Chapter to the Congregation as a whole.

A Chapter facing a decision that carries an element of risk for the future may arrive at a decision by majority vote. Orientations of a general importance are more commonly taken by consensus.

Editor: Itaici, for those who took part, was an experience not to be forgotten. Looking back over the past three years and from what you have seen in visiting the circumscriptions, do you think that the 'happiness index' and the 'feeling good factor', of Itaici were any indication of its importance or success?

Fr Schouver: I do not agree that everything that happened at Itaici can be reduced to emotional experience as is suggested by the use of pejorative terms borrowed from popular psychology. All who were present at the Chapter perceived a certain meaning of our mission today and we got in Itaici a dynamism to commit ourselves to move in that direction. I believe that it was an experience of faith and hope.

In my visitations since the Chapter, I have seen the spirit of Itaici at work. I hope that it will continue to grow and develop despite weaknesses and problems. For me, Itaici is the road we should travel even if the approach is not dominant in the Church as a whole at this time.

Editor: General Chapters and EGCs in the past thirty years have demanded a heavy input both in personnel and resources. Do you think that the time has come to make an input and output analysis of both General Chapters and EGCs ?

Fr Schouver: I myself have asked the same question in the course of previous Chapters. Those present have always concluded that chapters were worthwhile despite the heavy input demanded. Nevertheless, should EGC '95 so desire, the General Council could do an evaluation in the context of

ORGANISATION and from which the next Chapter could draw conclusions.

Editor: Some confreres consider that the Congregation has no strong centre. Would you like to comment on this view?

Fr. Schouver: It is my opinion that our Congregation, decentralised as it now is, corresponds to the style of mission that requires inculturation in different countries. I would say that it corresponds also to our spirituality - one of being able to adapt to the real; openness to the poor; differences in culture and new experiences.

Our spirit does not tend to either centralisation, to programming *a priori* or to 'voluntarism'

A strong juridical base is not a *sine qua non* in order that the Centre be strong. The Centre is strong also by its ability to welcome and to bring together the riches of different inspirations. It is strong when the vision is accepted by the whole Congregation.

Editor: Most confreres are appreciative of the visits of the members of the G.Council. However do you think that travelling puts too great a strain on the Councillors themselves, leaving too little time for reflection and leadership?

Fr Schouver: -I have asked myself several times about the outlay in expenses and the investment of time and energy which visitation demands. It has been discussed by the General Council so that a balance can be found. Speaking for myself, my reason for travelling was to get to know the Congregation. I shall do less from now on. This practice is also that of the Superiors of other Congregations.

Editor: Regarding where the 1998 Chapter should take place, some have expressed the opinion that meetings at this level should be held in the most economical and functional location. What weight should costs have in determining location?

Fr Schouver: Costs will have a decisive role for the location of the next Chapter. Itaici was chosen in the belief that it would not be more expensive than elsewhere.

Editor: One last question. Can you discern now the direction the Congregation may take in the next thirty years?

Fr Schouver: Simply, I believe that, if we follow the directions expressed above (the spirit of Itaici, the general hope in the leading presence of the Spirit) we will continue and will make a valuable contribution to both the Church and the service of the poor.

If I should venture to look into the future, I would say:

- The Congregation will be international in style but at the same time the roots of each group will be respected and valued.
- Members as a rule will be more professionally competent for the diversified ministry demanded in the future. They will contribute to the upkeep of their community by the salaries which they receive.
- Structures will be lighter and groups will be smaller. Nevertheless there will have to be sufficient structure to achieve the objectives of the Congregation and to favour a fraternal life-style among all. The spirit of our Founders and our traditions rather than structures will be our strength in living our vocation in a changing world.

Delegates: EGC, Dakar

The following seven have been selected in addition to those mentioned in Spiritan News No. 106.

Patrick DORAN, Papua New Guinea.
Yves Le QUERE, Guyane.
Anthony AMADI, Zimbabwe
John KWOFIE, WAF
Séan MULLIN, Sierra Leone.
Donal MURRAY, The Gambia.
Michael ONWUEMELIE, Nigeria.
Marielle BEUSMANS, Holland, Associate.

News from Circumscriptions

Gabon

On Nov. 24, 1994, the Church in Gabon celebrated the 150th anniversary of its foundation. Fr Schouver represented the Generalate. Mgr Santos Abril, Apostolic Nuncio preached the sermon.

Of the fifteen assembled by Mgr Barron and Fr Libermann for the mission of the Two Guineas, only two reached Gabon on the Nov. 28, 1844, Fr Bessieux and Br Grégoire. The others were either dead or repatriated, the mission to Liberia having failed. Because of this, Fr Bessieux can be considered the Founder of the Church in West Africa.

There were sixteen members of his family present in Libreville for the celebrations.

Today, there are still 46 Spiritans working in Gabon. Two confreres are natives of the country.

A worthwhile Review "Naissance de l'Eglise Catholique au XIX^e siècle sur la Côte Ouest de l'Afrique" has been published by Gérard Morel, Editions du Bosquet - C.D.L.C. - BP 8100 - Libreville, Gabon. This publication gives a good historical account of the work of Mgr Barron and the involvement of Missionaries of the Immaculate Heart of Mary in the venture.

Germany

From May 25 - June 4, the German Province will celebrate the centenary of the arrival of the Spiritans in Knechtsteden.

In 1895, the Congregation bought the Abbey from the Premonstratensians. The Abbey was in very poor condition having been burned in 1869. 1899 saw the first issue of the magazine "Echo of Knechtsteden" (Echo aus Knechtsteden) which was printed on the house press. Two years later the junior seminary was opened. In 1907, the faculties of Philosophy and Theology were added and remained there until 1967.

During the 1914 - 18 war, 57 confreres lost their lives.

The Spiritans were evicted in 1941 when the house was commandeered to become a hospital and a camp for refugees and prisoners. After the war it was re-possessioned by the Congregation reaching 495 residents in 1950, the highest number since it became the property of the Spiritans. In 1978, the Libermann house of Formation was opened in the former residence of the Brothers. 1988 was the 850th anniversary of its Cathedral Church.

1995: Spiritans are 100 yrs in Knechtsteden.

News Items

Statistics of the Congregation

Here is a breakdown of the professed members according to circumscription of origin as on January 01, 1995.

	Bps	Prs	Brs	Schol	Total
France	12	626	114	9	761
Ireland	4	530	25	12	571
Nigeria	2	145	7	140	294
Netherlands	2	216	48		266
Portugal	2	160	36	7	205
Germany	2	94	24	1	121
US/East	2	100	4	3	109
WAF		23	2	70	95
East Africa		72		22	94
Switzerland		78	2		80
England	1	64	2	1	68
Poland		50	7	9	66
Belgium	1	54	4		59
Canada	1	48	7		56
FAC		36	3	15	54
US/West		52	2		54
Angola		29	1	18	48
Tr/Canada		45			45
Trinidad	1	32	1	3	37
Brazil	1	18	4	5	28
Spain		17	3	1	21
FOI		7		1	8
Puerto-Rico		5		2	7
Fond. Zaire		3		3	6
Haiti		3			3
SCAF				3	3
Mexico				2	2
Southern Africa.	1				1
TOTAL	31	2509	296	326	3162

General Council Decisions

General Council

- Jan. 13, nominated Fr Vincent O'TOOLE of the English Province, as Archivist at the Generalate, for a mandate of three years, with effect from Nov. 30, 1995.

- March 01, nominated Fr Gabriel MBILINGI as Superior of the Province of Angola for three years from May 16, 1995.

- March 01, confirmed the election of Fr. René TABARD as Superior of the District of Congo for a 2nd term of three years from Sept. 22, 1995.

- March 01 confirmed the election of Fr John KWOFIE as Superior of the Foundation of West Africa (WAF) for three years from May 01, 1995.

- March 01 decided to prolong the mandate of Fr John HOGAN as Superior of the Foundation of West Africa (WAF) until April 30, 1995. The mandate is retroactive to Feb. 12, 1995.

- March 01, decided that the communities of Kinshasa are part of the District and Foundation of Zaire from March 01, 1995.

- March 01, nominated Fr Ghislain de BANVILLE (District of Bangui) General Archivist of the Congregation in Chevilly for three years from Sept. 01, 1995.

- March 01, has transferred Fr Joseph CARRARD from the General Administration to Switzerland, his Province of origin with effect from Sept. 01, 1995.

Waterier Peace Prize - Holland

Our confrere, Fr McAllister, Dr Elco Krijn, his wife Karin and their baby daughter, Zita were murdered in Sierra Leone by "rebels" in March 1994. Fr McAllister was Parish Priest of Panguma, Eastern Province and Elco was working in the Mission hospital there. Elco and his family, natives of Holland, have been awarded the Waterier Peace Prize posthumously.

This prize is awarded to a person or organisation who has contributed to Peace in a significant way.

Telephone Numbers

English Province: Provincialate, Northwood.

Northwood Community: 01923-829655

Provincial: 01923-825615

Fax:01923-836975

China: Duquesne Summer School

Duquesne University School of Law is sponsoring a summer school in June 1995, to be hosted in China by the China University of Political Science and Law. It will be the first ever summer school of its kind, in Beijing. Duquesne law professor Alfred S Pelaez who is director of the course says

"this is the only programme available to foreign law students in Beijing. Students will get the chance to study the most modern city in China and the site for some of the most amazing historical attractions in the world".

Silent Sentinels of Death

British and American intelligence estimate that there are over 200 million uncleared landmines in the world today and 500,000 to 1 million are being added each year. The figure for Angola is 20 million while the latest figures for Rwanda are 1 million.

It can take as little as \$3.00 to lay a mine but an average of \$1,000.00 to de-fuse it. It will take seven to ten years to de-mine Mozambique at a cost of \$30 - \$40 million.

80% - 90% of those killed or maimed by landmines are civilians. An international campaign started in 1991 to ban production of landmines. There are now more than 100 NGOs involved in the campaign both from the producing and recipient nations. Belgium and Holland have decided to destroy their landmine arsenals. The UN Secretary General, Dr Boutros Ghali at the 49th General Assembly in New York in September 1994 asked for a total ban on landmines.

World Debt

SEDOS in Rome have set up a team to gather information and data on current world debt. The aim is to build up a comprehensive knowledge of the economics that have caused huge debt in developing countries. At present,

poor countries make large transfers in interest to First World banks and Institutions.

Frs W. Jenkinson, A. Perrier and J. Skinnader are members of this working committee. The team is interested to hear from other Spiritans who would like to help this work by collecting data from their own countries and forwarding it to the Generalate.

Spiritus

There is a growing interest and movement to Missio ad Gentes in Latin America. This requires a deep theological reflection. In order to respond to this need, the General Assembly of the Review Spiritus has agreed to the publish an edition in Spanish.

General Council Diary

Fr Schouwer: March 14 - 20, Ghana; May 5 - 20, EGC, Dakar; May 20 - 30, Senegal (Visitation); June 2 - 5, Knechtsteden, Germany; June 30 - July 7, Paraguay; July 10 - 17, Alto Juruá; July 18 - 28, Tefé (Visitation); Sept. 1 - 15, Cameroon (Chapter).

Fr Kelly: May 5 - 20, Dakar; July 31 - Aug. 6, Montreal (Meeting of Younger Spiritans); Aug. 10 - 31, Canada.

Fr Odigbo: May 5 - 20, Dakar.

Fr Bongo: April 7 - 9, Paris; May 5 - 20, Dakar; July 3 - 20, Paris (Chapter of Spiritan Sisters).

Fr Castriani: May 5 - 20, Dakar; June 24 - July 10, Paraguay, (Meeting); July 10 - Aug. 28, Alto Juruá and Tefé (Visitation); July 28 - Aug. 13, Sao Paolo.

Fr Wijnen: May 5 - 20, Dakar.

Fr Jolibois: May 5 - 20, Dakar; May 20 - 30, Senegal (Visitation).

Fr Moreira Dias: April 20 - May 5, Stuttgart (Meeting of European Bursars); May 5 - 20, Dakar.

Meeting of New Major Superiors

Sept. 17 - 23, 1995 at the Generalate, Rome.

Our Dead

24 Feb. :Br Eligius .Van DORST Netherlands, 78 yrs
25 Feb. :Fr William C. COSTELLOE England, 79 yrs
27 Feb. :Fr Joseph FOURDAN France, 48 yrs
28 Feb. :Fr Antoine WOLLENSCHNEIDER France, 88 yrs
06 Mar. :Fr Edward J. SCOTT Ireland, 60 yrs
08 Mar. :Fr William J. HOLMES USAJE, 84 yrs
13 Mar. :Fr Charles STOERKEL France, 78 yrs
14 Mar. :Fr Etienne VIENNOT France, 71 yrs
20 Mar. :Br Henri B. Van de LAAR Netherlands, 78 yrs
25 Mar. :Fr Joseph GALLIC France, 72 yrs

Celebrations will begin on Ascension Thursday with the theme, *The Church in the World*. Fr Frans Timmermans, former Superior General and now Director, Missio, Holland will preside.

Cardinal Dr Joachim Meisner, Archbishop of Cologne will preside at a solemn celebration on Sunday, May 28.

The dead of the Province over the last hundred years will be remembered at Mass on Thursday June 01. After the Mass all are invited to visit the cemetery to pray for our deceased members at the tomb of Father Amandus Acker, Founder of Knechtsteden

The theme of the closing day is "Presence of the Holy Spirit over the last hundred years". Fr General, P. Schouwer will preside at the closing ceremony.

Bangui

The Church in Bangui, Central African Republic celebrated the centenary of its foundation from January 1994 to January 1995. Mgr Augouard and Fr Remy arrived in Bangui to establish the Church one hundred years ago. The celebrations closed with Solemn Pontifical Mass at which Cardinal Carlo Furno, Papal Delegate presided. Frs Schouwer, Jolibois and Wijnen were present.

The closing ceremony was relayed to Europe on French TV and was available to all European channels.

Fr Bernard Courant, Principal Superior writes:

What a contrast! Thousands of faithful and many priests surrounding their bishops, for the closure of the centenary celebrations. Bishops came from neighbouring countries as well as Europe to share the joy of one hundred years of evangelisation.

One hundred years ago, Mgr Augouard arriving by boat, disembarked where the Church, "St Paul des Rapides" stands today. Who awaited him? Who welcomed him?

One hundred years is a short spell of time. On the other hand it is long. It takes

- much courage to enter territory scarcely known and to live in a difficult climate,*
- much determination to continue to rebuild structures destroyed either by fire or tornadoes,*
- much hope also in presenting the word of God with confidence that at some later date it will produce its fruit,*
- great openness of spirit and boldness to speak about the innate ability of the human being to progress,*
- plenty of self-discipline and humility to continue day in day out, the work of founding the Church which is proud of its stature today.*

There

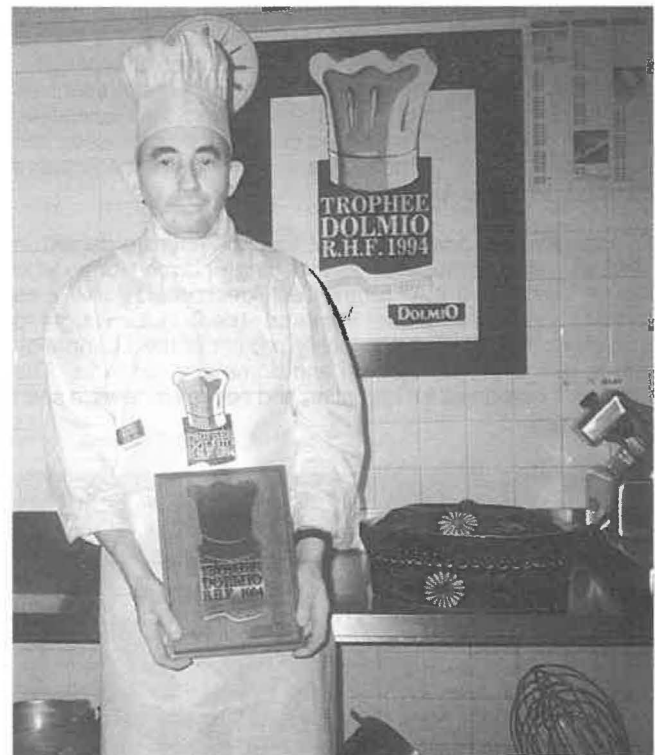
- are six dioceses and soon there will be more,*
- are liturgies broadcast live on radio and television,*
- is a diocesan radio station,*
- is a seminary full of students,*

- are communities, up and doing where the laity are responsible.

As has been said elsewhere, we can be proud of those who have gone before us, yet at the same time they challenge us. We are becoming fewer. How best can we use our resources for the good of the country? Our Chapter, presided by Fr Schouwer, gave us the opportunity to discuss these questions. We are looking forward to the future.

France

Br Dominique Wack, Chef de cuisine at Rue Lhomond, has received *Prix Special du jury 1994* (gold trophy) in the catering competition for hotels in France on the theme "dishes from our local areas" (*Les parfums du terroir*) for his recipe: *le bœckkeoffe de cannelloni à l'alsacienne* (a meat dish in the style of Alsace).



Br Dominique Wack

Zimbabwe

The meeting of South Central African Region, SCAF, (Southern Africa, Malawi, Zimbabwe and Zambia) took place in Mutare Diocesan Pastoral Centre in Zimbabwe from Nov. 14 - 17, 1994. At this meeting Fr Jim Devine, District Superior of Southern Africa was elected first Superior of the new South Central African Foundation (SCAF). The General Council formally established SCAF, on Nov. 22, 1994 and confirmed Fr Jim Devine as Superior.

A solemn celebration to mark the 10th anniversary of the arrival of the first Spiritans in Zimbabwe in April 1984 closed the meeting. Pontifical Mass, presided by Mgr Alexio Muchabaiwa, Bishop of Mutare, assisted by his Auxiliary Mgr Patrick Mutume, attracted many priests and religious as well laity and friends of Spiritans, in Zimbabwe. The guests praised what the Spiritans are contributing to the Diocese of Mutare as it recovers from the independence struggle. Special mention was made of their work for the promotion

of vocations to the local clergy, to the development of a diocesan pastoral plan and to efforts towards self-reliance in the local church.

The first two Spiritans came to Mutare from Nigeria in 1984. Since then, other Nigerians and Michael Sibeko, the first South African Spiritan, have worked with the group in Mutare. The Spiritans have opened a mission in Harare at the request of the Archbishop of Harare. At present, there are 13 confreres working in Zimbabwe of whom 12 are from Nigeria. Fr Kinderen from Holland is working in the refugee programme at the request of the Bishops' Conferences (IMBISA). The General Assembly of the group is planned for April 1995.

Ghana

The West African Foundation (WAF) held its first Chapter in the Spiritan house of philosophy, Ejisu, Ghana from Feb. 12 - 24, 1995. WAF members are from Ghana, Sierra Leone, The Gambia, and Makurdi in Nigeria. There were 27 official delegates in attendance. Some Major Superiors, Frs Keane, Ireland; Séan Mullin, Sierra Leone; Micheal Onwuemelié, Nigeria and Donal Murray, The Gambia, were present as observers plus Frs Odigbo and Castriani from the Generalate. The Foundation has 23 members ordained, 71 professed and six in the novitiate. Members are working in West Africa and there are two also in Malawi.

Fr John Kwofie, one of the first four members ordained in 1988 was elected Superior, succeeding Fr John Hogan who has accompanied WAF for the past fifteen years, initially, as Director and later as its first Superior. The Chapter sought to give guidelines for the missionary project of the Foundation and to define its identity both at home and 'ad extra'. The training of personnel for formation and self-reliance were seen as priorities.



WAF Council: L-R: Frs P. Palmer, M. Amoako-Atah, J. Kwofie (Superior) G. Luseni and F. Faerenga

Makurdi

The district held its Chapter from Jan. 4 - 10. The Chapter was preceded by a visitation of the District by two General Councilors, Sergio Castriani and Godfrey Odigbo from Dec. 10 - 26, 1994. All the members of the District were official delegates and almost all attended. Frs Luseni (WAF), Onwuemelié, (Nigeria) and Ward, (England) attended as observers.

The Chapter looked at the problem of personnel and reexamined the missionary project in the two dioceses in

which Spiritans are working, to see how best to give expression to our Spiritan charism.

Angola

After a two days' retreat, the Provincial Chapter began work on the afternoon of Jan. 22. The Provincial in his report recalled

- the spirit of Itaiçi,
- the work of evangelisation in the province during the time of war,
- the work of our confreres with refugees and in the defence of prisoners,
- the organisation of food kitchens for children and the old,
- the climate and atmosphere as a result of the Holy Father's visit,
- the celebration of the centenaries of the missions in Lucula, Cabinda, Malanje, Calulo, Caconda,
- the opening of the Province to the outside (Guinée-Bissau, Congo and FAC),
- Spiritan Formation which had much success despite the difficulties of the war,
- the arrival of confreres from other Provinces while being aware of the war situation
- and finally the present self-questioning of the missionaries.

The main themes of the other reports was firstly, the crisis which the people are undergoing and secondly, what the confreres are doing in order to save what can be saved. The reports from the regions suggested the following four themes.

- Community life, which was discussed in depth.
- Formation: it was thought better to leave the discussion of Spiritan Formation until after the EGC of 1995.
- Apostolic life.
- The organisation of the Province. The Chapter decided to await the results of EGC, 1995 before discussing this matter further.

Papua New Guinea

Fr B. Kelly who has recently returned from visitation to Papua New Guinea writes:

As the single engine plane landed at Aitape airstrip on Feb. 16, 1995, I caught sight of Mike Doyle chatting with a young Melanesian whose wide smile told everyone that he was enjoying a happy moment. Mike had returned to Papua after eight years, to organise the orientation of three Spiritans just arrived from Nigeria.

My journey that morning had begun in a downpour at Fatima, the highest point in the Aitape diocese (altitude 3000 ft) where Pat McGeever has been working for the past ten years. He leads a pastoral team that includes 3 Franciscan Sisters as well as catechists and prayer leaders.

Pat's ministry has been remarkable for his ability to converse with the people in their own language. During my visit, I thumbed through a hard-backed, well used notebook in which all the Sunday readings were written out in the local language. This "liturgical book", has transformed many a liturgy. Language is the gateway to culture and Pat's interest in the people takes in the whole range of their culture. He uses many of the traditional symbols. Learning from St. Patrick, he has baptised tradition, giving meaning in a Catholic context. This also gives needed encouragement to preserve these healthy traditions.