

## **GUEST SPEAKER – KEVIN WELLS, DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC RELATIONS, WORLD VILLAGES**

**WEB:** [www.worldvillages.org](http://www.worldvillages.org)

- Kevin summarized his book “Priest and Beggar.” Some highlights as follows:
  - Fr. Aloysius Schwartz was born in Washington, D.C., United States to Louis Schwartz and Cedelia Bourassa, the third of eight children. His father sold furniture door-to-door, and his mother had come to work in Washington, D.C., during the First World War, where she met her future husband. His mother died of cancer when he was 16 years old.
  - On December 8, 1957, he arrived in Korea. As a consequence of the Korean War, there were many widows, orphans, beggars, and street children. Almost one-half of the adult population were not employed productively, so they resorted to selling rags and waste paper, begging, and stealing.
  - One day he collapsed while saying Mass, and was diagnosed with hepatitis. His recovery was slow, so he was advised to go back to the United States; without money for his fare, he begged for transportation by an American ship. In the US, he made mission appeals at parish masses on Sundays to raise funds for the poor in Korea.
  - In December 1961, he returned to Korea and was assigned as a pastor of St. Joseph's Parish. He organized the Legion of Mary ladies to assist him in helping the poor. He founded the Religious Congregation of the Sisters of Mary on August 15, 1964, in Anam-dong and, on May 10, 1981, the Brothers of Christ.
  - Together with the sisters and brothers, Schwartz established Boystowns and Girlstowns to care for and educate the orphans, street children, and children of impoverished families up to their late teens. They also built hospitals and sanatoriums for very needy patients and hostels for homeless and disabled older men, mentally disabled children, and unwed mothers.
  - In 1983 he was a recipient of the Ramon Magsaysay Award for International Understanding, an award given annually in honor of President Ramón F. Magsaysay. He met Cardinal Jaime Sin, the then Archbishop of Manila, who invited him to set up his Religious Community in the Archdiocese of Manila.
  - In 1985 he founded the Sisters of Mary at Sta. Mesa, Manila, expanding his charity programs. Buildings were constructed, and children from the slum and impoverished areas were recruited.
  - In 1989, he was diagnosed to have a terminal illness, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS). Despite his deteriorating health, he established Boystown and Girlstown in Mexico, which he called his "unfinished symphony." His illness made him immobile, and he continued his work in a wheelchair. He celebrated Mass daily, prayed, heard confessions, and preached. Schwartz died on March 16, 1992, at the Girlstown in Manila, and was buried at the Boystown in Silang, Cavite, now Girlstown. He fulfilled his wish of wanting to “die like Jesus”.
- Kevin offered other books he authored for sale at the meeting including: “Burst – A Story of God’s Grace When Life Falls Apart”, and “The Priests We Need to Save the Church”.
- Information on Kevin’s organization, “Sisters of Mary World Villages for Children” can be found at [www.worldvillages.org](http://www.worldvillages.org)