

The Netherlands

A short report of International student chaplaincy (ISC) activities

The year 2014 ISC Delft may count as a year of blessing. It seems to be a record breaking blessing year

A summer which started early and lasted longest than records ever showed before, the largest ever group of 22 Masters of Science leaving for their homelands which hurt but is part of the church of touch and go.

Next on the list was Father Heinz Kuluke, Superior General of the SVD Order, visited ISC Raamstraat international student church Sunday celebration. He is a most relaxed and wonderful person and in his homily he shared his mission efforts with the deprived of the Visayas (Philippines) where he worked with and for the children living in garbage dumps. SVD stands for Society of the Divine Word, well Father Heinz can be called a Divine Humanitarian, and surely God is super proud of him.

Of course spring surprise family feat of Rev. Waltraut Stroh, who, as grandmother, baptized her own grandson Jan. in the international student church True, not a real ISC Delft relation, but distant relatives are relatives too right? Rev. Stroh did call all the visiting children, witnessing the event little future engineers which bridged the gap. May grandson Jan live up to grandma's expectation, but first things first a happy cuddly childhood.

IHE UNESCO PHD research student Nigerian Pedi Obani was next to receive all three sacraments in one go. She was a regular Bible study sharing group member for the past two years with the ISC. The choir accompanied Indonesian Adji in a Nigerian (Hausa) sang Lord's Prayer, breathtaking and tear jerking for the baptized as well as her Godparents, the honorable Bishop sure missed a great celebration!

Next was the distant wedding of Ceaser in Jakarta, Indonesia, witnessed by no less than nine ISC Delft member who joyfully conquered the eleven plus thousand miles, seven from Delft and two from Rome (former Delft). Some call it wedding; some marriage whereas I love the British term wedlock, sounds more permanent and more in connection with the vows before God. Love to think that God holds the keys to the wedlock and doesn't hesitate to throw them if parties do not stick to their vows. Again, to feel the closeness with the newlyweds in Raamstraat, Father & Son, Senot & Adji, in the right Spirit, recited the Lord's Prayers in Bahasa Indonesia. Indeed we are what a church, what a family, what a home (be it away from home).

The next marvel on the list that made his way to the TUDelft Auditorium as humble Italian Diego Riste, exiting the same premises as 3-D, Distinguished Doctor Diego, second Cum Laude on ISC Delft Record, preceded only by fellow Italian Prof. Dr. Ir. Anna Dal'Acqua. He was almost embarrassed with the laudations, humble as he is and will, by nature always remain.

Came October 19, a joint Christian water-fest. A bright day by all means to be baptized 1 named Luca, meaning light (Italian rooted again) joined by his Indonesian buddy Lukas meaning light as well. One to be blessed with baptism by Father Avin, the other bathed in blessed water by Mother (Rev) Waltraut, thus the fresh water students came in handy. It was a grand turnout, not fitting the chapel by near so we used the main church instead with some help local volunteers reshuffling chairs and manning the sound

system. The celebration was a bit lengthy but inevitable in a joint affair. The Indonesian ISC sisters took care of a fine supply of catering after the service.

In the finals of this month of great harvest remains Doctor to be Pavel Babal, who will undoubtedly successfully defend his thesis too. It seems we must learn to be patient in ISC Delft with so many Doctors watching us! Blessings? Well, since 1981 over two thousand ISC brothers and sisters went home as Masters in their field, a good thirty made the next step on the academic ladder, PhD , Doctor. I would not dare preview on what we pray and hope to be in store for each and every one of us, let it be hope, happiness and health first and foremost and next the fighting spirit to reach what you reached for. As every year, when the splash of fresh water specialist find their way to their rooms along the Delft canals and to our beloved Raamstraat church, I sigh with satisfaction that we may build new highlights in yet another academic season.

This year there are more than 1500 new international students have began their academic study in TU delft ,180 in ISS and 210 in IHE UNESCO Delft. The regular activities such as accompanying the students with spiritual guidance and counselling as well as weekly Monday Bible study, Global meeting point, Sunday liturgy and singing practice is going on well.

On 15th of November will be the National interfaith conference and all the ISP members are most welcome to join this year the theme is faith and Justice .The place of the conference is ISS kortenerkade 12 beginning at 10AM on 15th November 2014.

Avin Kunnekkadan SVD