

# JIVAN

News and Views of Jesuits in India

August 2014

**Jesuit University**  
first in India

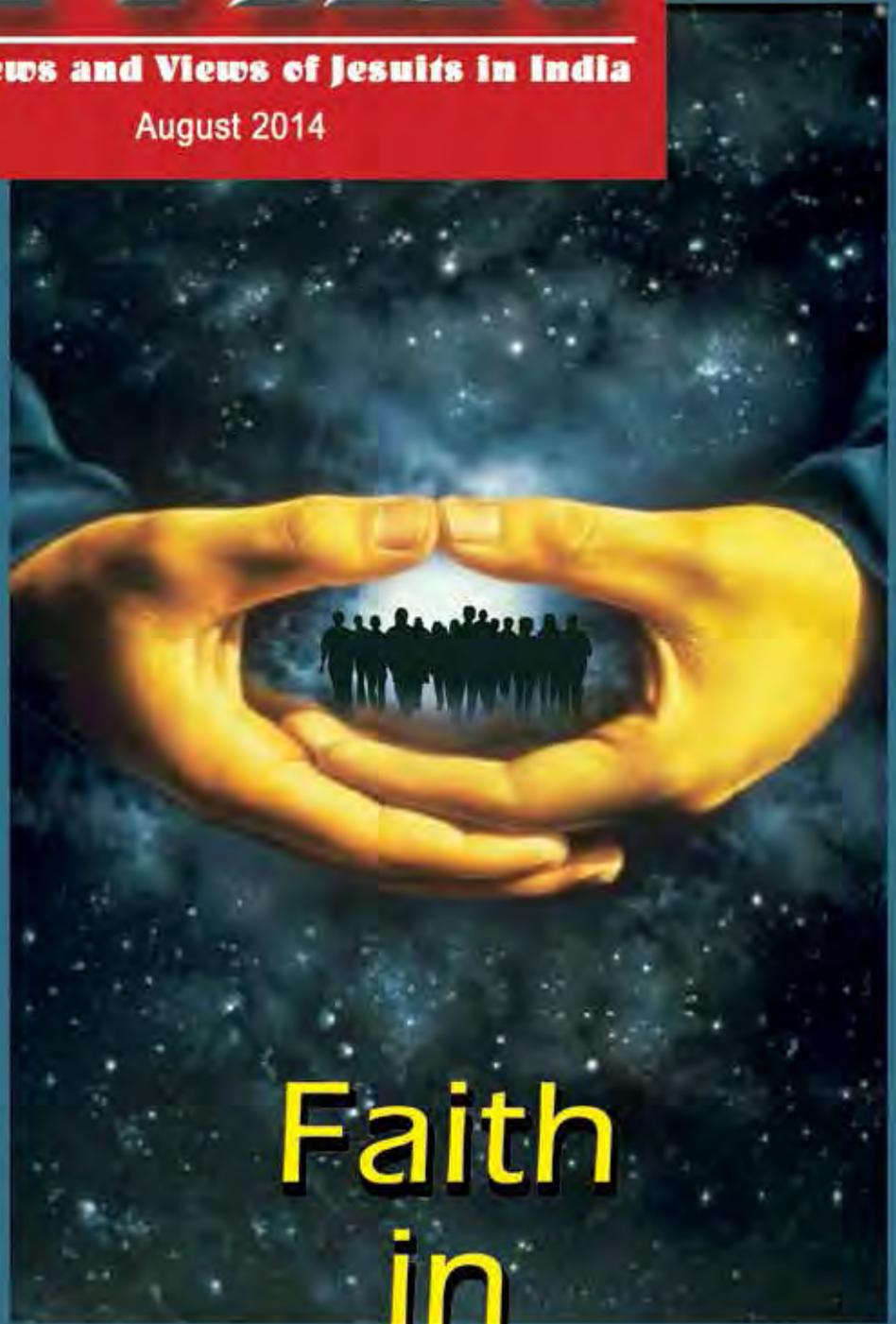
**Jesuit education**  
Ama Samy's questions

**Ecology mission**  
of Gujarat Jesuits

**Jesuit Restoration**  
in Myanmar

**10 commandments**  
of Nature

**IGFA 2014**  
In Chennai



**Faith  
in  
Providence**

# A hush in heaven

BY ALFRED BARRETT

*There was silence in heaven as Mary entered in,  
For even Gabriel had not foreseen  
The glory of a soul immune from sin  
Throned in the body of the angels' Queen.*

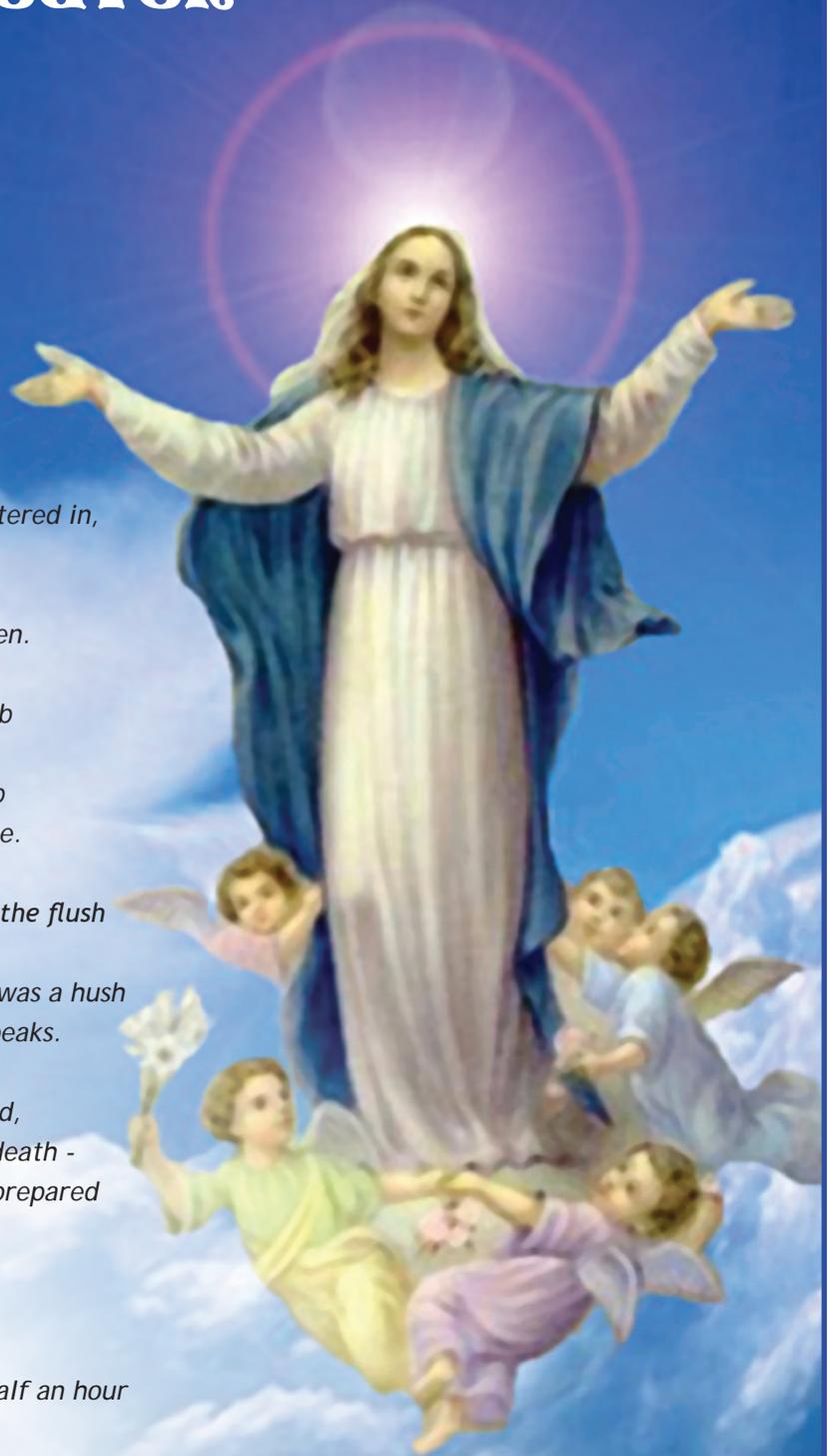
*Blessed be God and Mary in whose womb  
Was woven God's incredible disguise.  
She gave Our Lord His Body. In the tomb  
He gave her hers again and bade her rise.*

*Bright from death's slumber she arose, the flush  
Of a chaste joy illumining her cheeks;  
Among the motherless in heaven there was a hush  
To hear the way a mother laughs and speaks.*

*Eye had not seen, nor ear of angel heard,  
Nor heart conceived - until Our Lady's death -  
What God for those that love Him had prepared  
When heaven's synonym was Nazareth!*

*Her beauty opened slowly like a flower,  
Beauty to them eternally bequeathed.  
There was silence in heaven; as if for half an hour  
No angel breathed.*

- extracts from a poem titled, 'Mary's Assumption' in Sing of a Maiden, ed. by Therese Lentfoehr  
Source: <http://campus.udayton.edu>



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A sub-title of a report in this issue of *Jivan* (See p.10) seems to jump in joy: 'The first Jesuit University in India.' The news should bring joy to the heart of every Jesuit in a country where Jesuits are known as priests who run reputed colleges and schools. But will it?

It may not enthuse quite a few, as an increasing number of thinkers - Jesuits and others - have begun to ask what exactly we contribute through these colleges and schools. In an article in this issue (See p.13) Ama Samy, SJ, the Zen Master, says, "We educate our students just to compete in the rat-race of greed, competition and consumerism. Our education is only mass production in service of the capitalist machine."

The May-June '14 issue of the CRI's newsletter, *Religious India*, presented the views of some excellent Religious educators. Br Dr Brendan Mac Carthaigh, CFC, Founder and CEO of an NGO called 'SERVE'(Students' Empowerment, Rights & Vision through Education) says it very well: "In India as Jesus did with the thinking of his time we need to turn the entire system right-way up. Because yes, it is very definitely upside down right now. Look at our priorities. Ask any parent sending her/his child to school. Or teachers. Ultimate goal: percentages. Not knowledge. Out of percentages: fat wages. Not fulfillment. Overall objective: socialization. Not freedom. Creativity is virtually a non-starter in most schools. And as for spirituality - even in our 'convent schools' - it is more honoured in the breach than the observance.

"The terrible reality about education is... we have the highest number of student suicides in the whole world... Believe me it is horrifying in the extreme. I look at a school compound full of cherry kids playing... and I wonder to myself, who will be the ones who will opt out of it all on a rope or in a fire or under a train.

"Why have we the highest number of student suicides in the world, when students all over the world are doing exams? ...Year after year we have our suicide season, around results time, when for various ostensible reasons our young people seek escape from the harsh reality of simply being students...

"There is more. Our kids become adults and perpetuate the system. Our students are valued only because they score well, bring honour to the family (God help them if they don't!) and get into a reputed college.

"We need to challenge ourselves on, what has changed in education in India since each of us entered this field? Other great philosophical and entrepreneurial minds have tried and are trying various changes. But Christians? Only the great Fr Tom Kunnunkal, SJ has really made a serious change to education in India (in the face of ruthless opposition) by his introduction of what we call the Open School. The rest of us do what society wants of us. We are the world, as St John would have put it.

"I work and pray for the day that our whole education system will recognize that we are in a mess, and that at least some of the responses to that mess need urgently to be implemented - most of all in our schools which enjoy high prestige, but unfortunately are largely seduced by the same golden calfs as the rest of the educating society."

Bro K. M. Joseph, SG, Assistant General of Montfort Brothers of St Gabriel, says, "One day a friend of mine and former Salesian challenged me: Is your celibacy and religious life mostly to make the lives of those who already have much more comfortable? Don't you see that the rich are making use of you to improve their prospects?"

The problem can be stated in another way: Do we - priests and nuns - in the field of education, our teachers and students, and our alumni challenge in any way the evils that plague our society? Hasn't Mammon extended his rule from the top in our socio-political life down to our hearts? Can any college or school - Christian or not - be started or run without greasing the palms of politicians and officials? Does not corruption affect every aspect of our life? Are not the poor the primary victims of this omnipresent evil?

Pope Francis comes down extremely hard on corruption, probably because he recognizes how it affects the poor (See p.16). Will the Jesuit university face this challenge?  
- M.A.J.A.



# Believing in what Love promises



**FAITH IN PROVIDENCE**

BY REX A. PAL, SJ

In his letter to the whole Society dated 14 Nov 2013, our Fr General Adolfo Nicolas indicated the true spirit with which we should commemorate the second centenary of the Society's Restoration (1814). He also suggested possible themes for our prayer, reflection and discernment, one of them being "Faith in Providence". Through the challenging times of the Suppression, the following 40 years, the Restoration and the first decades of the re-born Society, what can we learn, Fr Nicolas asks, from the patient endurance, the fortitude, the faith and trust in God's providence and the Spirit's presence in the Church of that time?

We are well aware that the Brief of Suppression by Pope Clement XIV

See's permission, and eventually to the complete restoration of the Society.

What were some of the providential signs during these 40 years that gradually contributed to the Restoration?

a. The Brief of Suppression did not receive universal acceptance, not even in all Catholic countries. The Empress of Austria allowed former Jesuits to continue their good work in schools and universities; some cantons in Switzerland sought permission to let them go on with their earlier work.

*The Society and its members accepted the Church's fateful decree, without understanding why, putting their trust in the Lord, while undergoing hostility, persecution and rejection. The God of all consolation did not let them down.*



was preceded by the mini-suppressions in the three Catholic countries of Portugal, France and Spain and their colonies. We also know that the Society was not entirely suppressed as it continued to exist in Russia and Prussia, thanks to their non-Catholic monarchs. This 'remnant' of a few hundred Jesuits was a light in the darkness, a hope in desolation for so many ex-Jesuits in Europe and elsewhere. The most outstanding among these former Jesuits was Joseph Pignatelli - a Spaniard exiled to Italy - who for four decades till his death in 1811 was a rallying point for his confreres; he did his best to keep contact with them, encourage them and preserve the bond of being 'friends in the Lord'. His untiring efforts, along with a convergence of several other factors led to the formation of a Jesuit Province in Sicily with the Holy

b. Many former Jesuits in France and Italy grouped together as 'Priests of the Sacred Heart of Jesus' or 'The Society of the Faith of Jesus' continuing much of the Society's spirit and practice.

c. Catholics and others in several countries missed the good services of the Jesuits and wanted them back, some reasons being: Jesuit schools offered excellent education free; their pastoral work in parishes was well appreciated;

their speeches and writings left a mark; they were sought after as spiritual guides for retreats and missions.

d. A remarkably bold letter to Pope Clement XIV was written by Philip de Beaumont, Archbishop of Paris, hardly a year after the Suppression. He seems to be the spokesman of the Bishops and clergy of France, who had an earlier meeting with the King, during which there was unanimous acclaim of the Society, its men and its services. To the Pope the Archbishop writes: "Instead of suppressing it [the Society], you should canonise it."

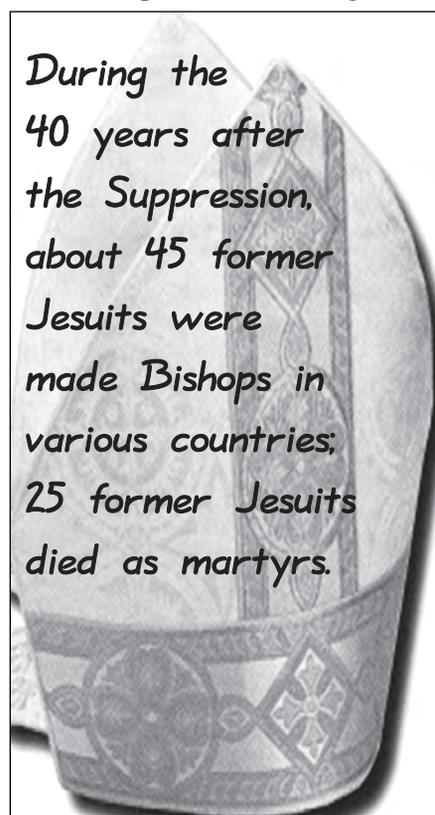
In his Brief the Pope had said that for the sake of peace in the Church the Society of Jesus had to be suppressed. The Archbishop comments: 'this is a false peace which the Jesuits were constantly combating', and concludes: 'The clergy of France and I cannot accept your Brief'. The whole tenor of the letter was respectful, but expressed strong dissent.

e. During the 40 years after the Suppression, about 45 former Jesuits were made Bishops in various countries (one of them being John Carroll in Baltimore, USA); 25 former Jesuits died as martyrs, most of them during the French Revolution. The Society of Jesus was deemed unfit to exist, but so many of its members became martyrs and bishops - a strange paradox.

f. The first Pope after the Suppression was Pius VI. Because of continuing threats from some royal houses and governments, he could not reverse the Suppression, but he gave tacit or oral approval to certain developments in favour of the Society. He was succeeded in 1799 by Pius VII, a Dominican, who had a firm resolve to restore the Society; again, because of the political situation

(including his imprisonment by Napoleon), the final Restoration was delayed to August 1814.

g. I am not aware of any public protests or disobedience of Jesuits when the Society was suppressed. It would have been for them the most crushing blow, a loss of everything, which left them nameless and rootless entities. Shortly before his death in 1775, Fr General Lorenzo Ricci, who was imprisoned for two years, said: "I declare and protest that the suppressed Society of Jesus gave no grounds whatever for it [the Suppression]... I declare and protest that I have given no



grounds whatever, even the slightest, for my imprisonment", and adds: "I blame or condemn no one - only God knows our hearts and thoughts."

The Society and its members accepted the Church's fateful decree, without understanding why, putting their trust in the Lord, while undergoing hostility, persecution and

rejection. The God of all consolation did not let them down; God continued working through his Spirit in big and small ways, moving persons and groups and even the Church herself towards the Society's Restoration - just as for our Redeemer the painful and burdensome Cross and death led eventually to the Resurrection.

\*\*\*\*\*

What are some lessons we can learn from our Society's paschal mystery?

**1. To deepen our faith in God's unconditional love and compassion:** The Gospel text Jn 3:16 which, in a way, summarises the whole Bible, reminds us: "God so loved the world that He gave His only Son... not to condemn but to save." To build on this foundation is to build our life on rock; any other foundation will be building on sand (Cf Mt 7:24-27). Some helps on the personal level would be:

- becoming aware of and dropping any false images of God e.g. one who punishes us; who keeps a record of our sins; who loves us only if we are good.

- accepting that God loves me at every moment, totally, 100%; he condemns my sin, but never condemns or rejects me.

- when any suffering, failure, mishap etc comes into our personal or collective lives, we should not blame God - it is not God who 'sends' these things to us. Rather, he is with us and in us helping us to face them, come out of them, if possible, and accept these pains fruitfully after the example of Jesus.

- growing in our personal attachment to Christ especially through prayer and familiarity with the word of God.

- believing and crying out with St Paul: "There is nothing in all creation that will ever be able to separate us from the love of God which is ours through Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rm 8:39).

**2. To strengthen our hope in God and his promises:** This is how Chapter 11 of the Letter to the Hebrews begins: "To have faith is to be sure of the things we hope for, to be certain of the things we cannot see". Our hope, which concerns the future, is based on God's promises and his fidelity. All through the Old Testament two qualities of Yahweh are repeatedly stressed: his loving kindness and his faithfulness. As Luis Bermejo says concisely: "His love makes a promise and his fidelity keeps it - we can rest assured in our hope". During a personal sharing with Henri Nouwen, the leader of a trapeze troupe in a circus stated: "As a flyer (one who jumps) I must have complete trust in my catcher". The flyer just jumps and stretches his arms and hands - it is the other who catches him with precision and draws him over to the other side. In such feats of human skill, there is always a remote chance of a 'miss' or an accident. But when we throw ourselves trustingly into God's loving hands, we are absolutely sure he will be there to catch us - he cannot drop us or let us down. "If we are not faithful, he remains faithful because he cannot be false to himself" (2 Tim 2: 13).

**3. To be a constantly discerning person:** As Jesuits we are called to be more and more Spirit-led (not ego-led or world-led), not only in the bigger decisions we are faced with, but in the thousand choices of daily life. This implies a growing self-awareness and an increasing inner freedom, for which our daily Examen of Consciousness is a precious help.



As discerning persons we will also make a fruitful contribution to group decision-making (community and apostolic discernment). In today's complex and globalised world we are confronted with pressing decisions, and it is not easy to keep our inner balance and allow the Spirit to lead us. As our former Superior General Kolvenbach remarked: "Often no space is given to the Spirit, no space is left for real prayerful discernment". Discernment should, so to say, become second nature for us.

**4. To be deeply united with one another as brothers and 'friends in the Lord':** During the years of Suppression many of the former Jesuits remained in touch with one another - this was a real strength and consolation in their common suffering, an antidote to discouragement and a balm to

their wounded spirits. As Jesuits our interpersonal and community relationships are vital. We are not just called to follow Christ individually but to be part of the 'body' of the Society. Are we thankful for our Jesuit communities on the local, provincial and international levels? Am I one who builds community or pulls it down? If we are good community builders, we will also foster community in other areas: our institution, our parish and diocese, and the human community wherever we live.

**5. To live in the present moment:** Most of our problems arise because we live in the past or the future. St Augustine gives us good advice: Entrust the past to the mercy of God and the future to his Providence, and make of the present a wholehearted act of love. The book,

*“God created order out of disorder, cosmos out of chaos, and God can always do so, can do so now - in our personal lives and in our lives as nations globally.” - Desmond Tutu*

*Abandonment to Divine Providence*, by Jean-Pierre de Caussade (1675 - 1751) is a spiritual classic. Caussade was born and spent much of his life in the south-west of France, in and around Toulouse. He joined the Society of Jesus in 1693 and was ordained a priest in 1704. In 1729 he was sent to Nancy in the north-east of France for just over a year; then again in 1733 for six years. During these seven years in Nancy he was the Director of the Visitation Sisters to whom he gave conferences, and later, wrote several letters. The Sisters preserved these letters and conference notes. About a hundred years later all this material was handed over to another French Jesuit, Fr Henri Ramiere, who assembled and edited them into a book published in 1861, a hundred and ten years after the author's death. So de Caussade never knew he had

written the book!

In this remarkable book, Caussade speaks of “the sacrament of the present moment”. A few relevant quotes reveal its great importance:

- ‘What God arranges for us to experience at each moment is the best and holiest thing that can happen to us’.

- ‘How easy it would be to become very holy! All they need to do is to fulfil faithfully the simple duties of Christianity and those called for by their state of life, accept cheerfully all the troubles they meet and submit to God's will in all that they have to do or suffer - without, in any way, seeking out trouble for themselves’.

- ‘The present moment always reveals the presence and the power of God. We must strip ourselves naked, renounce all desire for created things, and retain nothing of ourselves or for

ourselves, so that we can be wholly submissive to God's will, and so delight him. Our only satisfaction must be to live in the present moment as if there was nothing to expect beyond it’.

- ‘To discover God just as clearly in very minor and ordinary things as in the big things of life is to have a far from normal faith. It is one that is great and extraordinary’.

This simple but very challenging way indicated by de Caussade leads us to a life of great fruitfulness and holiness, of true peace and joy. We try to seek, find and do God's will at every moment, trusting that:

The will of God will never take you

where the grace of God cannot keep you

where the arms of God cannot support you

where the Spirit of God cannot work through you

where the wisdom of God cannot teach you

where the hands of God cannot mould you

where the love of God cannot unfold you

where the mercy of God cannot sustain you

where the comfort of God cannot dry your tears.

#### 6. To face the world's challenges with faith and courage:

We live in a world which tends to constantly undermine our trust and hope. The daily news informs us of war and violence, corruption and rape, oppression and persecution, accidents and natural calamities that weigh our spirits down. What, then, would help us to rise up with courage and enthusiasm? It is to believe deep down that, however hopeless the situation may appear to be, our God is in control and his Spirit is there working in the 'mess' and bringing life to dead bones (Cf Ez 36). God will always have the last word and it will be good! We should pray for the faith of the suffering believer who wrote these words on the wall of a Nazi concentration camp:

I believe in the sun even when it is not shining

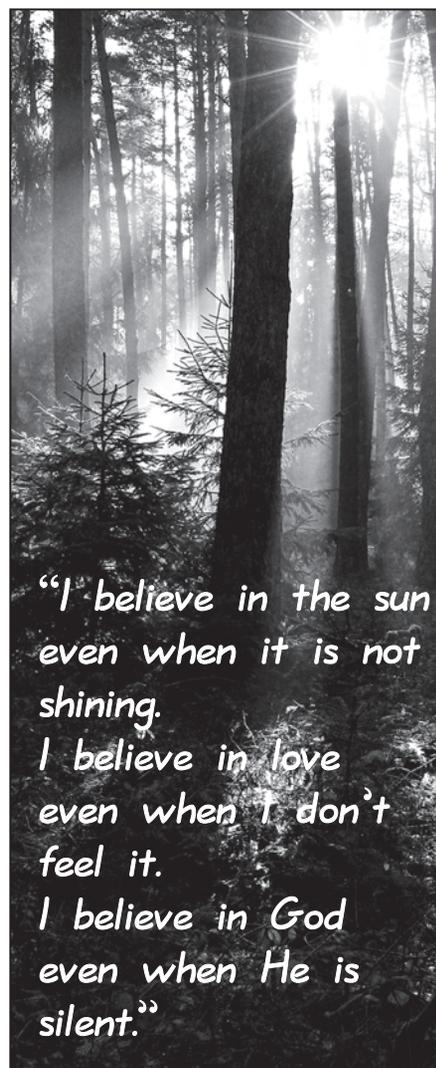
I believe in love even when I don't feel it

I believe in God even when He is silent.

Everyday we have to ask ourselves personally and collectively: Where is God calling me/us? How is he calling me/us to respond to this person/group, this happening, this situation? How is 'the more' (magis) finding expression in my/our life?

To bolster up our faith and hope we experience small and big 'miracles'

in our personal and group lives e.g. physical or inner healing, answers to our prayers, unexpected reconciliations or breakthroughs. On the national and global levels too unexpected transformations take place e.g. the end of apartheid in South Africa and the downfall of communism in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union about 25 years ago were practically unpredictable even five years before they actually occurred.



*"I believe in the sun even when it is not shining.*

*I believe in love even when I don't feel it.*

*I believe in God even when He is silent."*

In 1773, by the Pope's decree the Society of Jesus was suppressed for all eternity. By God's grace and mercy the 'eternity' lasted only 41 years! The initial darkness which seemed total for the Jesuits of that time had glimmers

of light and embers among the ashes which were gradually fanned into a mighty flame, 'a fire that kindles other fires'.

With this trust in God's providence let us conclude with the hope-filled words of Archbishop Desmond Tutu which manifest his unshakeable trust in God:

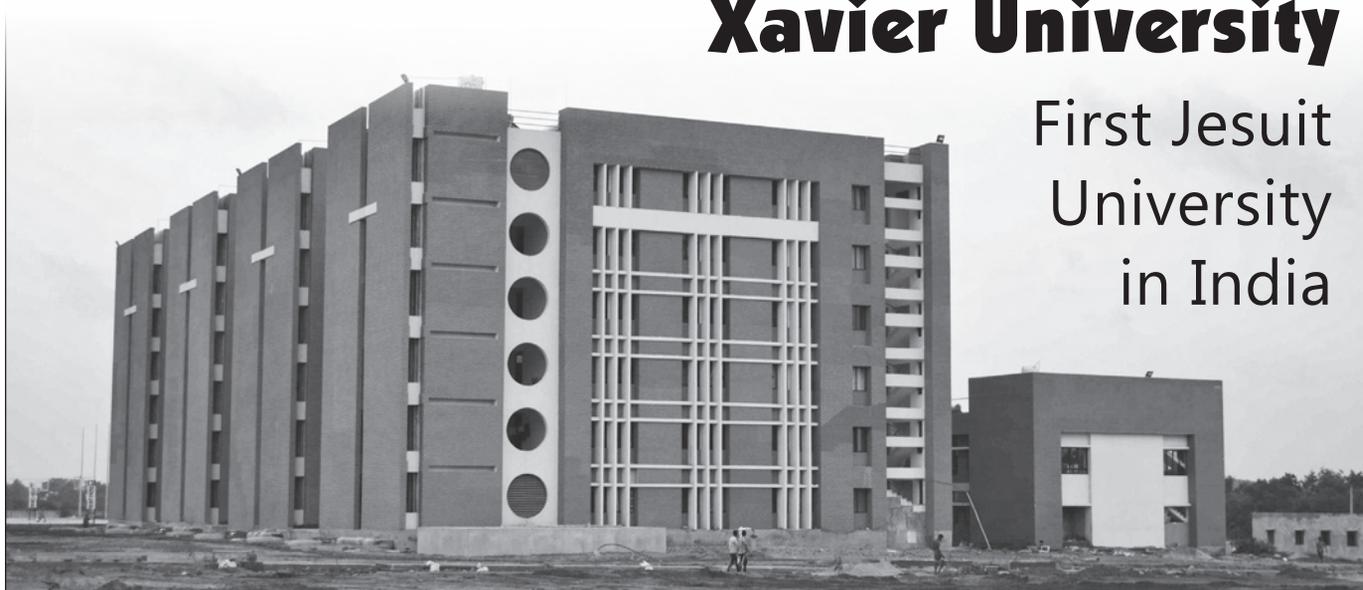
"There is no such thing as a totally hopeless case; our God is an expert in dealing with chaos, with brokenness, with all the worst we can imagine. God created order out of disorder, cosmos out of chaos,, and God can always do so, can do so now - in our personal lives and in our lives as nations globally. The most unlikely person, the most improbable situation - these are all 'transfigurable', they can be turned into their glorious opposites. Indeed God is transforming the world now - through us - because God loves us...

"All over this magnificent world God calls us to extend his kingdom of shalom - peace and wholeness - of justice, of goodness, of compassion, of caring, of sharing, of laughter, of joy and of reconciliation. God is transfiguring the world right this moment through us because God believes in us and because God loves us. What can separate us from the love of God? Nothing, absolutely nothing. And as we share God's love with our brothers and sisters, God's other children, there is no tyrant who can resist us, no oppression that cannot be ended, no hunger that cannot be fed, no wound that cannot be healed, no hatred that cannot be turned into love, no dream that cannot be fulfilled."

*Fr Rex A. Pai, SJ (MDU), a former Provincial of India and of the MDU Province, is now a much-appreciated spiritual guide and retreat director. He lives at St Joseph's, Trichy, T.N. He can be contacted at: [rexpaisj@yahoo.co.in](mailto:rexpaisj@yahoo.co.in)*

# Xavier University

First Jesuit  
University  
in India



The first Jesuit University, also the first digital university in the country, and a research university, was inaugurated by the Chief Minister of Odisha, Shri Naveen Patnaik, in Kurki, Odisha, on 07 July 2014. Under the meticulous and supportive direction of the Vice Chancellor, Fr Paul Fernandes, and with the selfless and unstinted supervision of Fr Donald D' Silva, who completed the work started by Frs Joe Puli, Charlie Pereira and Augustine Vattamattam, Xavier University kept its word to its students and began the academic year 2014-15 on 19 June 2014. "Such a challenging and never-before attempted commitment would not have been possible but for the dedication and hard work of the staff of XIM," said the Registrar of XU, Fr. Tony Uvari.

07 July was the day and we could rejoice and be glad. The new campus was spic and span and ready for the inauguration. Many may not have slept that night to make this inauguration a reality. The Jesuits, the Faculty, staff and the students worked together as one team. All had their jobs allocated and they worked as if there were no tomorrow! Sharp at 11 am arrived the Chief Minister of Odisha, Mr. Naveen Patnaik, with his entourage to inaugurate the new campus. The first person to be greeted by the Chief Minister was Fr Romuald who came all the way from Goa for the inauguration of the new University. Before proceeding to the dais, he stepped out to greet other Jesuits who nurtured XIMB along with Fr. Romuald – Frs. Abraham and C L George. On the dais were all the prominent dignitaries of Church and State, starting with Archbishop John Barwa, Provincial, Fr. George Fernandes, Associate Director – Registrar of XIMB-XUB, Tony Uvari, Vice Chancellor and Director of XIMB-XUB, Paul Fernandes, Mr. Rajive Kaul, Chairman NICCO Corporation Limited, Kolkata and Chairman of the XIMB-XUB Board of Governors and from the State, Chief Minister Mr. Naveen Patnaik, Shri Pradeep Maharathy, Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Animal Resources Development, and Dr. Pradeep Panigrahy, Minister of Higher Education, Science & Technology. During one hour programme there were a variety of speeches that highlighted the task of XU to become a global university of learning by transforming the world into a just and humane society.

In the course of his one hour stay, the Chief Minister inaugurated the University by unveiling the plaque commemorating this defining moment in the history of the Odisha Jesuits and planted a sapling at the end of the programme. Towards the closing moments, the Chief Minister honoured Frs. Romald, Abe, Augustine Vatta, Charlie and Donald, and the architect, Ms. Shailaja, contractor, Mr. Ramakant, and others. The tone of the speeches revealed a certain comfort level that it was the Jesuits who had taken this historic leap, to open this university with Jesuit Ideals, namely, to be visionary, innovative, research driven and open to all. It was a delight to hear in the course of one hour the Jesuit character of the University being touched upon in one way or another. The State Government has given permission to start



various Post Graduate Programmes, Ph.D. Programmes, MBA (Global) from this academic session. It will offer various courses like Rural Management, Human Resource Management, 5-year Integrated Programme, Ph.D. Programmes.

The new campus is spread across 35 acres of land in Kurki, 12 kilometers away from Bhubaneswar airport. The academic block and the hostel with a capacity for 350 students are ready. At the inauguration there were not only students from XIM but also students from the new campus. The inauguration ceremony came to an end with the National Anthem and a 5-star lunch for one and all.

- Alwyn Rodrigues, SJ & Eric Cassel, SJ

BY W.K. PRADEEP, SJ

**Y**ou would have made many Ignatian retreats. But have you ever tried 'Swara-Chitra-Raga-Sudha'? That is what Fr George Sebastian Vallocheril (KER) calls his audio-visual retreats. Fr George has designed this creative way of directing the Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius with the help of music and videos, which help you make the retreat easily and effectively. Recently he was in Kohima Region for his sabbatical, and after conducting some media related courses and programs for various groups of people, he guided the annual retreat of the Kohima Scholastics at Phesama.

The Audio Visual Retreat at St Paul's Retreat House, Phesama was a novel way of doing the Ignatian spiritual journey. As in any Ignatian retreat the purpose of this retreat also was renewal, revival and rejuvenation of the inner life and spirit of the participants. But it was done in a new and creative manner and it helped us scholastics to look at and respond to our Jesuit call and commitment in a more creative way. The entire retreat was presented through AV means of communication but in absolute silence and solitude. The programme of the retreat included appreciation of life in general, particularly of our Jesuit way of life in the modern world.

The dynamics of the retreat included sharing of reflections and insights in brief input sessions, audio-visual presentations of Ignatian themes, singing of special songs, song offerings, psalms and poems and meditative listening to soul stirring Indian classical music and other musical forms from various Eastern and Western cultures, watching special movies and movie segments etc.

The retreatants had ample time for personal prayer, meditation, and spiritual exercises. The daily celebration of the Eucharist was another high point of the retreat as they were well-integrated into the themes of each day and of the entire spiritual journey. They were special moments of grace for the retreatants. We spent a minimum of four hours in personal prayer, reflection, spiritual exercises and other spiritual activities. Frs Julian and Edmund from the region joined Fr George for daily sessions for personal guidance.

The real highlight and specialty of this AV retreat was the timely use of a lot of apt audiovisual materials to facilitate the retreatants to make the spiritual journey. Fr. George uses a number of his own productions. The two feature films that were shown, *Of Gods and of Men* and *Tuesdays with Morrie*, were moving movie experiences. While



watching and praying over these grace-filled movies many were moved to tears. The soul-stirring musical pieces that were used at various moments in the retreat, especially before each input session, along with some specially composed prayer verses were highly inspiring. They set the right tone for the themes of each day and created the proper mood for the entire retreat.

We felt that this professionally-designed Audio-Visual Retreat was a novel and effective way of making the traditional Ignatian Exercises in a way that makes them easy and appealing, especially to youth who are captured by visual media.

The retreat preachers and directors of yesteryears were using mostly oral and written communication. They relied mostly on the Scripture, exhortations, and spiritual books. Jesuits, who are ever called to 'frontier' fields of work and ministry, should constantly think of adapting the Exercises according to the mindset of people today.

Any perceptive Jesuit who deals with today's youth will understand how deeply they are influenced by the media. Youth all over the world have a global culture that is mediated by the mass media. This transcends national boundaries and so the traditions and ethos of individual nations. How can we impart to them the spiritual truths of the Exercises without the help of modern media?

The key thing to keep in mind is the clarity of purpose and the creative fidelity with which we should use these media. Fr George Sebastian has demonstrated a beautiful model of such retreats needed for today's media-saturated world with convincing clarity of vision and purpose. May be, our Scholastics, some of whom will be retreat directors in the near future, should try 'Swara-Chitra-Raga-Sudha'. ■

*W.K. Pradeep, SJ is the assistant director of Jesuit Training College at Jakhama, Kohima, Nagaland.*





## Plight of Jashpur tribals

On 11 July '14 in spite of heavy rain more than 500 people gathered at Alori village in Jashpur district, Chhatisgarh under the leadership of Mr. Ganesh Ram Bhagat, former State Minister for ST/SC. They demanded immediate arrest and punishment to the cuprites and justice to the tribal victims. On 5 July a tribal woman of the village, while collecting mushrooms in the forest, was raped. The very next day, on 6 July '14, another tribal woman was raped while bathing in a stream near by. The rapists in both cases were workers of Gullu Hydro Power Project. One of the culprits, Bhaiyalal, was caught and beaten by the villagers and handed over to the police, while the other culprit, called Anand, managed to escape.

The villagers say that most of the workers at the Power Project are outsiders who target helpless tribal women. Therefore to stop the atrocities the protesters demanded closure of the construction work for the project. On behalf of the people Mr. Bhagatji gave ten days to the administration to arrest the offender



and to stop the construction work. "If no action is taken within the given period of time, then we will go and stop the construction work," said Bhagatji.

Since 2008 Chhattisgarh Hydro Power (P) Ltd. Raipur, is doing construction work for Gullu Hydro Electric Power Plant. According to the plan a 15-meter dam is to be constructed at Dumbertoli, Jashpur, just above the Gullu waterfalls. Work to construct a eight-kilometer-long tunnel is in full swing. The company has brought workers from several areas to work for the project. Although the company has managed to somehow get the consent of Gram Sabha and some compensation to the farmers has been distributed, most people of the area have voiced their protest to the Project right from the beginning.

The company has ignored the protests and tries to misguide the people. Because of the construction of the dam 38 farmers, all tribals, have lost 30.39 hectares of their land. Many houses of Dumbertoli will soon submerge into water. Helpless tribals, for whom land is an indispensable part of life and self-identity, feel harassed from all sides.

Twice in the month of July public meetings were held at Ara village under the leadership of Mr Ganesh Ram Bhagat. People from 31 villages described their plight and said they did not want to live in their villages anymore, for they are harassed during the day by the police and at night by the Naxals. The police have accused the villagers of co-operating with the Naxals and have arrested about 15 villagers. Because of the police on one side and Naxals on the other, the tribals of Jashpur have come to the point of despair.

- Yacub Kujur, SJ

## IGFA 2014 in Chennai

The annual convention of IGFA (Ignatian Family)- 2014 was held at Dhyana Ashram, Chennai on 19 July, the weekend before the novena of St Ignatius. 94 participants graced the occasion. One third of them were Jesuits in spiritual ministry, another one third were Sisters associated with Ignatian spirituality, and the rest were lay women and men.



The theme was 'Ignatian Spirituality for the Life of Consecration.' This focus resonates with the declaration of a special 'Year for the Consecrated' by Pope Francis. The year begins on 30 Nov '14 and ends on 02 Feb '16.

The keynote cum homily was given by Sr Susheela, FSAG, the Executive Secretary of CRI-TN, at the Inaugural Eucharist presided over by Fr Thamburaj, Province-Coordinator of Spirituality. In the input-sessions that followed, the General Superior of Sacred Heart Brothers, Br Victor Dhas presented a well-received paper on 'Demands and Challenges of Ignatian Spirituality for the Modern Consecrated Men and Women'. Dr. Fr



Samuel Savio of Madras Archdiocese lectured brilliantly on 'From Rituality to Actuality in the light of Contemplative Dimensions of Ignatius'.

These presentations did trigger off a meaningful reflection-action process, followed by a fruitful interactive session at which essentials of major spiritualities were shared: Franciscan by the former Provincial, Sr Angeline, FBS, Salesian by Sr. Maria, FMA, Nanoian by Sr Rose, PBVM, Anne's by Sr Prakash, SAT and Lay spirituality by Mr Hari Krishnan. These mutually enriching sharings were climaxed by an inspiring input session on 'Attitude Shifts Needed Today' by Fr Rex A Pai, former Jesuit Provincial. The Chennai Mission Superior, Fr Jebamalai Raja then synthesised the proceedings of the whole day with an invitation for a life of radicality. Three books related to St Ignatius, Jesuits and Consecrated Life were released on the memorable day. The next convention is tentatively fixed for 17,18 July 2015 whose theme will be 'Indo-Ignatian Spirituality'.

- Jerry Rosario, SJ

# Should Jesuit education just serve capitalism?

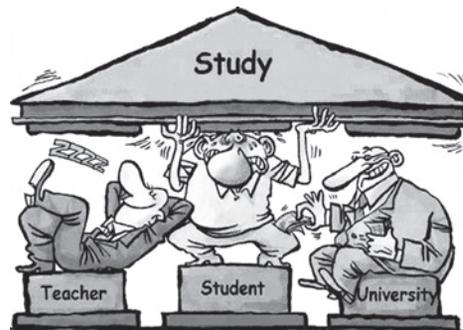
BY AMA SAMY, SJ

Recently I went for the inauguration of a course on Zen and Mindfulness meditation at the Holy Cross College in Trichy, Tamil Nadu. I was pleasantly surprised to see everyone in the administration, from the Provincial to the Principal and the other Sisters so enthusiastic about this new venture. They have made this course and value orientation part of their regular curriculum and so all students have to participate in them and they are given credits. These Sisters have vision and wisdom, which our Jesuits seem to be wanting in. My only consolation was that it was a Jesuit, Fr Francis Thamburaj, who did all the spade work and tirelessly worked for the staff and the students to realize this goal.

We Jesuits are known as educators. But this title is dubious nowadays. Like my own Madurai province, most Jesuit provinces are invested top-heavy with educational institutions. But what is the difference between our Jesuit institutions and the so-called secular institutions? Is the difference only that Jesuits are running them? Can we claim that our institutions are better, just because we are running them? Most Jesuits are not models of holiness or selflessness; rather we are known for our internecine squabbles and rivalries. If there is no difference between our institutions and the others, what is the point of spending ourselves so much in them? Did we become Religious and priests just to teach mathematics, science and English as others do? Is this our religious vocation?

Starting educational institutions could have been relevant in those days when there was no one else to offer quality education. But now? Some may say that we are at least helping the poor. But is

our vocation primarily helping them climb up the ladder of capitalism? If all that we do is to help the poor get jobs, won't we resemble the hypocritical Pharisees who Jesus said locked the door to the Kingdom in the face of the poor? (Mt 23: 13-15). Is not our vocation to stand witness to the Kingdom-values? We talk of faith and justice: where is faith - faith that goes beyond "gaining all the world and losing one's soul"?



Our education, tragically, is oriented to making our students fit for competing in the world and in the job-market. Many years ago an eminent educationist remarked that the Jesuit education was fit only to produce clerks and Government functionaries. We educate our students just to compete in the rat-race of greed, competition and consumerism. Our education is only mass production in service of the capitalist machine.

We often talk of our intellectual apostolate. We have, of course, got tens of run-of-the mill Ph.Ds. But what is the value of these degrees? How has their research contributed to the well-being of our men and women? Where are our creative intellectuals? As regards the Indian political and social situation, we have some Jesuits who are fond of making laments, but there seems to be no one who can analyze our situation and impartially clarify our historical roots and the perilous consequences of the present trends.

In today's world science and scientism are mounting a frontal attack on faith and religion. Where are our Indian intellectual Jesuits who understand the mortal predicament of faith and religion and can respond to this peril and dilemma? In the USA at least some like John Haught, SJ are valiantly defending the faith. However, there or here, merely an intellectual defense will not be enough. We need a praxis to awaken and enlighten

**We educate our students just to compete in the rat-race of greed, competition and consumerism. Our education is only mass production in service of the capitalist machine.**

young minds to the flame of the spiritual.

But real religious or spiritual education is practically nil in our institutions. We have, of course, so-called moral or value education or religion classes. But that is a useless palaver which is not going to help to transform or conscientize our students in the least. What will be needed is an experiential awakening and liberation. For this our entire system has to be overhauled and transformed. However, our inertia and lack of qualified Jesuits will prevent us from achieving anything of this sort. Even our young Jesuits offer no hope, as they will be subsumed into the dysfunctional system, and they will not be able to do anything except to join the rat-race.

I am not saying that we should quit our institutions. They are a good base for some creative modification and adjustment. But the mentality of most Jesuits in our institutions cannot easily be changed. Any change has to come from our provincials and superiors. This is



what seems to have happened among the Sisters I referred to at the beginning of this article. They seem to have understood the acute need of the present day students for meditation and mindfulness.

Mindfulness Meditation (MM) is quite popular now; internet offers an enormous literature and guidance. See particularly MBSR courses. More than its popularity, MM is a practice of healing and liberation. In today's world people, especially youth, are bombarded with too much of the seductive and destructive aspects of the world; they are being carried away mindlessly. There is a crying need for silence and solitude. Mindfulness Meditation can be the cure for this modern malaise. MM originally comes from Buddhism. However, it can be practiced without any adherence to a particular religion. It can be said to be spiritual, but even this label need not be applied, when we teach it to our youth.

MM should be an essential part of our education and our Jesuit formation. Some young Jesuits, as well as some of our lay collaborators, can be trained in this form of meditation. Vipassana meditation and zen are good fields to learn this practice. But Jesuits here and elsewhere seem to be allergic to Zen! Zen is much deeper but vipassana courses will do and will be excellent training in MM. However, just one 10-day course will not be enough. They should also learn the theory and the vision and interiorize MM as one's way of life.

When this happens both teachers and students will begin to enjoy the fruits - both spiritual and liberative. Let me mention some of them:

First and foremost, MM helps one *to come home to oneself, to learn to accept and affirm oneself*. It is in a sense, realizing that one is unconditionally accepted and affirmed. This is realized in the praxis of just being-with oneself, just being seated and being aware of the body and the breath. Realizing being accepted and affirmed unconditionally evokes gratitude and peace.

MM will also awaken one *to realize that life is mystery*, that all of one's life and the world are embraced by Mystery that is graciousness. We cannot control and

manipulate our life as we wish; we will have to learn to be willing, not willful, and to open our hearts and minds to reality, and discern truth and love from its illusions.

MM calls one *to recognize one's emotions, thoughts and fantasies* - to pay attention and take note of them, without fear, shame or guilt - to face them without suppressing, repressing or acting them out. MM helps us be friends with our shadow side and to be kind and compassionate to ourselves, as we will become aware that there is goodness in our core. Awareness of emotions and thoughts has to be non-judgmental, this is essential. No judging, no blaming, no self-indulgence, no self-pity. We will learn to dis-identify ourselves from our emotions, thoughts and fantasies. This is facilitated by focusing steadily on the breath, without straying away or jumping from one mental state to another. This helps us be seated like a mountain with the clouds (thoughts, fantasies and emotions) swirling around at the top. This way MM helps us be free from addictions and obsessions and thus builds a character of courage, patience and fidelity.

MM helps us also in the way we relate to others. It would teach us to listen without judging, to avoid 'you-statements' but rather to use 'I-statements'. Not 'you are confusing me', or 'you are making me angry'. Rather, 'I am confused when I hear you etc', 'I am feeling upset when you do or say these...' This is descriptive, non-hostile language. It is learning to express oneself truthfully and compassionately.

Further, MM enables us to clarify for oneself what one's values, needs and authentic emotions are and choose them. This forms one's core identity. We will learn to say 'no' to what does not cohere with our values, needs and core identity. William Ury talks of 'the Power of Positive 'NO''. He says there are three steps in this: yes/no/yes. First, one has to become aware of one's own integrity and identity, one's values and needs. This is saying 'yes', that is, affirming one's integrity by becoming aware and taking responsibility; then, when the demands of others go against one's integrity, say firmly 'No'. Express to the other that your

values and needs cannot go with what is demanded. Finally, make some affirmative statements to validate the other's needs. And become sensitive to the situation and the other's needs. Saying 'No' is most vital in the modern world when peers, advertisements, fashions, corruption, injustices and the like are swirling around and trying to drag one down. One has to be grounded in and stand by one's integrity. This will be in terms of one's values and needs. This needs great courage, patience and transparency. This calls also for forgiveness and compassion for self and others. The well-spring of these will be Mystery that is graciousness.

MM helps us become aware of the world and of others, their needs and problems. It fosters compassion and caring. One has to experience peace and compassion in one's heart and mind before one can help the world to attain peace and freedom. Etty Hillesum, the young Jewish woman who died in the Nazi concentration camp, writes, "Life is hard, but that is no bad thing. It is not morbid individualism to work on oneself. True peace will come only when every individual will find inner peace. When we have all vanquished and transformed our hatred for our fellow human beings of whatever race - even into love one day, although perhaps that is asking too much. It is, however, the only solution".

When MM is made part of the syllabus, and given valued grades, students will be willing to undergo it. It is only an adjustment within the educational system, not any great revolution (Think of Kiran Bedi holding vipassana meditation for the inmates of Tihar jail). But this will revolutionize the lives of the students as well as our social atmosphere. The staff should also be encouraged and helped to take it.

Can't we Jesuits at least do this much for the youth of today who come to our institutions? Or are we hopeless? Is our system beyond redemption? How long will we keep offering just what others in the field do and call it an apostolate?



*Fr Ama Samy, SJ (MDU) is Director of Bodhi Zendo, the Zen Meditation Centre in Permalmalai, Kodaikanal, T.N.*

The Society of Jesus in Gujarat has a tradition of caring for the Earth. Most of our missionaries planted plenty of Neem trees long ago in our church compounds. They provided a cooler and healthier campus in the 40-45 degree heat of summer! Br Galicia ran a very green and productive farm at Mogar, near Anand, and trained Adivasi farmers in innovative farming. Fr Agizu introduced in Vadatal the cultivation of Chicory used to blend with coffee. Watershed projects and land improvement projects were widely undertaken by many Missions.

In 1990's Gujarat Jesuits began to harness solar energy. Wolfgang Scheffler developed a solar concentrator (named after him later) to focus solar radiation through a large, reflective parabola for large scale cooking. Many of our hostels

of saline wasteland at Katamba by Fr Jolly. He organized organic cultivation of nearly 50,000 trees after redeeming the land. Fr Arula launched into vermicomposting and organic agriculture with small farmers around Modasa.

After doing his doctorate on Adivasi herbal medicines, Fr Lancy D'Cruz of St. Xavier's College established Aadiaushadhi (aboriginal medicine) at Dediapada. The Adivasis cultivate medicinal herbs and produce their age-old herbal medicines. Jothi Xavier, then in charge of Jesuit Youth Ministry in Gujarat, started a movement called "Climate Campers" in 2008. They provided eco education using art to create eco-awareness. Fr Rappai Poothokaren left media ministry at Gurjarvani to work with Mother Earth in 2010. He tried to spread awareness and action in various

'understanding' of Creation, ii) support and start new practices that respect Creation, and iii) develop advocacy research and stimulate a scientific approach to Creation.

We aim to create an attitudinal change towards God's creation and our role in it - at the individual, institutional and national level - through incorporating the ecological dimension in all our ministries and activities.

*Education:* Environmental audit of the school, Ecology/Solar Exhibitions, visits to Bio reserves, etc., sustained training of a group of selected students, fprotests against ecological crimes in the public fora etc. *Pastoral work:* Developing an eco-spirituality through preaching, eco recollections and retreats, public involvement as Christians in environmental



## Ecology Mission of the Gujarat Jesuits



across Gujarat set up such solar cooking systems then. Three of our Technical Schools produced them with the license given by Scheffler. But their commitment and expertise was insufficient.

Fr Cedric Prakash promoted widely the use of solar energy for the poor. Some ten years later a Solar Steam Cooking system was set up at Fulwadi in south Gujarat to cook for nearly 500 boys. Solar concentrators boiled water to create steam which was sent to the kitchen to cook food, fast and clean. The system worked for nearly ten years.

In the last decade Tarumitra, Patna, St Xavier's College and Gurjarvani in Ahmedabad took the initiative to start Taru Mitra Gujarat (Friends of Trees) in 2003 with three other NGO's. Eco education of youth, planting and protecting trees, reduction of plastic and pollution, etc..were the goals. It continues to do good work with youth. The same year saw the beginning of a Bio Diversity Reserve in over 30 acres

aspects of ecology among youth and in Church institutions. At the invitation of JESA (Jesuits in Social Action) Western Region, he organized an 'Ignatian Eco Retreat' for Jesuits from all over India, directed by Fr Robert Athickal of Taru Mitra, Patna.

These initiatives created ripples across Gujarat Jesuit Province. The three-yearlong SAP (Strategic Apostolic Planning) process in the Province recognized this, and ecology was accepted as one of the key themes for the resurgence of our Province. As a result, Gujarat Province established Gujarat Jesuit Ecology Mission (GJEM), with a committee of six to spearhead it: Frs. Lancy D'Cruz (Coordinator), Cedric Prakash, Vincent Moonnu, Lucas Rayappan, Rappai Poothokaren, and Mr. Jothi Xavier.

Gujarat Jesuit Ecology Mission: We realized that in order to develop and sustain right relationship with Creation, we need to, i) challenge and transform our

conservation etc. *Jesuit Formation:* A systematic and progressive formation of Jesuits through different stages to be stewards of God's creation. *Social Action:* The poor and marginalized are the worst victims of ecological degradation. Jesuits in social action want to create awareness of this situation, and try to empower the poor to claim their legitimate share of God's Creation. They are committed to research and advocacy to promote awareness and action at grass-root, public and political fora. *Social Communication:* Jesuits in Communication want to use the power and reach of modern media to make people aware of viable approaches to ecological action at different levels.

The task is enormous, endless and ever expanding. But it is a labour of love and hope that encompasses the whole Universe, a Universe created with love and care for you, me and all of us who share the spark of Divine Life!

- Rappai Poothokaren, SJ

*Excerpts from the interview Pope Francis gave to Franca Giansoldati for Il Messaggero newspaper. The English translation was done by Zenit:*

The appointment is at Saint Martha's in the afternoon. A speedy check and a Swiss gentleman leads me to a small parlor. There are six armchairs of somewhat worn out green velvet, a small wooden table, one of those old televisions. Everything is in perfect order. The marble

minors and, not least the exploitation of child prostitutes not even fifteen-years-old. And by clients who could be their grandfathers. "Pedophiles" – this is how Pope describes them.

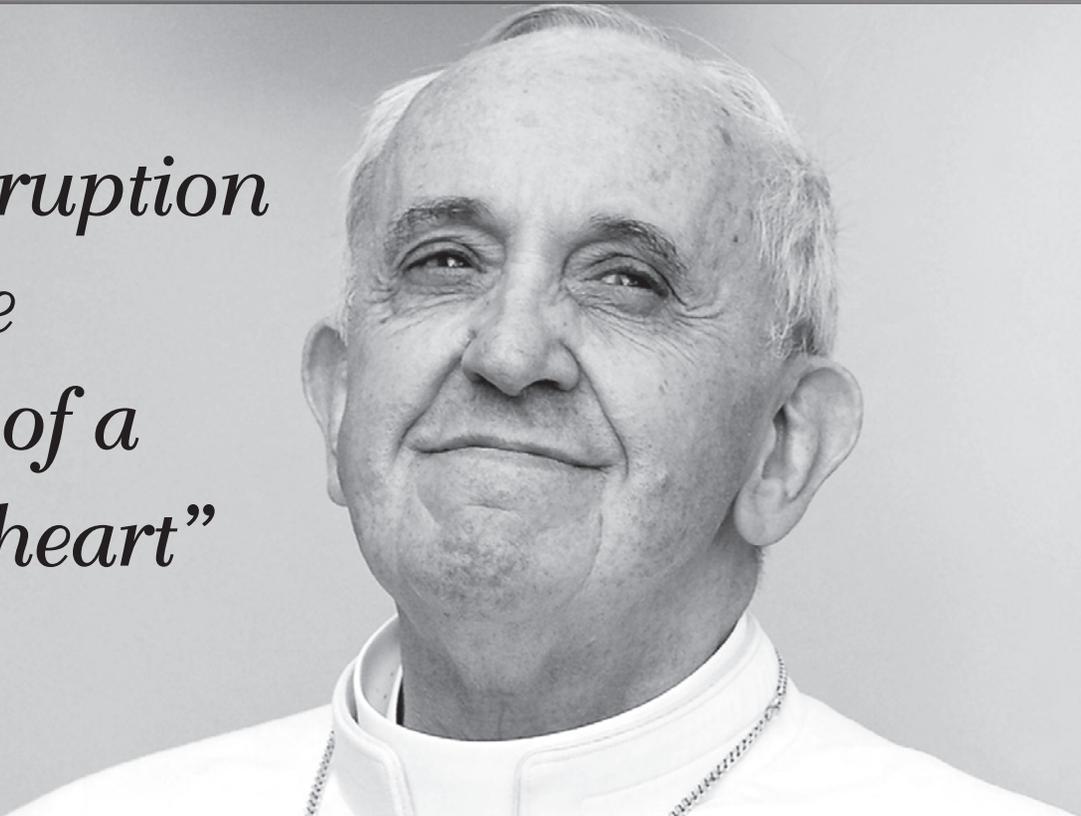
"I am the first Pope who didn't take part in the Council (Vatican II) and the first who studied theology after the Council and, at that time, for us the great light was Paul VI. For me, *Evangelii Nuntiandi* remains a document that has never been surpassed," he says.

as cardinal, I didn't come here often. I know St Mary Major because I always went there. And then St Lawrence Outside-the-Walls where I went for Confirmations when Don Giacomo Tantardini was there. Obviously I know Piazza Navona because I always lodged on Via della Sciofa, behind there.

**Is there something Roman in Argentine Bergoglio?**

Hardly anything at all. I am more Piedmontese, those are the original roots

*“Corruption is the fruit of a sick heart”*



shines, some pictures. Pope Francis enters smiling: "Finally! I read you and now I finally meet you." He laughs. The Pope laughs heartily, as he will do at other times in the course of an hour long off the cuff conversation. Rome with its big-city evils, the era of change that weakens politics, the effort to defend the common good; the re-appropriation by the Church of the issues of poverty and sharing ("Marx didn't invent anything"), the dismay in face of the degradation of the peripheries of the soul, the slippery moral abyss in which children are abused, the tolerance of begging, the work of

Francis talks, explains, interrupts himself, returns to the subject - passion, gentleness, irony. His hands accompany his speech, he clasps them, loosens them, they seem to trace invisible shapes in the air. And his health seems to be excellent, despite rumors about his health.

**Shall we begin with Rome?**

But you're aware that I don't know Rome? Just consider that I saw the Sistine Chapel for the first time when I took part in the conclave that elected Benedict XVI (in 2005). I haven't even been to the museums. The fact is that,

of my family. However, I'm beginning to feel Roman. I intend to visit the parishes. I'm discovering this city little by little. It's a most beautiful metropolis, unique, with the problems of large cities. ...It's like this in all big cities. In November, in fact, we will hold a congress at Barcelona dedicated to the pastoral care of metropolises. One discovers so many intersecting cultures, but not so much because of migration, but rather because of transversal cultural territories, each having their own membership. The Church must be able to respond also to this phenomenon.

Is there a hierarchy of values to be respected in the management of public affairs?

Certainly, to always protect the common good. This is the vocation of every politician. It is an ample concept that includes, for instance, the protection of human life, of its dignity. Paul VI used to say that the mission of politics is one of the highest forms of charity. Today, the problem of politics – I don't speak only of Italy but of all countries, the problem is worldwide – is that it has been devalued, ruined by corruption, by the phenomenon of bribery. A document published by the French Bishops 15 years ago comes to mind. It was a Pastoral Letter entitled: 'Rehabilitating Politics', and it precisely addressed this question. If service isn't the foundation, it's not possible to understand what politics is.

You have said that corruption smells rotten. You have also said that social corruption is the fruit of a sick heart and not merely external conditions. Without corrupt hearts, there would be no corruption. The corrupt person does not have friends but useful idiots. Can you explain this better?

I have spoken about the matter on two consecutive days because I was commenting on the reading about Naboth's vineyard. At Mass I like to talk about the Readings of the day. The first day I addressed the phenomenology of corruption, the second day the way that the corrupt end up. In any case, the corrupt person has no friends, but only accomplices.

In your opinion, is there so much talk about corruption because the mass media insist too much on the matter, or because it is in fact an endemic and a grave evil?

No, unfortunately, it is a worldwide phenomenon. There are in fact heads of state in prison for this. I have wondered about it a lot, and I have come to the conclusion that so many evils grow especially during epochal changes. We are living not so much an age of changes, but a change of age. Therefore, it is about a change of culture; precisely in this

phase things of this sort emerge. A change of age fuels moral decadence, not only in politics, but in financial and social life.

**Even Christians don't seem to give a shining witness ...**

It is the environment which facilitates corruption. I'm not saying that all are corrupt, but I think it's difficult to remain honest in politics. I'm speaking about everywhere, not just Italy. Sometimes there are people who want to clear things up, but then they

**Politics has been devalued, ruined by corruption, by bribery.**



run into difficulty and it's as if they'd been swallowed up by a multi-level, across the board, endemic phenomenon. Not because it is the nature of politics, but because when times are changing the push towards a certain moral drift becomes stronger.

**Are you more alarmed by the moral or material poverty of a city?**

I am alarmed by both. For instance, I can help a hungry person so that he is no longer hungry. But if he has lost his job and doesn't find employment, he has to deal with another poverty. He no longer has dignity. Perhaps he can go to Caritas and take home a food parcel, but he feels a very grave poverty that ruins his heart. An Auxiliary Bishop of Rome told me that many persons go to the cafeteria, secretly and full of shame, and take some of the food home. Their dignity is progressively impoverished, they live without hope.

**On the streets of Rome you can see girls as young as 14 often forced into**

**prostitution, while in the subway you see children begging. Is the Church still a haven? Do you feel powerless in the face of this moral decline?**

I feel grief, I feel enormous pain. The exploitation of children makes me suffer. It's the same thing in Argentina. Children are used for some manual labor because they have smaller hands. Children are exploited sexually, in hotels. Once I was alerted that on a street of Buenos Aires there were child prostitutes only 12 years old. I checked and it was in fact so. It made me sick. But even more so to see high-powered cars stop, driven by elderly men. They could be their grandfathers. They would make the girl get in and pay her 15 pesos that was then used to buy discarded drugs, the "paco." For me, these persons who do this to girls are pedophiles. It also happens in Rome. The Eternal City, which should be a beacon to the world, is a mirror reflecting the moral decay of society. I think these are problems that can be resolved with a good social policy.

**What can politics do?**

Respond in a clear way, for instance, with social services that help families to understand, supporting them to come out of burdensome situations. The phenomenon indicates a deficiency of social service in the society.

**The Church, however, is working so much ...**

And she must continue to do so. Families in difficulty must be helped, uphill work that requires a common effort.

**Increasingly in Rome young people don't go to church, don't baptize their children, can't even make the sign of the cross. What strategy would be useful to reverse this trend?**

The Church must go out into the streets, seek the people, go to homes, visit families, go to the fringes. She must not be a Church which merely receives, but which offers ...

**Are you worried about the declining birthrate in Italy?**

I think more work must be done for the common good of children. To put

the family at the top is a commitment; sometimes the salary isn't enough to make it to the end of the month. There is fear of losing one's work and of no longer being able to pay the rent. Social politics doesn't help. Italy has a very low birthrate, so does Spain. France is doing a bit better but it is also low there. It's as if Europe has become tired of being a mother, preferring to be a grandmother. Much depends on the economic crisis and a cultural drift marked by selfishness and hedonism. I read a statistic the other day on the spending criteria of populations worldwide. After food, clothing and medicine - three necessary items - come cosmetics and spending for pets.

**Animals count more than children?**

It's another phenomenon of cultural degradation. And this because the emotional relationship with animals is easier, it can largely be programmed. An animal isn't free, whereas to have a child is something complex.

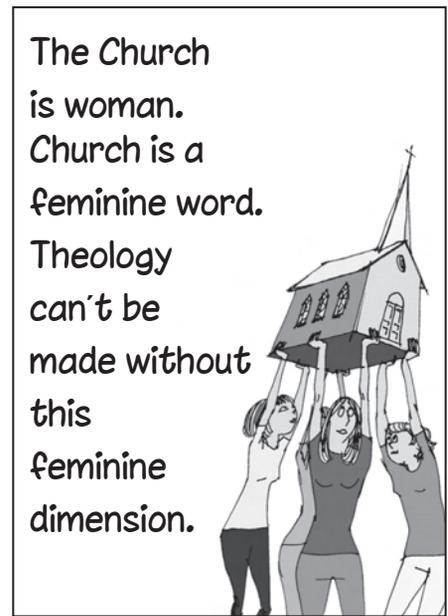
**Does the Gospel speak more to the poor or to the rich to convert them?**

Poverty is the center of the Gospel. The Gospel cannot be understood without understanding real poverty, keeping in mind that there is a most beautiful poverty of the spirit: to be poor before God so that God can fill you. The Gospel addresses the poor and the rich alike. And it speaks both of poverty and of wealth. It does not, in fact, condemn the rich at all, except when riches become idolatrous objects - the god of money, the golden calf.

**You are regarded as a communist, pauperist, populist Pope. *The Economist*, which has dedicated a cover to you, stated that you speak like Lenin. Do you identify yourself in this depiction?**

I say only that the Communists have stolen the flag. The flag of the poor is Christian. Poverty is at the center of the Gospel. The poor are at the center of the Gospel. Let's take Matthew 25, the protocol on which we will be judged: I was hungry, I was thirsty, I was in prison, I was sick, naked. Or, let us look at the Beatitudes, another

flag. The communists say that all this is communist. Yes, right, twenty centuries later, now when they speak one could say to them: 'But you are Christians.' [laughs].



**If you allow me a criticism ...**  
Of course.

**Perhaps you speak little of women, and when you do, you address the argument only from the point of view of maternity, the woman spouse, the woman mother, etc. And yet now women lead states, multinationals, armies. In your opinion, what position do women occupy in the Church?**

Women are the most beautiful thing God has made. The Church is woman. Church is a feminine word. Theology can't be made without this feminine dimension. You are right about this, we don't speak enough about women. I agree that more work must be done on the theology of woman. I have said so and work is being done in this regard.

**Do you perceive a certain underlying misogyny?**

The fact is that woman was taken from a rib ... [he laughs heartily]. It's a joke, I'm joking. I agree that there must be more reflection on the feminine question, otherwise the Church herself cannot be understood.

**Can we expect historic decisions from you, such as a woman head of a dicastery, I don't say of the clergy ...**

[laughs] Well, so many times priests end up under the authority of their housekeepers...

**In August, you will go to Korea. Is it the door to China? Are you pointing to Asia?**

I will go to Asia twice in six months: to Korea in August to meet Asian young people and, in January to Sri Lanka and the Philippines. The Church in Asia holds great promise. Korea represents so much; it has behind it a most beautiful history. For two centuries it had no priests and Catholicism progressed thanks to the laity. There were also martyrs. In regard to China, it is a great cultural challenge, very great. And then there is the example of Matteo Ricci, who did so much good ...

**Where is Bergoglio's Church heading?**

Thank God I have no Church; I follow Christ. I didn't found anything. From the point of view of style, I haven't changed from the way I was at Buenos Aires. Yes, perhaps to some little extent, because one must, but to change at my age would be ridiculous. In regard to the plan, instead, I follow what the Cardinals requested during the General Congregations before the Conclave. I go in that direction. The Council of Eight Cardinals, an external body, was born from that. It was requested to help reform the Curia. Something that isn't easy because when a step is taken, it emerges that this or that must also be done, and so if there was one dicastery earlier, it now becomes four. My decisions are the fruit of the pre-Conclave meetings. I haven't done anything on my own.

**A democratic approach?**

They were decisions of the Cardinals. I don't know if it's a democratic approach. I would say it is more Synodal, even if the word is not appropriate for cardinals. ■

Courtesy: Il Messaggero

BY HEDWIG LEWIS, SJ

The first six companions of Ignatius who formed the nucleus of the Society of Jesus were: Peter Faber, Francis Xavier, Simão Rodrigues, Diego Laínez, Alfonso Salmerón, and Nicolás Bobadilla. They were enrolled in theology courses at the Dominican College of St Jacques, affiliated to the University of Paris. They lived in different residences but met frequently for spiritual conversation and prayer. On Sundays they gathered at the Carthusian residence on the outskirts of the city for confession, Mass and Communion. They were all fired by common objectives and action-plans. The vows they made at Montmartre on 15 August 1534, was evidence that they were determined to remain united in mind and heart, come what may, and made unanimous decisions on their way of proceeding. [see *Autobio* 85].

They were later joined by three others: Claude le Jay, Paschase Broet, and Jean Codure. Ignatius once referred to the complete group as “nine of my friends in the Lord”. Transformed by the experience of the 30-day *Spiritual Exercises* of Ignatius, and motivated by the *magis*, these co-founders of the Society were committed to service under the banner of the Cross for the greater glory of God.

The Society of Jesus was formally approved by Pope Paul III in the Bull, *Regimini Militantis Ecclesiae* of 27 Sept 1540. At the time, only three members of the group were in Rome: Ignatius, Codure and Salmeron. Xavier and Rodrigues were in Lisbon, Faber was in Parma, and Bobadilla was in Calabria. Ignatius sent notices to the companions working in Italy to assemble in Rome to prepare for the election of the General in accordance with the Bull.

On 5 April 1541, Ignatius and the five companions who could meet in Rome – Laínez, Salmeron, Broet, Jay, Codure – deposited their written ballots in an urn, together with the sealed



## Solemn Profession of our Founding Fathers

ballots of Faber, Xavier and Rodrigues. Ignatius’ ballot stated: “Except myself, I elect as Superior the one who will get the most votes.” The ballots were examined on 8 April. Bobadilla did not send his vote or it did not arrive in time. After Ignatius accepted his election as General of the new Society [19 April 1541], the companions decided to make their religious profession in keeping with the papal bull, on 22 April 1541.

On that day, they started out by visiting the Seven Main Churches of Rome. At the Basilica of St Paul Outside-the-Walls, one of the Seven Churches, they made their Profession. The high altar of the basilica has remained the same to this day, having survived the fire of 1840 that destroyed the church. The altar of Our Lady was to the right, enclosed by an iron grill and contained the Blessed Sacrament, and a Byzantine mosaic of Our Lady. It was at this altar that the group assembled.

### The ceremony

In a brief document called the “*Form the Society took in its Oblation*”, Ignatius gives a faithful report of the memorable occasion: “When we reached St Paul’s, all six went to confession, one to another. And it was decided that

Inigo [Ignatius] should say Mass in the church, and that all the others should receive the Blessed Sacrament from his hand, making their vows in the following manner: Inigo, just before Communion, holding in one hand the paper on which the vow formula was written, turned toward the kneeling companions, and said the words of the vows.

“After saying them, he took Communion, receiving the Body of Christ our Lord. When he had finished consuming (the chalice), he placed the five consecrated hosts on the paten and turned to the companions... Each one took the page of vows into his hand... and said the words aloud [in Latin]. When the first had finished, he received the Body of Christ our Lord. Then, in turn, the second did the same; so too the third, fourth, fifth.”

“When Mass was over, after praying before the indulgenced altars, they came together at the high altar, where each one came to Inigo and he went to each. Giving an embrace and the kiss of peace, with much devotion, feeling and tears, they ended the ceremony of vows...”

Before leaving the church they signed a paper, prepared by Jerome Domenech, who acted as secretary. It stated that the perpetual vows of their Institute were made in the hands of Master Ignatius of Loyola unanimously chosen as General, and concluded: “Done in the Church of St Paul Outside-the-Walls, in the year of our Lord 1541, April the 22nd.” It was later handed over to the Pope.

The Society of Jesus was now fully constituted. The companions departed with feelings of deep comfort and joy.

### Later professions

The companions who were not present made their Profession at different places and times. Faber at Ratisbon, on 9 July 1451. Xavier in Goa in December 1543 or January 1544. Rodrigues at Evora on 25 December 1544. Bobadilla hesitated to make his profession, but finally, in September 1541, he did so in Ignatius’ presence at St Paul’s Basilica. ■

**ROME**

**'Confessor of Rome' on the path to sainthood**

On 24 June 24 the diocesan phase of the process of canonization of Fr Felice Cappello (1879-1962) which began in 1986 was completed at the Vicariate of Rome. Now the documentation will go to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints, that will evaluate the collected proofs to ascertain the heroic virtues of the Jesuit. Fr Cappello, internationally renowned canonist but better known as "the confessor of Rome", is buried in the church of St. Ignatius next to the confessional where he carried on his ministry for about 40 years. He also taught at the Gregorian University for many years,

- SJ Web

**GERMANY**

**350<sup>th</sup> death anniversary of first German General**

The 350<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of the tenth Superior General falls on 31 July '14. Goswin Nickel



(1584-1664) was the first German to become the Jesuit General. After him, there was only one more German Superior General, Franz Xaver Wernz from Rottweil. He was the 25th Superior General, whose 100th death anniversary is on 19 Aug '14.

Goswin Nickel was born on 01 May 1584. After serving as the Provincial of the Lower Rhine Province, he was elected General on 17 March 1652. He lived at the time of persecution of witches, the inquisition, censorship and the Thirty Years' War. He fought against all these injustices.

- SJ Web

**KENYA**

**Jesuits work for peace in troubled Kenya**

For the past 10 years, Jesuits have been working in the peace-building process in Kenya, finding "God in the mess", as Fr Peter Knox SJ at Hekima College in Nairobi describes it. The latest attacks of terrorists in Kenya have highlighted the dangers to both Kenyans and visitors. The murder



of 48 locals in the coastal town of Mpeketoni in June has reinforced the climate of mistrust and fear in the country. But for Jesuits working in Nairobi, these events have emphasized the importance of their work in peace building and reconciliation. The Institute of Peace Studies and International Relations (HIPSIR) in Hekima College is helping people to analyze the conflict in Kenya and elsewhere in the African continent. Fortuitously located in the capital, the college was founded in 1984 as the Jesuit School of Theology for African young Jesuits training for the priesthood. It marked its 20th anniversary in 2004 by opening 'Hipser', where each student has to conduct original research in one area of conflict. The programme includes courses in human rights law, diplomacy, economics and international relations. It approaches conflict from various perspectives, including African culture, identity and the ethics of war. And it has a strong emphasis on conflict resolution and peace-building.

- SJ Web

**Vatican names Jesuit canon lawyer adviser to Legionaries of Christ**

Although the Legionaries of Christ have returned to a normal form of self-governance, the Vatican named a top canon lawyer as a special adviser to the religious community.



Jesuit Fr. Gianfranco Ghirlanda, a former rector of Rome's Pontifical Gregorian University and canon law consultant to various offices of the Roman Curia, will support the Legionaries "in overcoming the institutional crisis that has taken place in the last few years," according to an announcement from the Legionaries' headquarters. The new leadership of the Legionaries of Christ, elected in February, was informed of Ghirlanda's appointment by Cardinal Joao Braz de Aviz and Archbishop Jose Rodriguez Carballo, respectively prefect and secretary of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life.

In a letter to members, Fr. Eduardo Robles Gil, general director of the Legionaries, said Ghirlanda "will counsel us especially in the search for an adequate canonical configuration" for the relationship between the Legionaries of Christ and the related Regnum Christi movement. The movement includes consecrated women, consecrated men and laypeople.

Both the Legionaries of Christ and Regnum Christi were founded by the late Fr. Marcial Maciel Degollado, who was condemned by the Vatican for having sexually abused boys in his seminaries and fathering children. Pope Benedict XVI ordered an apostolic visitation of the Legionaries and Regnum Christi in 2009 and appointed a papal delegate to oversee the groups as they prepared to rewrite their constitutions and reform their communities.

Part of the process was to spell out how the branches of Regnum Christi relate to one another and, particularly, how to give the consecrated men and women greater autonomy from the priests of the Legionaries of Christ in their daily lives and apostolic work while still promoting cooperation.

Ghirlanda, 72, had served as the canonical adviser to the papal delegate throughout the process. He presided over the general chapter of the consecrated men's branch of Regnum Christi in November 2013 and served as vice president of the Legionaries of Christ general chapter in January and February. The general chapter ended in February with delegates approving the text of new constitutions for the Legionaries of Christ, which must be approved by the Pope.

Vatican also asked for "some 40 small textual modifications of different kinds such as the reorganization of some of the numbers, changing a few terms that can lead to misunderstandings, or the simplification of some procedures in the section that addresses the government of the congregation." One of the main Vatican criticisms of the old constitutions of the Legionaries was that it attempted to control every aspect of the members' lives.

- CNS

BY WALTER FERNANDES, SJ

# Jesuit Restoration in Myanmar

While the Society was restored in 1814, the Jesuit mission in Myanmar was restored only in 1997. Maryland Jesuits were expelled from Myanmar in 1966. The first Burmese Jesuit was ordained a priest in May 2013 and two more of them in 2014. That is indicative of the growth of the Jesuit mission after their Restoration in Myanmar in 1997. That was their third coming.

Though Francis Xavier wrote to St Ignatius to send Jesuits to Pegu, four Jesuits came to Burma only in 1600. So Jesuits did not found the Catholic Church in Burma. It began when an Italian Franciscan came in 1514.

In 1600 Jesuits came as chaplains of the army led by an adventurer, Filipe de Brito e Nicote who brought the Arakkans (Rakhine today) under his control with the help of the local prince. The Portuguese Vice-Roy of Goa then conferred on him the title of governor of Pegu. The Jesuits baptised a few local people. But Brito and the prince were later defeated and executed in 1613. A Jesuit too was killed. The troops led by Brito were captured and sent to the north of the country. They formed a Catholic community that continues to prosper today. Two Jesuits who accompanied them were martyred but other Jesuits served them till around 1660.

The second coming of the Jesuits was in 1958 when some Maryland Jesuits came at the invitation of the Bishops to teach in the major seminary. The military regime expelled them along with all the foreigners in 1966. As far as one knows, they were expelled because they were foreigners, not because they were Christians. From the 1970s Fr Leo Cachat of Nepal became the link with the past because he came every



now and then to guide clergy retreats. Finally two Jesuits from Indonesia led by Fr Clay Pereira were sent by Fr Kolvenbach in 1997 at the request of the Bishops. Today Myanmar has more than 40 Jesuits, 17 of them foreigners, including eight from India. Among the Indians five are from Madurai, one each from Gujarat and Kohima and the Australian Paul Horan who worked in the Hazaribagh Province for 40 years.

Apart from opening a novitiate and a Candidates' Home, at its Restoration, the pioneers led by Clay Pereira had to discern the people's needs from a justice and human rights perspective. The military regime that was ruling Myanmar had turned the country into a closed society and had nationalised all schools. Burma needed a window to look at the rest of the world. Starting an English teaching institute was the window that they tried to open. The

youth needed the language for jobs and to know the world beyond Myanmar. Jesuits viewed this initiative at Taunggyi in Central Myanmar as support to their right to a better tomorrow. Not surprisingly, on the very first day the school had 150 students. A second such institute was opened in Yangon five years later initially for seminarians and religious and then admitted others. Today it has 350 students. It shows the need that the youth feel to move out of isolation.

On 02 May 2008 Cyclone Nargis changed the world for Myanmar. By official count 150,000 people lost their lives in it and 2.4 million persons were rendered homeless. The reality is probably worse than that. C. Amalraj from Madurai Province, who had experience with disaster management and refugees and had come to the country a few months earlier, was sent



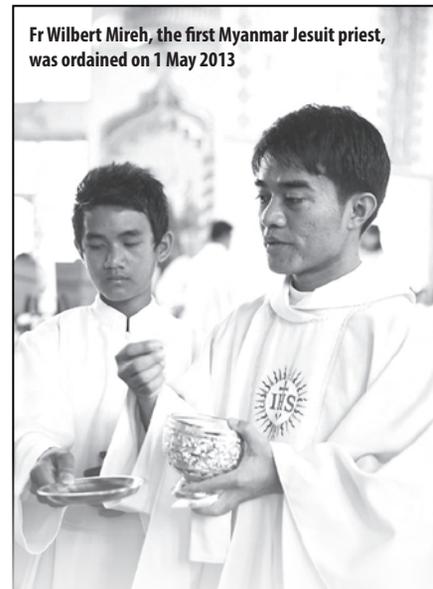
to the cyclone-devastated area together with some students of the Campion English Teaching Institute, Yangon. They started Myanmar Rehabilitation Initiative (MRI), and helped build 3,500 houses, monasteries, water and sanitation units, community assets that reached around 8,600 households, in the remotest areas of the Ayeyarwady delta where other NGOs hesitated to go. They also worked in a slum near Yangon.

This small effort compared to the massive need, was meant to be a model in turning disaster relief into development with the involvement of people's communities. Thousands of children drowned when the cyclone washed away their schools. To give hope to the community the remaining children had to be sent back to school. Building schools and finding teachers was a step in that direction.

The delta region has farmers, fishing households and farm labourers. The fishing households could be rehabilitated with new boats and nets and by reviving their marketing network. A bigger number of farm labourers had died, because they lived in low lying areas. That meant labour shortage and higher wages for the survivors. Justice demanded that this advantage be protected while reviving their economy by rebuilding agriculture. The farmers had lost the infrastructure including barns, seeds, agricultural implements and animals. The soil was rendered saline, water had become salty. These problems combined to push them into the hands of the moneylenders. To solve their problem, focus had to be on freedom from debt and rebuilding the infrastructure, with the involvement of the community. MRI is doing it as intrinsic to the Jesuit commitment to justice to the most marginalised and by being where the need is the greatest.

In the 1950s Rangoon and Mandalay were considered the best

universities in South East Asia, but during the five decades of military rule original thinking was discouraged and the tradition of research was destroyed. So justice demanded that Jesuits take initiatives in this direction too. I was invited to Myanmar to use my 40 years of experience in research and advocacy as tools of justice, to train researchers



Fr Wilbert Mireh, the first Myanmar Jesuit priest, was ordained on 1 May 2013

**It is difficult to say that now a Church of Myanmar exists. Each ethnic community builds its own Church with very little national and universal feeling. Jesuits too belong to the same ethnic communities. That poses a challenge for their formation.**

in the country. During one year of its existence, the Animation and Research Centre has been trying to train local researchers beginning with Jesuit scholastics. It is too early to speak of any achievement other than that it has done two major studies on disaster management and on tribes divided between Northeast India and Myanmar. It has started contacting civil society groups for training in research and advocacy.

The Church is an important

component in all the efforts. Most Christians belong to the ethnic minority tribes, whose areas are blessed with natural and mineral resources. But these are under attack from the business enterprises of rich countries of Asia, Europe and North America. These regions have also witnessed conflicts for autonomy for six decades. The Church has been the victim of the isolation of five decades, when the country became a closed society. The bishops could not attend the Vatican Council. The clergy and the rest of the Church have, therefore, to be brought up to date in developments in the Catholic Church during the last few decades, including its social teaching and advocacy for peace, based on justice and indigenous rights. That has been one more area of Jesuit involvement.

Jesuits need to be in the frontier areas. A mission with local people at the centre has to be built for this purpose, according to the principles of justice based on faith. It is difficult to say that now a Church of Myanmar exists. Each ethnic community builds its own Church with very little national and universal feeling. Jesuits too belong to the same ethnic communities. That poses a challenge for their formation. The Jesuits who are indigenous to the country need to show the way in building a Myanmar Jesuit mission whose members respect their identity but go beyond it to a universal mission. They can thus make a contribution to the Church of Myanmar and to the country as a whole by working for peace based on justice to all the communities. It can also be a way of walking with the Church that is trying to adapt itself to the changing situation and to go beyond ethnic identities to a universal mission. Requests continue to come for pastoral and other training institutes. Jesuits will have to discern and be ready to go into unknown lands. ■

BY K.T. CHANDY, SJ

I have come up with these “Ten Commandments of Nature” after nearly 40 years of working with nature and considering many aspects of human and environmental existence and development. Since all of us have our own ideas on how to manage our health and our environment, I am sure that many will deny or debate these conclusions, and so will generate a lot of heat and dust. Yet after all the heat and dust settles, I hope some consensus will eventually emerge.

of the earth. Land mass and water are the base for all the living things on the earth.

The biggest water body on the surface of the earth is the sea, which itself covers about 70% of the surface of our planet earth. Besides sea there are water bodies like lakes, reservoirs, ponds, marshy lands, swamps, mangroves, river systems etc. on the land area, which make up 5 % more.

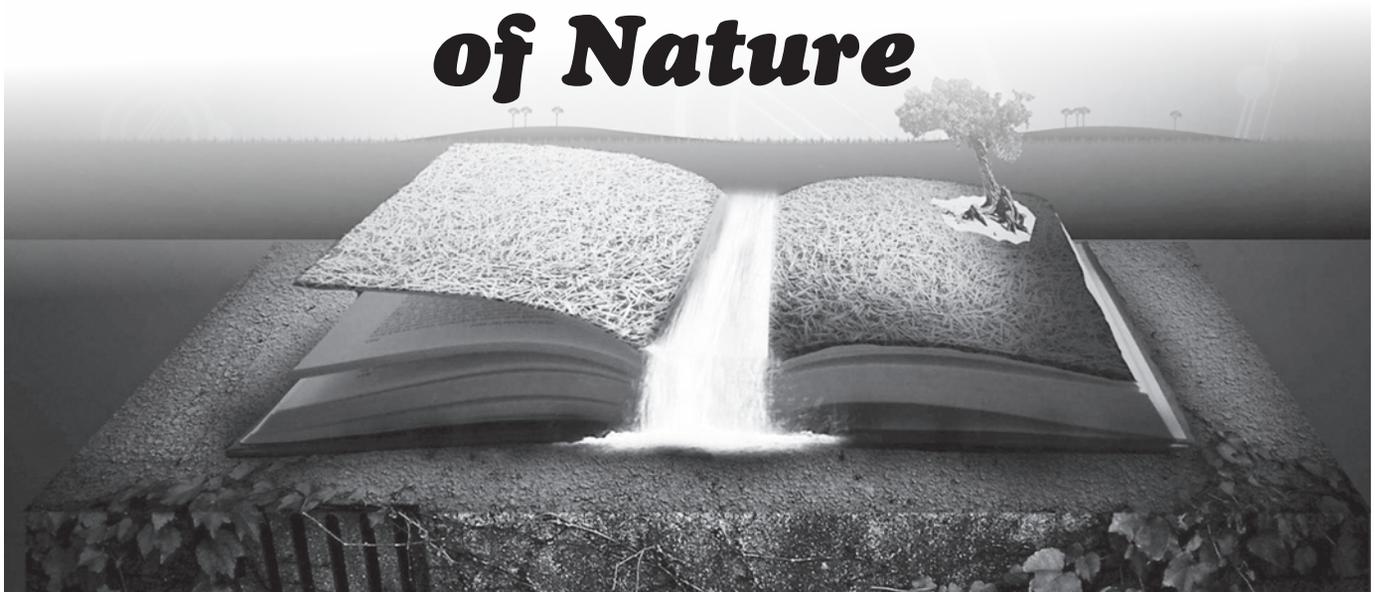
### II. Retain the forest area

On the land, the proportion of perennial forest area to the non-forest area - on the globe as a whole or in a continent or a country or a state or in a small

nature of the forest or vegetative cover it should have. Remember anything done in forestry, agriculture, and animal husbandry influences directly the environment. Here are some rules of land use under this law:

3a. All the slopes at and above 33.33% (1:3 = Vertical to Horizontal) or 15 degree slope should be earmarked as perennial forest area which should never be disturbed in the future. This is to facilitate storage of as much rain water as possible in the hill-forest system during the rainy season. The water stored will be released slowly in the form of numerous springs

# Ten Commandments of Nature



It may be too late for that to happen; but it is better to be late than never.

Today we know that most of the environmental problems are man-made because of over exploitation and mismanagement of natural resources. But still most of us do not know that environmental degradation happens because we act against some unwritten “Laws of Nature.” There are ten such laws and we can call them “The Ten Commandments of Nature”:

### I. Don't alter the ratio:

Understand that on the surface of the earth there is an optimum ratio of 3:1 between the area under water and the land. Men should not alter this proportion significantly in their management practices of land and water resources on the surface

watershed area - should also be maintained in 3:1 ratio.

There was a time the whole land mass was covered by forests. People and animals all lived in the forest and depended on the forest for their necessities. Gradually humans began clearing the forest for cultivation, habitation, urbanization, institutionalization and industrialization. Today in most countries not even 50% of the area have forests. The 3:1 ratio of forest and non-forest area is a fundamental and underlying principle in the preservation of our environment system.

### III. Don't disturb slopes and trees

The land use pattern for agriculture and forestry-related activities are strictly governed by the degree or percentage of the slope of the land: greater the slope of the land more should be the perennial

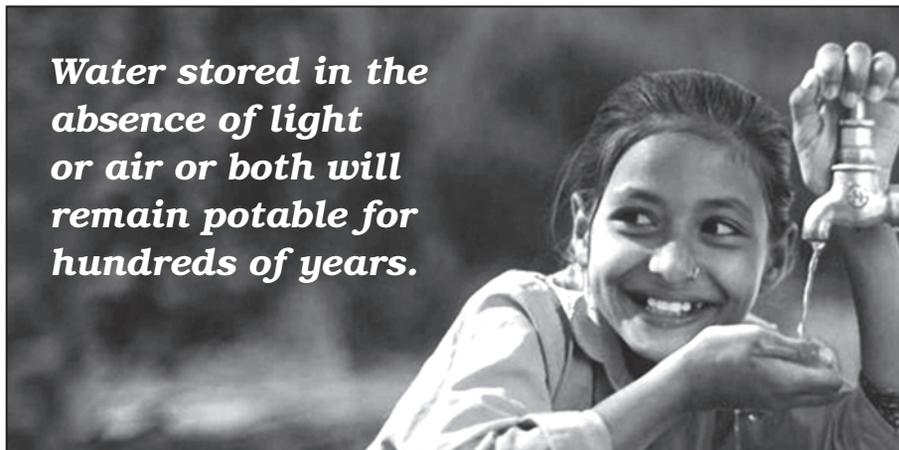
at the foot of the hills. Slopes at 33.3% are the maximum level beyond which no human or domestic animal activity should be permitted.

3b. Harvesting of timber trees in the forest area should be decided - not on the basis of our needs, but only on the basis of the availability of trees of prescribed size and height. Harvesting of trees for timber from anywhere in the perennial forest area should be done only by using cut-and-lift-off-technology and not by cutting roads to bring trucks or dragging them by elephants or machines.

3c. Collection of minor forest products also should be done with least disturbances to the forest eco-system. Quarrying should be avoided; if it is indispensable, it should be done without disturbing the eco-system of the forest area.

3d. Grazing of cattle and other animals should be strictly forbidden in the forest area as it causes tremendous amount of soil erosion. Stall-feeding of domestic animals is the best form of maintaining domestic animals.

3e. All the slopes ranging between 20 to 33.3% (1:3 to 1:5 vertical to horizontal) or 9 to 15 degrees should be used for perennial crops like fruit trees, plantation crops or timber trees. But the springs originating in these areas should be preserved with a perennial protective cover of natural forest of 50 to 100 meter in radius around the spring.



**Water stored in the absence of light or air or both will remain potable for hundreds of years.**

3f. All the lands having slopes ranging between 10 to 20 per cent (1:10 to 1:20 = vertical to horizontal) or 4.5 to 9.0 degree slope should be terraced before they are used for seasonal crops.

3g. Areas between 5 to 10 percent (2.25 to 4.5 or 5 degree) slopes can be used for seasonal cultivation, provided terracing and other soil and water conservation practices are adopted.

3i. Only land between 0 to 5 percent (0 to 2.25 degree) slopes can be used for seasonal crops like cereals, millets, pulses, vegetables, flowers etc. without the need for any soil conservation measures.

**IV. Don't disturb agricultural land:**

Agricultural land should never be used for any non-agricultural usage. If you do that, you shall experience acute food shortage. The term agriculture is used in its broadest sense. After allotting 75% of the land for perennial forests, only 25% percent of the land is left for human usage: both for agriculture and for non-agriculture purposes.

**V. Convert all material into organic manure:**

All the bio-mass or organic material

generated within a specific rural and agricultural land area should be converted into organic manure, which should be incorporated into the cultivated soil in order to maintain its high level of productivity and sustainable organic food production. Remember "Organic matter is the soul of the soil"; just as a body without soul is dead, so too soil without organic matter will remain lifeless and unproductive.

**VI. Remove harmful substances**

All the urban and industrial organic and non organic wastes - whether chemical, medical, in liquid or solid form - should be treated to remove all the harmful

substances before recycling into their byproducts.

**VII. Use renewable energy**

Use more and more renewable sources of energy like bio-gas, solar, wind and tidal waves instead of fossil sources. Solar radiation should be used for generating electrical power connected to the national grid. Similarly solar energy should be used for cooking food and for heating water and other purposes.

**VIII. Store and use rain water:**

Facilities for collection, storage and use of rain water should be part of the construction at every house and institutional complex. Remember water stored in the absence of light or air or both will remain potable for hundreds of years or forever.

**IX. Eat wisely**

Healthy population is an essential condition for a healthy environment. Healthy nutrition and healthy environment are the two necessary conditions for a healthy population. People who indulge in irrational unhealthy practices are a heavy burden on the eco-system.

a. It is an established fact that most of the sicknesses and low body resistance

to various diseases is due to under or mal-nourishment. The problem starts at the time of conception and continues till the death of an individual. Both among the rich and the poor regular and sufficient amount of vegetable consumption is rare. The cereals and millets provide the people with energy, while pulses, meat, fish etc give protein. But vegetables and fruits provide the vitamins and minerals which are equally important to energy and protein.

b. The daily diet of every person should contain besides the energy foods (cereals, millets and tubers) and protein foods (different types of pulses and non-vegetarian foods including eggs) a minimum of 50 gram of cooked leafy vegetables, 50 gm of root vegetables and vegetables other than roots and leaves. Besides these 150 gm of the three types of vegetables, 50 gm of mixed fresh salad and 50 gm fresh fruits are an essential part of the regular diet. Thus everyone should consume daily in two or three meals a total of 250 gm of vegetables and fruits (in the five categories mentioned above) to provide the human body with 14 vitamins and about 24 minerals which govern millions of hormonal and enzymatic production and utilization functions in our body.

**X. Don't commercialize food and sex**

Commercialization of food and sex degrades and destroys humanity. It is a blatantly anti-people trend that works against nurturing a healthy and vibrant population. Commercialized food, known as junk food, damages the physical and mental health of people, while commercialization of sex and womanhood damage their social and moral life. A rational human approach to food and sex is necessary for ensuring a healthy population that is necessary for a well-balanced ecosystem. A hedonistic approach based on cravings and emotions will damage and destroy the eco-system. God set man as the master and ruler of the earth and everything in it. If the master and ruler himself is sick and acts like an irrational slave, how can a healthy ecosystem be created and maintained?

Food and sex are interrelated in such a way that life is impossible without either of them. Food is for preservation of life while sex is for preservation of humanity. Both are so sacred in human life that having one or the other is a holy act.

*Fr K.T. Chandy, SJ (KER), an environmentalist, is now the Librarian at Vidyajyoti, Delhi.*



BY SALVADOR FERRAO, SJ

Some years ago I saw two youngsters with their ‘spear master’ (spiritual leader) celebrating their crimes with a feast of roasted goat. When I asked the police whether they shouldn’t be arrested and punished as criminals, I was told, “Relax, Father, it’s just their culture...”

In our South Sudan the conflicts between clans are never ending, or rather, they come to an end only when one group has slaughtered the other completely. One Sunday during my homily at Mass, I called out to two girls: “Come out in front of the assembly and start fighting.” They just smiled, and didn’t move. The people reacted immediately. “These girls have no ill feelings towards each other. On the contrary, they would remove the skin of their faces with their finger nails to help each other...” Then I retorted, “Then why do Dinka and Nuer kill each other?”

Why do they fight? Clans fight over cattle-stealing, a sport to them. They also fight under the pretext of a larger political crisis. The conflict is two fold. One is ethnic-religion based: South Sudan (largely Christian) versus North Sudan (Arab). The other is based on tribal hostility within South Sudan:

*Salvador Ferrao, SJ, a Jesuit from Goa, and a member of the East Africa province, has been working for many years in one of the most conflict-ridden parts of the world today - South Sudan. He shares his experiences and the questions they provoke:*

## Will the fighting ever end?

Dinka versus Nuer.

The state of South Sudan came into being in 2005, after decades of bitter civil war between the tribal (and largely Christian) south and the Arab (Muslim) north. John Garang, a Dinka tribal, became president of South Sudan. Some years ago on a Sunday when we celebrated the canonization of Daniel Comboni, the Italian founder of the Comboni Fathers and Sisters. I invited John Garang to attend the Mass.

Though it was at short notice, he came with his brass band to grace the festivity. After my homily I asked him to greet the Sunday assembly. He did so using words from St John’s Gospel, “In my Father’s house there is plenty of room. So too in Sudan there is place for everybody.” I congratulated him in public and called him Al Haj Al Kabir

- an Arabic title signifying honour and esteem. Unfortunately Garang died prematurely in an air crash in 2005.

Salva Kiir, his vice-president, campaigned for presidential office. I happened to be around in one of our villages. The commissioner of the place asked me to bless the people before Salva Kiir spoke to the crowd. I did so, praying, “Oh God, make our president-to-be the commander-in-chief of non-violent forces, and not of armies that loot and kill.” When Kiir arrived, he got off his platform on the land-cruiser which brought him, and I blessed him with my stole and gave him holy pictures of Our Lady of Fatima. He accepted them and said, “Father, thank you. But will this work?”

Kiir was elected, but a split in the Kiir regime took place in 2013, just before last Christmas, when soldiers of



the Nuer clan seceded under Machar. The Bishops thought they would be able to bring the army that had split together by saying, “Come back to normal life before Christmas.” They didn’t succeed.

So now tribal tensions between the Nuer and the Dinka tribes within South Sudan have erupted again, while the hostility of the Arab north to the tribal south continues, as the oil wells of the country are in the South.

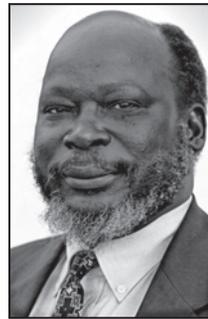
Proving that birds of the same feather flock together, soldiers desert one group and join another which has the most of their tribe. The basic law is that of survival,



Salva Kiir

rebels nor the army have the fear of God, and killing another man or woman does not even prick their conscience one bit. They are far too hardened for that.” I have anointed wounded soldiers from both tribes, returning from the battle field.

In a national meeting of religious of South Sudan, I pleaded for a vision and a voice for the nation as a whole, but now I realize that people here are not ready yet to think in these terms yet. Neither South Sudan nor the Catholic Church in Sudan will never be the same, because the split in the government divides the army, the tribes, and everybody.



John Garang

and they do not welcome workers from other states. Often I remind our people in church meetings that God created the Sudanese without divisions of caste, race and colour. I would quote the UN declaration which proclaims, “Embrace Diversity.”

It is a matter of shame that the leaders who support either side are Christians or believers in God. True, many of them are smart; but they are ignorant of what matters most – our common humanity.

Can we hope the conflict and the fighting will end some day? Pope Francis makes a distinction between being an optimist and having the



survival of self and of family and clan. Tit for tat destruction happens regularly on both sides.

I remember something a tribal chief told me years ago: “Neither the

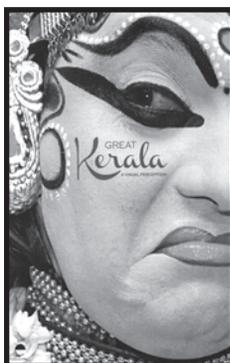
There is an urgent need for building bridges. Unfortunately this view isn’t shared by everyone. Many declare that people should only work within their own regions

warmth of hope. It is not enough to be optimistic that one day this war will be over; there’s need to live in the warmth of hope, that is, to trust in a future over which we have no say, but God does. ■

## Southern beauty

- Great Kerala  
A Visual Perception
- Dee Publishers, Eluppakkattu,  
Athirampuzha, Kottayam - 686 562
- Pages: 128; Price: Rs.650

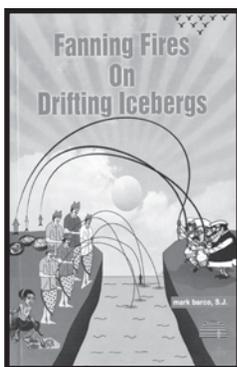
This excellently-produced book on Kerala is a collective effort of artists and photographers from Kerala, who obviously love their homeland. Their aim, they say, is to bring to light many of Kerala's smaller but important and unique destinations. They are not so well-known, simply because these have not been given the importance they deserve in tourist guides and maps. The beautifully illustrated book is a delight to the eyes. The Jesuit communicator, George Sebastian, SJ (KER) is the Editor-in-Chief and Researcher.



## On Church's mission

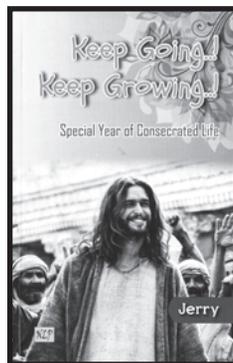
- Fanning Fires on Drifting Icebergs
- Mark Barco, SJ
- Vaigarai Publishing House  
6, Main Road, Dindigul - 624 001, T.N.
- Pages: 104; Price: Rs.60

This is a book by Mark Barco, a Jesuit Brother of Bombay Province. He says in his Preface that this is the first of his six books addressing issues that specifically concern the Church and her mission. Calling himself "a great beneficiary of Vatican II," he says his aim is to awaken everybody to a consciousness of God's love which dwells in our hearts by faith.



## Prayers for Religious

- Keep Going...! Keep Growing...!
- Jerry, SJ
- The New Leader Publications  
Armenian Street, Chennai - 600001
- Pages: 203; Price: Rs.150



Jerry Rosario, SJ (MDU), has made it a habit to bring out booklets on occasions of importance to the Church or the society. This is his latest in view of the special Year of Consecrated Life announced by Pope Francis (30 Nov 2014 - 02 Feb 2016). The year 2015 has been chosen, as it will mark the 50th anniversary of the publication of *Perfectae Caritatis*, Vatican II's document on religious life.

The booklet has 60 prayers on various themes related to religious life.

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## CARTOON CORNER



"I'm enrolling in a seminary so that I can learn about miracles, like how to pay off my student loans."

**JOHN ALPHONSO, SJ  
(PUN) 1914 - 2014**



Well-known Jesuit Brother John Alphonso, 101, who entered the Society of Jesus in 1936, passed away at his residence on the campus of St Vincent's School on 19 July '14. Bro Alphonso spent 78 years in the Society. He was born on 12 Jan 1914 in Agashi, Vasai. He studied at St Stanislaus High School, Bandra and entered the Society of Jesus in 1936. He was sent for his Novitiate to Calicut and later worked in Mapuca, Margao and Belgaum.

Those who have lived with Bro Alphonso in the communities at Calicut, Mapuca, Margao, Shembaganur, Belgaum, or at St Xavier's, Kolhapur, in Loyola, Pashan, or over the last 29 years at St Vincent's, Pune, have all been inspired by his devotion, gentleness, and simplicity. Bro Alphonso remains a source of blessing by his enduring commitment to the mission, personifying for almost 80 years the Ignatian charism of the Jesuit Brother. He had lived 78 years in the Society of Jesus and did tireless work. One of his main contributions to the Society of Jesus was at XTC (Xavier Training Institute, the old Province Novitiate and Juniorate), which has a farm of more than 100 acres. He labored tirelessly there for 8 years, leveling the ground, cultivating a variety of crops and planting hundreds of trees. The institute looks so graceful on account of Br. John Alphonso. He worked in many Jesuit communities as minister, serving the community delicious food and bringing life and smiles through his unflagging sense of humour. He never forgot the poor. He had the hobby of collecting stamps of various countries and selling them to help the poor. Many whom Br Alphonso helped are now well settled in life. His entire life revealed the true qualities of a Jesuit. After every evening meal, he made sure that someone would celebrate an early morning Mass for him at the community chapel.

His funeral was on 20 July at St Xavier's Church, Pune Camp followed by funeral rites at the Hadapsar Cemetery.

- Oscar Daniel Raj, SJ

**MARIASUSAI SEBASTIAN, SJ  
(MDU) 1917 - 2014**



"My soul is thirsting for the Lord. When shall I see him face to face?" sang the Psalmist. These verses seem to capture the disposition of Br Mariasusai during the last days of his life on earth. He starved himself in order to hasten his journey to his Maker. He remained silent and prayed in the silence of his heart.

Mariasusai was born on 17 July 1917 at Oriyur. His parents were Mr Sebastian, who had been a school teacher and catechist in Burma, and Mrs Savariammal. He was the eldest in the family. His two younger sisters are alive. A niece, Sr Dhanam Mary, is an FSJ Sister.

Mariasusai entered the Society of Jesus on 12 Nov 1937 at Sacred Heart College, Shembaganur. He pronounced his Last Vows on 02 Feb 1948. He served at SHC, Shembag, St Joseph's, Trichy, St Mary's, Madurai, Perumal Malai, Loyola Technical Institute, Madurai, La Providence, Kodaikanal, and S.H.C, Shenbaganur. His 27 years of efficient and committed service at St Joseph's form a golden chapter in his epic journey of 76 years as a Jesuit.

After working tirelessly for nearly 66 years, he was sent to Beschi Illam to have his well-earned rest. In fact, he rested and prayed for the next three years. After he sustained a crack in his thigh bone in June, he found it difficult to walk and was confined to the bed most of the time. On 13 July in the early hours of the morning, Br Mariasusai Sebastian, the oldest Jesuit in the province, had a cardiac arrest and passed away peacefully. The Funeral Mass in the evening was presided over by the Provincial, Fr Sebasti L. Raj. In the homily, Fr A. Ambrose who had been with him in Shembag as his Superior, touched on his inimitable qualities of doing everything with a smile, of gentlemanliness, and of his spirit of detachment and loyalty to the Society. He was laid to rest in the Beschi cemetery after Fr Leo Tagore, the Beschi Superior, said the final blessing.

- Maria Jeyaraj, SJ

**STANISLAUS VAS, SJ  
(KAR) 1924 - 2014**



Fr Stany Vas was a great person. He was sharp, intelligent, knowledgeable and committed. He always thought of others. He looked after the community with warmth and love. During the past one year even though he was confined to his room, he took care to meet people, particularly the youth who came for his guidance.

Born in 1924, he was to complete 90 years on 13 August this year. He joined the Society on 16 June 1945. He was ordained a priest on 24 March 1958 and made his final vows on 15 Aug 1962. After securing an M.Sc degree from Loyola College, Madras (now Chennai), he got a Ph.D from Loyola University, Chicago, USA.

Then began his career as a college teacher. He served as professor of Chemistry at St Aloysius College, Mangalore, then Rector of St Aloysius institutions, Rector of St Joseph's College, Bangalore, Director of Fatima Retreat House, Mangalore, chaplain at St John's Medical College, Bangalore, professor and spiritual guide at St Joseph's Inter-diocesan Seminary, Mangalore.

After this he came to Fatima Retreat House to live a quiet retired life as an exemplary community man, ready to say Masses and give retreats. What was striking in him was his availability to be at the service of people and Jesuits. He saw to the needs of others.

As a Jesuit he made it a point to visit the sick in the hospital and it was his regular work. He would talk with the sick and pray over them. He even quietly helped those in real need. People would eagerly await him in the hospital and his smile and warmth were very contagious. He spread happiness wherever he went.

He was an efficient and kind teacher. As a Superior, he gathered people together for prayers and was concerned about everyone. He was a man for others.

- Frederick D'Silva, SJ

## We don't disturb anyone

Quite a few writers have reflected on the Suppression of the Society and its restoration. In my humble opinion, the main reason behind the suppression of the Society of Jesus was that the Jesuits were a disturbing element everywhere. They were, as we would say now, 'whistle-blowers'. It was because of this that they invited opposition and persecution, which by the way, according to St Ignatius, was the sure sign that the Society was moving in the right direction. There was hardly a day in Gandhiji's life when he was not involved in some 'satyagraha', small or big. Unfortunately, his followers, the Gandhians abandoned his 'sangharshatmak' activities and opted for 'rachnatmak' (non-disturbing) activities. As a result they have now become sterile and totally ineffective. The Jesuits in India should find out whether they are also disturbing elements or simply carrying out their myriad charitable activities ('rachnatmak') peacefully without, causing any disturbance anywhere. There is a vast scope for us to be 'whistle-blowers' in this country plagued by widespread corruption, caste system, gender discrimination; money and muscle power during elections and other evils whose first and immediate victims are the poor and the marginalized.

- William Macwan, SJ  
Vidyanagar, Gujarat - 380 001

## Why problems in communities?

Permit me a few comments on the cover feature in the May-June 2014 issue of *Jivan*: 'Friends in the Lord' by Myron Pereira, SJ. I beg to disagree with the idealistic proposals by Myron. First of all, one is called by God to continue the work started by His Son, Jesus who asked Peter to care for the flock if and only if Peter loved Him more than the others. Working for God's people is the top priority; the proviso is stressed and Ignatius says it is the glory of God.

It's the duty of the Provincial to organize this work for the people of God within his jurisdiction through an apostolic plan. This apostolic plan has to emerge from the superior and the community. This community knows the needs on the ground - the needs of the people of God within their purview.

The Superior and the community happily fulfill the mandate granted to them. The community will definitely give effect to their dreams and aspirations incorporated into the apostolic plan. The community members will vie with each other to see the emergence of light at the end of the tunnel. Surely there will be some grumblings, some misgivings and even some destructive criticisms. Those will be handled creatively by a liberated Jesuit superior or sometimes by the members of the community itself; by those who truly love God. But problems emerge when the Provincial or Superior is not a sincere or honest gentleman, when they give more value and attention to the power and prestige of office rather than to caring for, loving and so serving their subjects and the people of God in their care.

- Ranjit Yawu, SJ  
Sri Lanka

## JIVAN AWARDS for creative writing – 2014

We are happy to announce the Jivan Creative Writing Contest for this year. The cash prizes to the winners come from a generous grant offered in 1997 by the family of Fio Mascarenhas, SJ and his brother, Frazer Mascarenhas, SJ in memory of their beloved parents – Francis and Flora Mascarenhas. This year too the contest is just for short stories.

The contest is open to all - Jesuits and non-Jesuits, men and women, young and not-so-young. The short-story should be original, unpublished anywhere else, in English, within 2000 words – set in today's Asia, highlighting people, events and trends that offer us hope for the future.

**There are three prizes:**

**The first prize: Rs 5,000**

**The second prize: Rs 2,000**

**The third prize: Rs 1,000**

1. Send neatly typed, original (unpublished) entries, with a forwarding letter with your full name and address and a brief description of your background to: Jivan Awards/ IDCR / Loyola College / P.B. 3301 / Chennai – 600 034 / India.

2. The entries should reach us **before 30 Sept '14**. The results will be announced in the Jan '15 issue of *Jivan*.

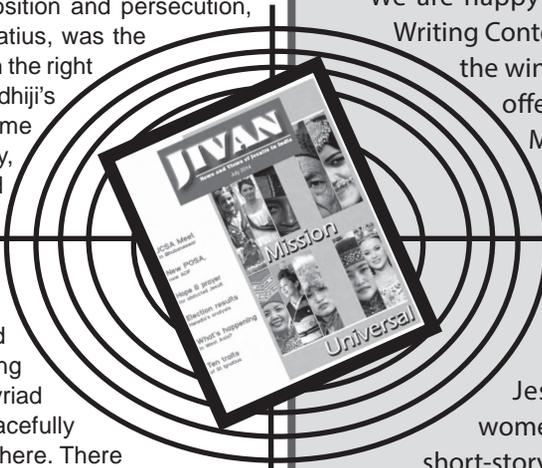
3. *Jivan* is not responsible for any loss or damage in transit. So to ensure safety, apart from keeping a copy, you can send the entry by e-mail to [jivaneditor@gmail.com](mailto:jivaneditor@gmail.com) after you send it by registered post or speed post or courier or ordinary mail. Entries will be acknowledged on receipt by e-mail or mail.

4. Entries cannot be returned and all entries become the property of *Jivan*.

5. A person can send only one short story.

6. The decision of a two-member Jury will be final.

- Editor



# Lessons for Life

## I've learned from Belgium

BY ANTONY PUTHUMATTATHIL, SJ

### Administration is for service

I found the local administration in Belgium very people-friendly. Almost all offices deliver everyday administrative services on a "first come, first served" basis. Moreover, office-staff are very welcoming and friendly. They greet people with a smile and make sure that people's needs are met. On entering an office, after the usual cordial exchange of greetings, they ask, "How can I help you?" This was a pleasant surprise for me on my first day at one of our university administrative offices.

### Priority to the most vulnerable

The city-traffic system in Belgium gives priority to pedestrians and cyclists, who are the most vulnerable on the road. All foot and bicycle paths everywhere in Belgium are clearly demarcated and linked by zebra-crossing lines. If a pedestrian is about to cross a road by a zebra-crossing, vehicles on the road *must* stop for him/her to cross first. Although a simple rule, it is very strictly and strikingly observed in Belgium. Moreover, vehicles are checked and maintained regularly ensuring minimum pollution on the road so that the atmosphere remains clean and safe.

### Rules are for everyone

Rules are strictly and impartially enforced with fines on defaulters; and hence, everyone follows them for the good of the society and the system functions smoothly.

### Every work is valuable

Every work has its value. A decent minimum living-wage per hour is enforced. Hence, everyone who has a work, earns enough to meet his/ her needs, including children's education. Hence, there are less roadblocks on upward social mobility for all people who work.

### Social security reduces social unrest

Belgium has wise social security measures for people who are sick and the physically challenged. All possible help is provided to enable them to be self-reliant. The over-aged and all those who cannot work to earn a living by themselves are well taken care of by the able-bodied members of society. There are well-functioning old-age homes, and rehabilitation centers for all kinds of people - young and old. Most of these are aided by the government. All healthy people who can work are obliged to pay certain fixed annual contributions, besides regular annual income tax, to the maintenance of these important social security provisions. Sadly of late there have been attempts to reduce these security measures.

*Antony Puthumattathil, SJ (JAM) was at Catholic University, Leuven, Belgium for a Master's programme and then a Ph.D. in Political Science. His research was about the history of the Hos of Jharkhand, and their relationship with 'the state' in India.*



### Work hard, then rest and relax.

People in Belgium are serious about their work. Each one tries to excel in what he or she does. Normally, the weekdays - Monday to Friday - are for serious work. The weekends - Saturdays and Sundays - are for rest, and recreation. All public offices remain closed on weekends, which are officially declared public holidays. There are special subsidized provisions on weekends for travel and relaxation. The idea is that when people are relaxed and content, they work more effectively and creatively.

### Give freedom, reduce conflict

Although a very small country, Belgium has three autonomous geopolitical regions demarcated on the basis of language: French, Dutch and German. Each of these has its regional autonomous government constituted by locally elected representatives and together make the central Belgian government. Each regional government works on the principle of subsidiarity and the central government's existence and legitimacy rest entirely on the fact that it equally and satisfactorily serves all the people(s) of all the three autonomous regions. Recently, however, there have been suggestions to divide Belgium further!

### Love your own, but welcome others

Always the preferred language is the local language for all official and administrative purposes, including education. This shows that Belgians care to nurture their own language. If any immigrant in Belgium plans to continue living here, the first thing he/she needs to do is to learn the language and culture of the place. This is most

essential for one to find a job. Since the country has three language regions, most people learn or understand all the three languages. Yet most Belgians remain open to other languages and cultures.

### Make education effective

Belgium has an educational system that helps children to learn by doing, experiences and experimentation. The educational system here is meant to open up students' minds not only to new things but also to critique, evaluate, test and make choices for themselves as important members of society. As the country becomes more and more multicultural with millions of immigrants from all over the world, the educational system is geared to promote critical reflection, openness and respect for the 'other.'

In such a social context, an overtly dogmatic, structured and 'controlling' Church appears to be irrelevant for most people in Belgium, but gospel (human) values have deep roots here.





# Dear Lord,

*As morning breaks, I think of You,  
and my desire is to serve You joyfully.  
With gladness, I consecrate this day to Your Sacred Heart,  
and offer whatever joys and sacrifices may come my way.  
Thank You for the graces You will send,  
all the love, all the beauty,  
and the ways You will answer my prayers.  
Today, may I love my enemies,  
and treat others as I would ask to be treated;  
may I forgive seventy times seven and show mercy;  
may I welcome the prodigal,  
have compassion for the Samaritan;  
be a peace maker  
and love my neighbor unconditionally.  
Take all my heart, and mind and strength, O Lord,  
that this day may be truly lived  
for Your greater honor and glory  
and for the salvation of souls.  
Amen.*

*Source: <http://www.catholicdoors.com>*

# MOMENTS



© Vivian Richard, SJ (KAR)

*“Being abandoned or given up is the most devastating emotion  
we can cause in another human being.”*

*- Gary Davie Currie*