

A LOCAL PILGRIMAGE – DAUGHTERS OF MARY AND JOSEPH, GHANA

In Ahotokurom community, when Srs. Pat and Monica are talking about the DMJ early days in Ghana, where the sisters lived and worked first, you wonder where those places are located. You also ask yourself what is happening there now. One day, in a conversation, the community decided to go on a pilgrimage in order for the African sisters to know their roots.



SETTING OFF

On Friday, 14th May 2021, we set off from Ahotokurom. Our first stop was at St. Theresa's Minor Seminary, Amisano which is about six kilometers from Ahotokurom. Sr. June Bell taught English and Mathematics there from 1973 to 1983. Sr. Agnes O'Shea also taught there along with Sr. June from September 1978 to 1980.



ST. THERESA'S MINOR SEMINARY MAIN GATE

SEMINARY JUNCTION





ABOVE, IS THE HOUSE IN WHICH OUR SISTERS LIVED AT ST. THERESA MINOR SEMINARY. THE TREES INFRONT OF THE HOUSE WERE PLANTED BY SR. JUNE BELL.

We later drove through Cape Coast town and went up the hill where the Infant Jesus sisters have their novitiate. That was

PAT POINTING TO THE ROOM THAT THE DMJs STAYED IN AT THE SIJ FORMATION HOUSE



THE INFANT JESUS FORMATION HOUSE, WHERE SOME OF OUR SISTERS LIVED TO

FORM THE FIRST BATCH OF THE INFANT JESUS

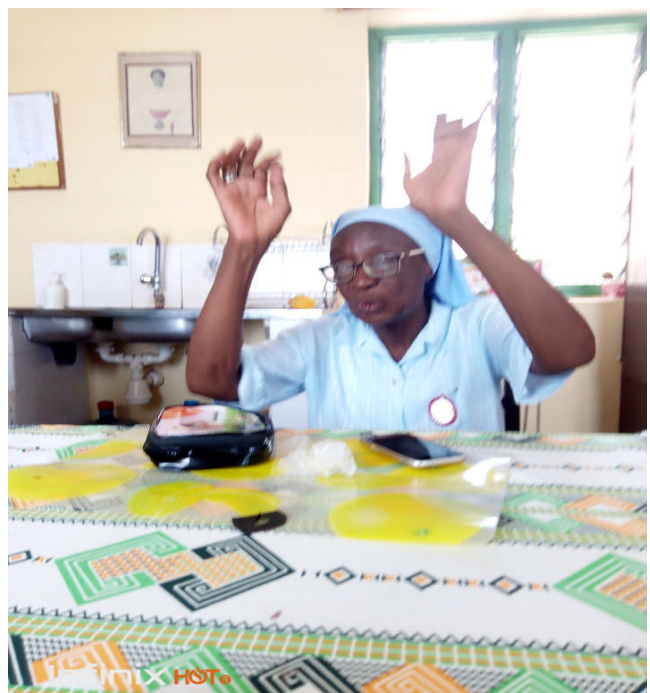
We hit the road towards the Eastern region. We stopped somewhere on Esikuma road for our picnic. Pat had packed breakfast and lunch for the five of us. We ate transient style, standing on the roadside with the beautiful bamboo whistling around us.



THE SISTERS HAVING THEIR BREAKFAST ALONG ESIKUMA ROAD

We stopped at Esikuma to greet one of the Infant Jesus sisters, Sr. Agnes Kudjo, who was formed by the DMJs. She was overjoyed by the short visit, and in true Ghanaian style welcomed us with water and biscuits. We took the biscuits with us not knowing where the next meal was coming from.

SR. AGNES KUDJO, INFANT JESUS, SINGING FOR THE DMJ COMMUNITY





DMJ COMMUNITY WITH SR. AGNES INFANT JESUS AT ESIKUMA COMMUNITY

At Akim Swedru, the clinic has expanded and is now in the hands of the government. What used to be our convent is under renovation to provide accommodation for the medical personnel and administration offices. What used to be the orphanage (before the DMJ) was transformed into an operating theatre. There is a cupboard full of books there belonging to DMJ. We hope to go for them!!!

We also visited the sisters who have their school on the hill behind the clinic. One sister, Mary Brigid, ran to us with open arms. Monica and Zabibu were not with us at this point. Mary Brigid then began talking about Monica, how she had impressed her so much as a novice and asked us where she was. Gladys said she is coming behind us and her joy at seeing Monica was unbelievable.

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THE FORMER DMJ HOUSE AT AKIM SWEDRU

As we journeyed from Akim Swedru to Ofoase we felt sad at the decimation of what used to be the forest.

The road had not really changed very much – wider but not finished and full of potholes and dust. We reminisced about when Peg used to arrive with her snow white hair gone ginger.



At Akim Ofoase a few buildings have been added to the clinic but the community house is still the same. The only change is the wall around the house and new tiles on the floor. The sisters of the Handmaids of the Divine Redeemer of Accra (HDR) are using the house and working at the clinic. We met Sr. Mary Dorothy Agyapong HDR who was very pleasant. We also visited a few of our former staff members, including Dominic who used to be our driver. We also met one of our former Leprosy Sufferers, Gabriel Appiah. Many years ago soon after we began our

work in Ahotokurom we built a small house for Gabriel so that he could settle in his hometown, Ofoase.



THE DMJ COMMUNITY WITH SR. DOROTHY HDR, IN AKIM OFUASE HOUSE

KIM OFOASE CLINIC





AKIM OFOASE FORMER DMJ HOUSE

It was 6pm when we left Akim Ofoase for Accra. We drove through the dark Accra road singing and chatting. It was so dark and with all the lights of the oncoming cars at times we wondered if we would reach Accra before daylight. Our Guardian Angels were with us and somehow we arrived in Accra a few minutes to 11pm and went straight to be. Gladys, who had some contact with the place we were to spend a night in Accra had called and arranged for accommodation. The following day, Saturday, 15th May 2021, we went to James Town where our late Sr. Kate Creedon and Sr. Cathleen Calvey lived. The house is still there, occupied by one of the Brothers of Charity. He works at 'City of God', the former 'Sodom and Gomorrah' camp.

The rest of the day was spent browsing around Makola Market with Gladys leading us. Everyone enjoyed that and even bought a few bits and pieces.

A memorable weekend was had by Srs. Pat, Monica, Gladys, Zabibu and Theresa.



DMJs ARRIVING AT THE HOUSE IN WHICH OUR LATE SR. KATE CREEDON AND SR. CATHERINE CALVEY LIVED IN JAMES TOWN, ACCRA.

We then went to Accra (Makola) market for some shopping. We had our lunch around Accra after which we headed to Kasoa.

We spent a night in our own house in Kasoa. The next morning, Sunday 16th May 2021, we went to Sts. Peter and Paul for the first mass. We returned to the house, had our breakfast and around 11am, we started our journey to Cape Coast. On our way, we dropped Zabibu at school since her semester was beginning the following day.

Reported by Gladys