

JIVAN

News and Views of Jesuits in India

July 2014

JCSA Meet
In Bhubaneswar

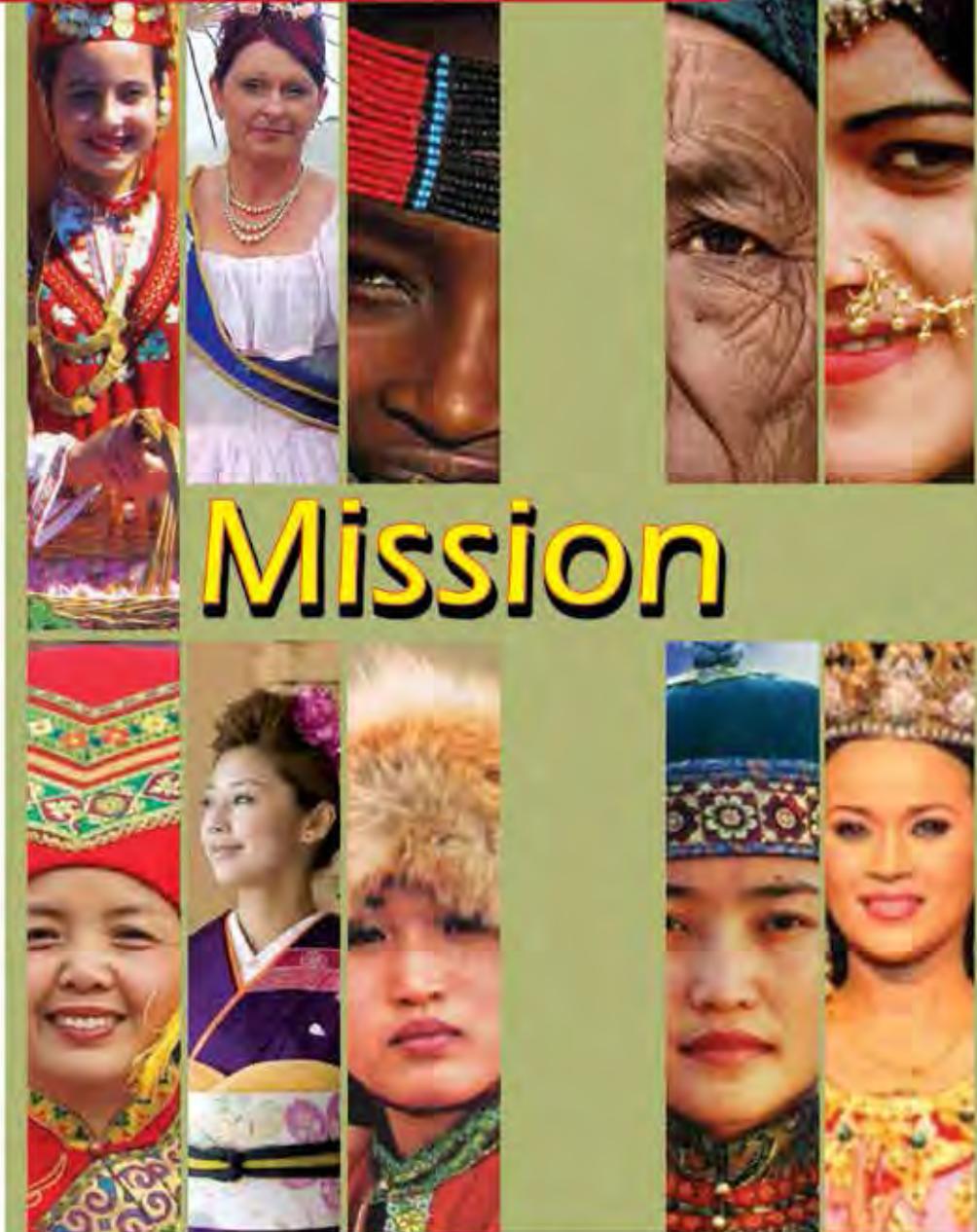
New POSA,
new ADF

Hope & prayer
for abducted Jesuit

Election results
Heredia's analysis

What's happening
In West Asia?

Ten traits
of St Ignatius



Mission

Universal

Oh Tigris, Oh Euphrates

BY CAROLYN GRASSI



*Oh Tigris, Oh Euphrates watching Greek armies,
Roman archers, legionnaires armed to the teeth, British
forces, American military, empire-building further, further
east and south across your deserts, hills, ravines, cities,
villages, their shape-shifting alliances, offensives, counter-
insurgencies, crushing the centuries old silk-trade routes*

*Oh Tigris descending Armenian highlands,
Oh Euphrates born in Kurdistan, watering Kurna's
garden of Eden, marrying as one grand current sweeping
through Basra emptying into the Persian Sea*

*Oh Tigris, Oh Euphrates witness of Greeks, Romans,
British, Americans sighting enemies over the next ridge,
ever expanding military exploits taking a toll on men,
women, children, plants, animals, here and at home:
the homeless, the unemployed, the sick, the orphans,
the widows, the aged, the rich richer, the poor poorer.*

Courtesy: (excerpts from a poem published in) America

JULY 2014

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As a service of information for the South Asian Jesuit Assistancy, *Jivan* is sent to Jesuits and their colleagues, collaborators and friends. Articles appearing in *Jivan* express the views of the authors and not of the Jesuit Conference of South Asia. The Editor regrets he is unable to return articles and photographs. So please keep a copy of whatever you send for publication. All material sent for publication may be edited for reasons of space, clarity or policy. Readers are requested to donate generously towards Jesuit ministries.

What can you do when you are hit all of a sudden by the shocking news of a fellow Jesuit being abducted in Afghanistan? (See p. 11) When you listen to those who have grasped the ground realities of the war-torn nation, you understand there is nothing much you can do. You can pray, hope and wait. You can also read. Ever since this tragedy occurred, I have been reading anything that may shed light on what is really happening in Afghanistan and the neighbouring countries.

I read *Time's* cover story (16 June '14) titled, "No soldier left behind" by David Von Drehle. It was about the American soldier, Bowe Bergdahl, held by the Taliban in Afghanistan for more than four years. In order to secure his release, the U.S. government had to release five prisoners - all Taliban leaders accused of all kinds of crimes.

Later more information began to surface. Soon after Bergdahl was sent to Afghanistan, "he quickly grew cynical about his mission. "These people need help, yet what they get is the most conceited country in the world telling them that they are nothing and that they are stupid, that they have no idea how to live," he wrote in an email to his parents... Sometime after midnight on 30 June 2009, Bergdahl made a neat pile of his armor, along with a note of farewell, then disappeared... More than 24 hours later, U.S. intelligence intercepted Taliban radio calls indicating that they had captured an American soldier."

The American people and so the American government want to withdraw their troops and declare that the messy war is over. But "the Bergdahl story shows why wars continue to gnaw and grind long after the end is officially pronounced. Too much is smashed and bloodied to be wrapped up neatly. People must live, sometimes in turmoil, sometimes for centuries, with loose ends. What lies in store for Afghanistan and its neighbors after the U.S. departs?"

The war in Afghanistan could end for Americans, but for Afghans? "The peace of Kabul will rest on the ability of Afghan factions to coexist, which, given the long history of this troubled land,

there is little reason to hope for... And the inescapable truth is that the U.S.'s departure from Afghanistan will not bring an end to the storms of that region, nor shield us from their effects."

Indian newspapers which flashed the news of Premkumar's abduction forgot about it once another news story broke: 40 Indians kidnapped by the ISIS in Iraq. It is rumoured that hundreds of Indians are trapped in the ongoing conflict. Since it was Iraq, I remembered an extremely forthright article published by *America* (10 Feb '14). Titled, 'What We Wrought' it was written by Cathy Breen, a peace activist who has spent years in Iraq.

She says, "I first went to Iraq in the fall of 2002... In January 2004, Voices (the peace group she belonged to) decided to no longer travel to central or southern Iraq for fear of risking the lives of Iraqis who associated with us. The United States not only occupied their country; it also created a path for terrorist groups to enter Iraq.. After the fall of the regime, I saw firsthand groups from surrounding countries descend on Baghdad... Al Qaeda was not even in Iraq before the U.S. invasion in 2003."

"Between 2005 and 2011 I lived for a total of four years in Jordan and Syria to witness and call attention to the dire situation of hundreds of thousands of Iraqi refugees who were forced to flee the violence and death threats and, far too often, the tragic deaths and/or kidnapping of family members. Late in 2011, I was finally able to return to Iraq after a nine-year absence... My latest trip was in May of last year. Back in the United States, I open my e-mail messages with dread, wondering if I can take more bad news from Iraq, more stories of explosions and killings. No one is safe. There is no safe space in Iraq, not in schools, buses, mosques, soccer stadiums.. There is no place to go, and no country wants to take Iraqi refugees... I receive report after report of kidnappings, assassinations and suicide bombings."

What can we do? Says Cathy Breen, "We can only trust God that we will be shown the way."

- M.A.J.A



Universal
Mission
of the
Society
in
Collaboration:

Challenges
for South
Asia

BY ANTHONY DA SILVA, SJ

Introduction

At the Vatican, on 27 April 2014, surrounded by more than a million pilgrims from all over the world, Pope Francis raised to the sainthood, former Popes, John XXIII and John Paul II. Since I was fortunate to be in Rome on that day, I mingled with the pilgrims and could experience first-hand the rich diversity of the Church, as a result of her universal mission. The atmosphere at St Peter's Square and the adjoining cobble-stoned streets of Rome was spiritually energizing and humanly electrifying. The previous night many had slept under the stars with fellow-believers who were strangers. The momentous event provided the pilgrims a ready platform to share their common faith in a myriad different ways. The spontaneous outbursts of prayer, song, dance, ritual celebrations... in polyphony of languages highlighted the multi-cultural Church of Christ and her universal mission.

In recent years, the universal character of the Jesuit mission has also come under the repeated focus of Fr General, Adolfo Nicolás. In fact, in his 2013 letter¹ on how to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the Restoration of the Society, Fr Nicolás proposes “universal mission” of the Society as one among five themes for our “prayer, reflection and discernment”. He re-visits the history of the Society at the time of the restoration and emphasizes that within 15 years after the restoration of the Society in 1814, and during the Generalate of Fr Roothaan (1829-1853), the restored Society promoted strongly its universal mission by starting new Jesuit works and Provinces in “Asia, Africa, America and Australia. Of the 5,209 members of the Society, 19% worked outside the Provinces they entered.”² Therefore, Fr Nicolás asks, “what might be the significance of this strong sense of universal mission in the newly reestablished Society, for us (Jesuits) today?”³

The reason the Society today, in its 200th anniversary since the restoration, still remains focused on the universal mission is because this concept belongs to the very foundational experience of the Society. Whereas Religious Orders of his time tended to remain focused locally, Ignatius felt that the mission of the Jesuits was to go to the whole world, a universal or global mission. Father Nicolás in asking us to reflect on this challenge of universality in the Jesuit vocation today, is seeking to re-capture this spirit for mission in our global world.

In order to foster a more fruitful conversation and reflection on universal mission, among Jesuits as well as among our collaborators in the South Asian Assistancy, it may be helpful initially to seek an understanding of the very concept of “universal mission” and its application in the Jesuit world.

From “God’s universal mission” to the universal mission of the Church and the Society of Jesus

The concept of universal mission is neither originally nor uniquely Jesuit. It derives principally from the theological concept of “God’s mission” (*missio Dei*). Described simply, God’s mission is to make known the love of God for each of us, for the world, for the cosmos. For us humans it means, to share in the movement of God’s love for the entire cosmos. As Jesuit theologian Michael Amaladoss says: “ ...the mission of God - Father, Word and the Spirit – is to gather all things together and that this is a task of everyone and everything. We have to collaborate with all people of good will and with creation itself.”⁴ Thus we see quickly the universal character of God’s mission. Moreover, all other missions are a mere sharing in the universal mission of God. Thus the Church, the Society of Jesus, and all others are sharers in this single mission, which always has a universal perspective. Various texts from the Gospels richly reinforce this universal vision of God’s mission.⁵

The Jesuit narrative of mission had from its inception a universal character as well. Already in the Spiritual Exercises, Ignatius makes references to universal mission in several key meditations. In the contemplation on the Eternal King, Ignatius presents Him as universal Lord, saying, “My will is to conquer the whole world...”⁶ The contemplation on the Incarnation further reinforces this universal vision when the Three Divine Persons are said to gaze on the “whole surface or circuit of the world, full of people...” and say to one another, “let us work the redemption of the human race.”⁷ The meditation of the Two Standards clearly presents Christ who chooses

¹ Nicolás, Adolfo, *Letter to the Whole Society on: Commemoration of the second centenary of the Restoration of the Society of Jesus*, 2013/17, Rome

² Nicolás, Adolfo, p. 2, 2013/17, Rome

³ Nicolás, Adolfo, p. 2, 2013/17, Rome

⁴ Amaladoss, Michael, Editorial Comment, *IGNIS*, p. 5, No. 2013.3, Chennai, India

⁵ Mathew, 28:19-20; Mark, 16:15; John, 3:16-17

⁶ *Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius*, (97)

⁷ *Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius*, (102, 107)

⁸ *Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius*, (145)

his disciples and many others and “sends them throughout the whole world...among people of every state and condition.”⁸ In the Contemplation to Attain Love, Ignatius presents God as the universal Lord of the cosmos, who “labors and works for me in all creatures on the face of the earth.”⁹

In later years when Ignatius wrote the Constitutions of the Society of Jesus, he focused strongly on universal mission in the context of sending Jesuits on mission. He stated forcefully that the Superior, “should keep the greater service of God and the more universal good before his eyes as the norm to hold oneself on the right course.” ... The more universal the good is, the more it is divine.”¹⁰ It was this kind of thinking that impelled Ignatius to ask Francis Xavier whether he would go to India in place of the sick Fr Bobadilla. Xavier simply replied, “Here I am. Send me.”¹¹ Ignatius missioned him to India and Xavier left promptly in 1540, never to return to Europe again.

Ignatius valued greatly universal mission as it introduced a freshness and newness into how to be a Religious for his times. Ignatius’ unique insight into Religious life for a global world was that his new Society was to be an apostolic body, which was fully engaged with the world, rendering service everywhere and anywhere, where the need was greatest. As Fr Kolenbach (quoted in GC 35) says very well, “a stable monastery does not serve us (Jesuits), because we have ...the entire world to tell about the good news...we do not close ourselves up in cloister, but remain in the world amid the multitude

of men and women that the Lord loves, since they are in the world.”¹² In fact, Fr Jeronimo Nadal, an early companion of Ignatius, summarizes the mind of Ignatius when he says pithily, “the world is our house.”¹³

The more recent General Congregations (from 32 to 35) have spelt out more specifically the universal mission of the Society of Jesus within the wider context of God’s mission, as: the service of faith and the promotion of justice, with a preferential option for the poor and in dialogue with other religious traditions.

“Men on Mission - men of Collaboration” (GC 35: 6, n. 17)

We see rather quickly that the mission of God being universal makes it also large and complex; in fact, as large and complex as the world we wish to serve. Naturally, no single individual or single organization can respond fully to such a mission. The response has got to be a collaborative response, in partnership and solidarity with other women and men of good-will, across cultures, nations and religions. This challenge applies no less to the Jesuits. As Fr Nicolás points out, “...many of the areas (of mission) we Jesuits want to contribute to are much larger and more complex than we can address by ourselves...Moreover, we rejoice that we are able to work with so many others of good will and good heart, well-educated men and women with excellent training and skills for cooperative planning and international networking. We are blessed to cooperate with them for the good of all humankind. However, such cooperation underlines the need of a

universal dimension in all we (Jesuits) do.”¹⁴

The Ignatian emphasis on collaboration in mission between the Father, Son and Spirit in the meditation on the Incarnation in his *Spiritual Exercises*, reinforces for us the value and importance of the collaboration dimension in our mission today. So the Society of Jesus “acknowledges as a grace of our day and a hope for the future that laity take an active, conscientious, and responsible part in the mission of the Church in this great moment of history... Jesuits are both “men for others, and men with others... To be men with others is a central aspect of our charism and deepens our identity.”¹⁵ Similarly, GC 35 acknowledges our gratitude to our collaborators stating, “We are humbled and grateful that so many... have chosen both to work with us and to share our sense of mission and our passion to reach out to the men and women of our broken but lovable world...We are enriched by people from other religious traditions...with whom we labour in seeking a more just world... we must look to our collaborators in mission and say, with gratitude and affection, that the call we have received is a call shared by us together.”¹⁶

Fr Nicolás not only endorses strongly the collaboration vision of the most recent General Congregation in 2008, but is urging Jesuits to create a culture of collaboration in all Jesuit apostolic activities. In writing to Jesuit Major Superiors in 2010, he says, “I think it is essential that every Jesuit understand and accept that collaboration is not a temporary or

⁹ Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius, (236).

¹⁰ *Constitutions of the Society of Jesus*, Chapter 2, (622).

¹¹ Nicolás, Adolfo, *Letter to the Whole Society on: Universal Vocation of the Jesuit*, p. 3, 2009/04, Rome.

¹² GC 35, (2008), decree 2, number 23.

¹³ Jeronimo Nadal, *MHSI* 90, p. 469-470.

¹⁴ Nicolás, Adolfo, *Letter to the Whole Society on: Universal Vocation of the Jesuit*, p. 2, 2009/04, Rome.

¹⁵ GC 34,(1995), decree 13, numbers 1 & 4.

¹⁶ GC35, (2008), decree 06, number 3.

even recent development. A realistic look at our history clearly indicates that collaboration is not a new phenomenon. From the time of our Father Ignatius, *everything that the Jesuits have been able to accomplish has been due to the generous and selfless dedication and help of many other people. Even our most famous and brilliant Jesuits did not accomplish what they did all by themselves. We have to be thankful for all the people with whom we have worked – from the beginning of our history.*¹⁷

Four Challenges:

Here are four challenges for the South Asian Assistancy in the light of our universal mission. Having seen the rich history and the importance of universal mission in the Society, we are now well poised to reflect on its implications and challenges for the Jesuits of South Asia.

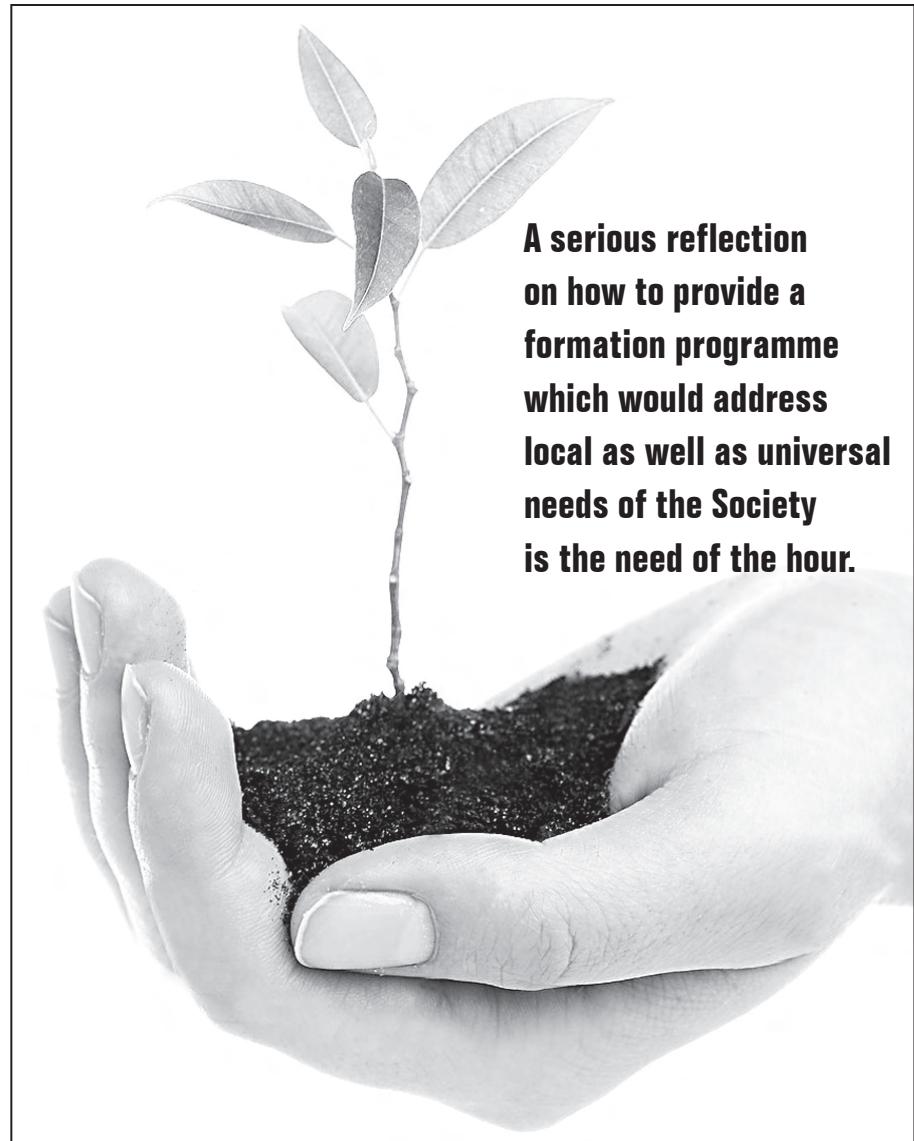
In his letter on, ‘Universal Vocation of the Jesuit’ (2009), Fr Nicolás mentions two challenges that are particularly relevant and important for our Assistancy. The first challenge concerns, “the need to restructure the Society at all levels (Provinces, Conferences and Central Government) so that we can better respond to new and more universal challenges”. The Jesuit Conference of South Asia (JCSA) has already begun a reflection on this challenge. In South Asia we have today, 4047 Jesuits, distributed over 18 Provinces and 2 Regions. Do we need this many administrative units? Which units could be combined for greater apostolic effectiveness? However, the Jesuit Provincial of Delhi, Fr Varkey Perekkatt in his extensive article in *Jivan* (October 2013) bemoans that, “the South Asian Assistancy does not seem to feel the need for a reorganization of its Provinces/Regions for greater apostolic effectiveness... Moreover, there seems to be a certain unconscious

or even conscious unwillingness to think of reorganizing the boundaries of present Provinces/Regions mainly because of the attachment to the past history of each unit”.

We do have presently four Jesuit geographic zones to encourage

stray attempts at collaboration. An encouraging sign during this year, as we commemorate the 200th anniversary of the restoration of the Society, has been the various apostolic projects undertaken collaboratively and zonally by all the Provincials of the JCSA. The

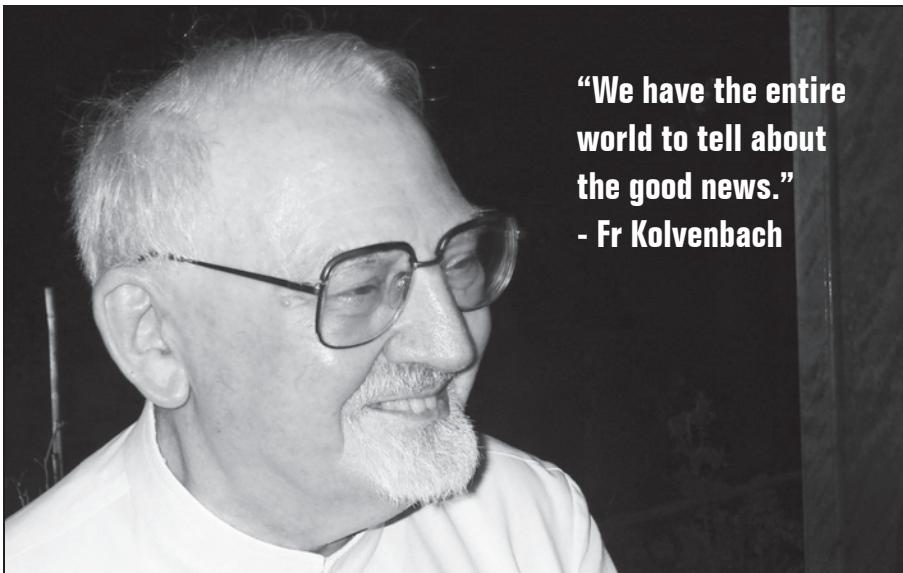
**A serious reflection
on how to provide a
formation programme
which would address
local as well as universal
needs of the Society
is the need of the hour.**



apostolic collaboration. However, zonal collaboration tends to remain restricted only to formation needs of our Scholastics. Unfortunately, other apostolic sectors, such as, pastoral, educational, spirituality, social justice etc operate in Province silos with only

projects range from inter-Provincial retreats, zonal Ignatian formation programmes for collaborators, zonal Ignatian Youth programmes, to inter-Provincial field visits of mission-stations and other apostolic ventures. However, the entire discernment exercise of

¹⁷ Adolfo Nicolás, *Response to Annual Letters*, 2010, p. 3.



"We have the entire world to tell about the good news."
- Fr Kolenbach

reorganization of the JCSA, would need to be done from the perspective of mission effectiveness and apostolic needs, if it is to take off seriously in our Assistancy. As Fr Nicolás emphasizes in his letter, "the discernment of Major Superiors...should explicitly include the apostolic needs and works of the Conference as well as those of the universal Society."

The second challenge Fr Nicolás mentions in the same letter of 2009, is the universal missionary thrust of the Society. He says, "I encourage all Major Superiors to establish or continue the practice of many Provinces in the past, who generously sent 10% to 25% of their members abroad. ...We should send abroad Jesuits who are academically and spiritually gifted, even if the cost to the sending Province is great". However, the South Asian reality with its exploding population of more than one billion, its dehumanizing mass poverty, dozens of languages and multiple cultures and religions has tended to leave us at times, excessively focused on our local and regional needs to the neglect of the universal, global reality. As we commemorate our past, we are in a better position now to raise some futuristic questions

about universal mission. Following the lead of Fr Nicolás, we should ask: should not the JCSA be looking more outwards, towards the universal Society where the need may be greater? Should not at least 5% - 7% (200-300) of the South Asian Jesuits be encouraged and supported to opt for international missions, within as well as beyond the Assistancy? Such a universal apostolic thrust would surely provide new apostolic dynamism to the Assistancy, promote local vocations and strengthen greatly a new culture of Jesuit collaboration in South Asia.

A third challenge that remains closely connected with the universal mission is that of creating and promoting South Asian Ignatian formation programs to train Jesuit collaborators, and other women and men of good-will. In this regard, a uniquely South Asian contribution to Ignatian spirituality would be the incorporation of a multi-religious and inter-religious ethos that would appeal particularly to our collaborators of other faith traditions. Such a common Ignatian platform would open new doors for collaboration and networking for mission, nationally and internationally. Presently we have no

such Ignatian training programmes in the entire Assistancy. The Gujarat Province has recently initiated a process towards the creation of such an Ignatian program for collaborators. Several Provinces of the JCSA have plans to do something similar. Experiences in other parts of the Society indicate that Ignatian formation programmes have resulted in strong and meaningful partnerships for mission among Jesuits and our collaborators. Moreover, such programmes have even enabled Jesuits to work willingly and successfully under the direction of our lay collaborators.

Furthermore, these partnerships in mission have inspired some Jesuits and their collaborators to create digital networks for mission; thus, new global apostolic platforms related to education, social justice, refugees, ecology, etc. are available today on the web, while strengthening universal mission. Two examples of highly successful global networks of the Society, for universal mission are: first, the *Fe y Alegria* network of schools and colleges across 16 countries in Latin America, serving over one million students, with the dedication and expertise of 34,000 Jesuit collaborators; second, the Jesuit Refugee Services (JRS) which serves 600,000 refugees in 50 countries, with the commitment and expertise of 1,400 Jesuit collaborators.

More recently some Jesuits in Europe have launched a website to promote Jesuit Networking for the universal mission of the Society. The response this far has been extremely encouraging with many younger Jesuits and their collaborators responding enthusiastically to the call for greater collaboration. The website may be visited at www.jesuitnetworking.org

A fourth challenge that the JCSA will have to address in the context

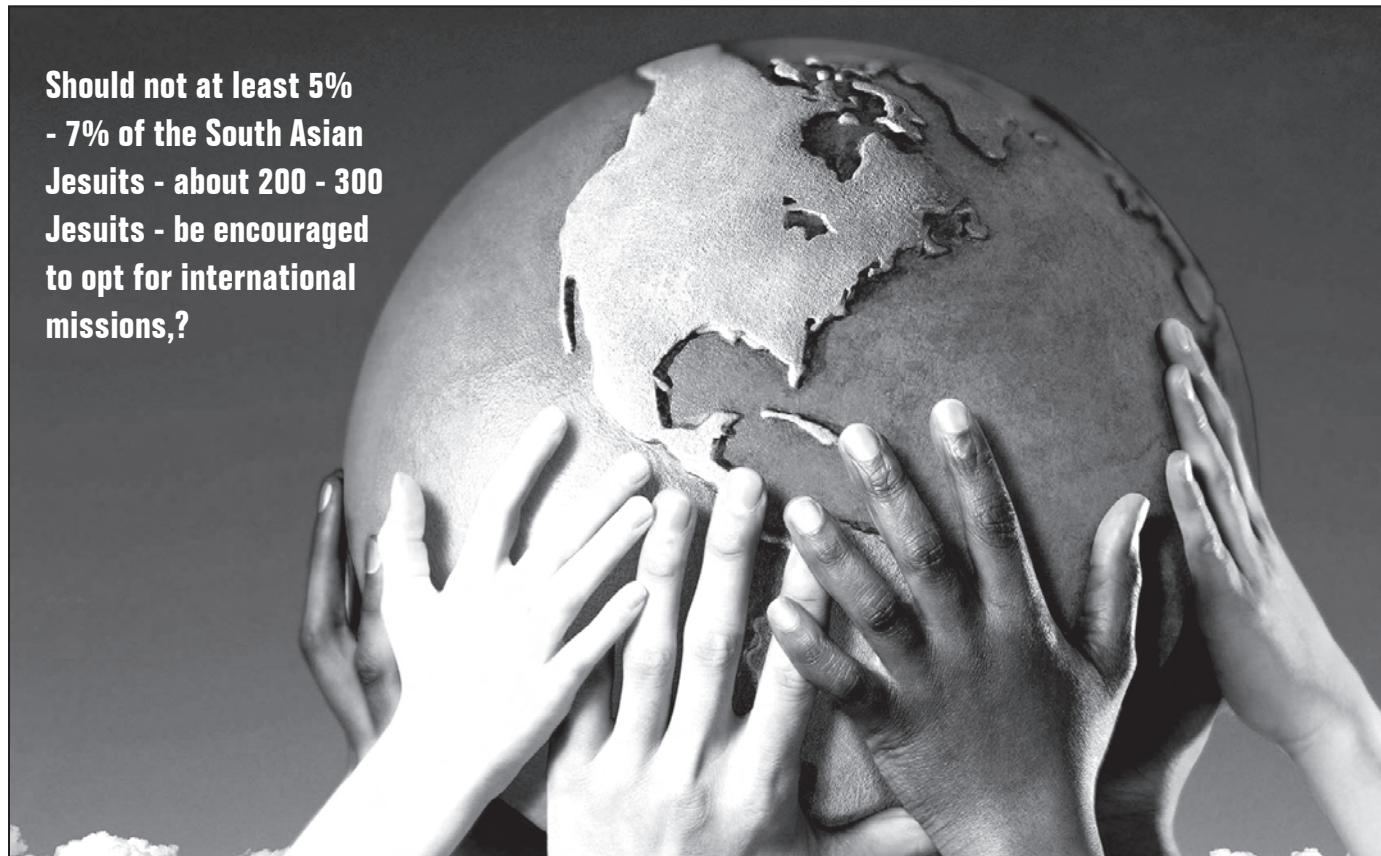
of universal mission is that of the formation of at least some young scholastics at international venues. Fr Nicolás insists that, "we need to foster in all our scholastics and brothers a universal availability to be sent anywhere in the world. They should be told that offering themselves voluntarily for difficult assignments

reflection on how to provide a formation programme which would address local as well as universal needs of the Society, is the need of the hour. Sending young Scholastics abroad to experience Regency and/or do theological studies is a productive way to gain an appreciation for universal mission. Also, Scholastics at that age

Jesuit identity and self-understanding as the largest apostolic body of Jesuits in the present day Society?

As Fr Nicolás says pointedly about this historic event, "We wish to understand and appreciate our past better so that we may go forward into the future with "renewed fervor and zeal" (GC35: 1) for our life and

**Should not at least 5%
- 7% of the South Asian
Jesuits - about 200 - 300
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abroad is a very good way of expressing and strengthening this availability. ... Learning foreign languages, especially those that are more widely used in the world (English, Chinese, Spanish, etc) has to be considered part of our training. ...It would be ideal if all Jesuits had a meaningful international experience as part of their training".¹⁸

Given the immense complexity of languages, cultures and nationalities within the JCSA itself, a serious

have an easier time learning a new language and immersing themselves fully in new cultures for mission Challenged in such international, frontier situations, young Jesuits become both, beneficiaries of, as well as benefactors to universal mission.

Conclusion

What better time than this 200th anniversary of the restoration of the Society, for the South Asian Assistancy to explore in greater depth its own

mission today". May this be the vision that drives the JCSA forward as all of South Asia experiences at the present time a new churning of the Spirit, politically, religiously, culturally, and economically.

Anthony da Silva SJ, is the outgoing Secretary for Collaboration, in Rome. He will soon be joining the Staff of Xavier Centre of Historical Research in Goa. He can be contacted at tonydasj@hotmail.com

¹⁸ Adolfo Nicolás, Letter to the Whole Society on: *Universal Vocation of the Jesuit*, p. 3, 2009/04, Rome.

Assistancy Appointments



Appointed by Fr General

Fr George Pattery (CCU) Provincial of South Asia

Fr Raj Irudaya (MDU) Assistancy Delegate for Formation & ex officio Consultor of the POSA

Fr Francis Kurien (HAZ) Consultor of the POSA & Chair of the Central Zone

Fr Sebasti L. Raj (MDU) Consultor of the POSA & Chair of the South Zone.

Appointed by Provincial of South Asia and approved by Fr General:

Revisors

Fr Alex Gnanapragasam (JAM):

Revisor for Sadhana Institute, Lonavla

Fr Trevor Miranda (BOM):

Revisor for Papal Seminary, JDV, DNC

Fr Sebastian Jeerakassery (DEL):

Revisor for ISI-Delhi, Jesuit Conference of India

Fr Claudius Tauro (DUM):

Revisor for VJ, SN, ISI- Bangalore

Appointed by Provincial of South Asia:

Vidyajyoti, Delhi:

Fr Edwin Victor (DEL) Islamic Studies and Dialogue with Islam

JDV, Pune:

Fr S. Selvarathinam (KAR) President, JDV, Pune

Indian Social Institute, Delhi:

Fr Ranjit Tigga (MAP), Staff

Br Vincent Devasia P (DAR) Admin, Treasurer of Institute & Min of Jesuit Community

Indian Social Institute, Bangalore:

Fr Louis Prakash (PAT) Director

JEPASA:

Fr Gerard C. Rodricks (BOM) Secretary, JEPASA

Outgoing:

The South Asia Assistancy is deeply grateful to the following who have rendered their dedicated services to the Common Houses and Works:

Gratian Carlo (KHM) as ADF (now Dir. of NVSC, will be an attached member of the DNC Community);

Fr Nirmal Raj (DUM) as Consultor; Fr Antony Pothireddy (AND) as Consultor; Fr George Pattery (CCU) as Act President JDV; Fr M.K. George Mutholil (KER) as Dir. ISI-Bangalore; Fr Marianus Kujur (RAN) as HOD Tribal Unit and Asst Research Director at ISI-Delhi; Fr T.V. George (CCU) as Min and Treasurer ISI Delhi community, Chief Fin off, Admn, Treasurer JCI.

New POSA

Fr George Pattery, SJ (CCU), 63, was, for the past two years, President (Acting) of and Professor at Jnana Deepa Vidyapeeth, Pune. During his sabbatical year in 2011 he was Visiting Faculty at Holy Cross College, Worcester, Massachusetts, U.S. For a full term of six years he was the Provincial Superior of Calcutta Jesuits (2005-2011).



He was Reader, Department of Philosophy & Religion, Visva-Bharati University, Santiniketan, West Bengal for nine years (1996-2005). At the same time he was the Director of Bengal Regional Theologate, Santiniketan and also taught theology.

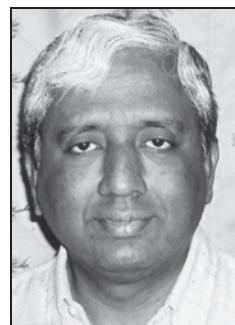
He has represented his Calcutta Province at the Procurators Congregation (2003), Provincials' Congregation (2006), and General Congregation (2008). He was a member of the Jesuit International Ad Hoc Commission on Review of 'Ratio' in 2012.

Having done his Master's in both philosophy and theology, he went to the Gregorian University, Rome for his Doctorate in Theology. His thesis was on 'Faith and Justice Struggle in Mahatma Gandhi in Relation to Indian Christian Theology'. As a theologian, he contributes to national and international periodicals.

Fr Pattery was earlier a diocesan priest and served as Lecturer in Morning Star College, Barrackpore, West Bengal and also served in the diocese of Trissur in Kerala. He hails from Kombathukadavu, Irinjalakuda, Trissur, Kerala. His two sisters are Franciscan Clarists and two brothers are happily married.

Fr George Pattery will take charge as POSA on 31 Oct '14 in the presence of Fr General during the JCSA Meet at Phesama (KHM).

New ADF



Raj Irudaya, SJ (MDU), 61, the new Assistancy Delegate for Formation (ADF), was for the past two years MDU Province's Coordinator for Formation.

Born in Madurai, Raj joined the Jesuits in 1972 and was ordained a priest in 1987. He made his final profession in the Society in 1998.

After doing P.G. degrees in Social Work and Psychology, he went to the Pontifical Biblical Institute, Rome to do his Licentiate in Sacred Scripture. He did his Doctorate in Theology at St Peter's, Bangalore.

He taught Scripture at Arul Kadal, the Regional Theologate in Chennai and was its Superior for a few years. He has also taught at several other institutions. Fr Raj assumed charge as the ADF in June '14.

BY STAN FERNANDES, SJ



Alexis Premkumar, 47, (MDU) has been working in Afghanistan as the Country Director of Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) for the past three years. On 02 June 14, he visited a school run by the JRS at Sohadat, about 35 km away from Herat City, a place where the 'returnees' - Afghan citizens who earlier fled to other countries and later returned - are settled. Just before Prem left the school, he was abducted by unidentified gunmen. Till today no group has claimed responsibility. These are excerpts from the letters of Stan Fernandes, SJ, South Asian Regional Director of JRS, to Jesuits in India dated 12 June and 22 June '14:

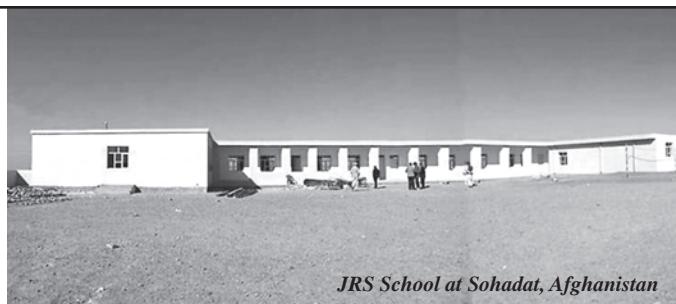
Dear Jesuit companions,

Christ's Peace! The Crisis Management Team (CMT) set up on the very first day has been constantly engaged in discerning what God wants us to do at each moment, though a number of factors are beyond our grasp and reach. The systems and mechanisms we have in place at various levels, including one by the Madurai Province to accompany Prem's family in Devakottai, are extremely useful to keep our hopes alive. A number of professionals with experience and expertise in handling such situations are guiding the CMT.

One great consolation is that all those working tirelessly on the ground: government officials, local community leaders, and some organizations indicate that no harm has been caused to Prem till now. No one, however, is able to confirm this comforting information. But, strengthened by the many voices of hope, we move forward in solidarity to face the challenges of the difficult road that may lie ahead. At this moment, with glimpses of hope amidst the seemingly overwhelming darkness, we rely totally on God's providence. In solidarity and companionship, we strive to support one another, specially the members of Prem's family and those working tirelessly on the ground for Prem's safe release.

From my personal knowledge of Prem, I am confident that he experiences close union with God, and our companionship will be a source of great strength for him in his isolation and ordeal.

I am deeply grateful to all who share our pain and unflinching hope. It is heartening to note that many priests, religious and lay persons are with us at this crisis moment, especially Jesuits across assistancies and the global JRS family. Everyone, cutting across geographical boundaries,



JRS School at Sohadat, Afghanistan

faith traditions and age, expresses the hope that Prem will return safe, as God protects those he has chosen. I am very much touched by the support of the Afghan children and youth, especially those JRS has been serving. The children offer prayers before starting classes and the youth pray in mosques during the times of 'namaz'. We have every reason to believe that our prayers will bring about a change in the hearts of Prem's captors and they will soon set him free.

The second round of elections in Afghanistan concluded on June 14, and the counting of ballots began soon after. Unfortunately, both candidates, citing fraud and rigging, have demanded the countermanding of the counting. We earnestly hope that the counting will proceed smoothly and the transition to new government will take place peacefully. A stable political atmosphere will be an enormous help to the local agencies on the ground to focus on securing Prem's safe release.

Recently, on 17 June, quoting a top Indian diplomat in Kabul, NDTV stated, "Abducted in Afghanistan, Indian aid worker Alexis Prem Kumar is safe. India is confident of getting him rescued unharmed soon." From different sources, we have learnt that both Indian and Afghan governments are putting in their best efforts. It is consoling to note that, though 21 days have passed since Prem's abduction on 2 June, so far as we know, there has been no hint that Prem has been harmed in any way. However, it still remains a matter of grave concern that no one has claimed responsibility, or communicated any demands. It will take time to get a clearer picture.

For all who are engaged in search of Prem, the primary concern is getting Prem back safe and unharmed. Along with your prayer for Prem, at this point in time, I appeal to you for special prayers also for those who are working on the ground under complex and volatile situations and under severe stress. We do not have many options, as there are only a handful of persons available, Jesuits and lay, on the ground who can absorb the stress and continue to engage in this.

May our Good Shepherd protect Prem and all those who are working for his safe return soon. ■



Call of the Universal Society

JCSA meet in Bhubaneswar

About 35 members of the Jesuit Conference of South Asia (JCSA) gathered in the lush green campus of the Xavier Institute of Management (XIM), Bhubaneswar on 26 April - 2 May, '14. Welcoming the members of the JCSA and the facilitators, Fr Edward Muduvassery, the POSA, reminded the group that we are primarily called to a 'spiritual governance' based on the privileged process of manifestation of conscience. We are not to be ruled by feelings but by faith. We are not managers per se, rather mentors accompanying our brothers in fraternal charity. Our governance and ways of proceeding should follow from a perspective of greater universality, reminded Fr Edward.

The biannual JCSA meets have the specific objectives of sharing, evaluating, planning and networking among the various

receive the grace to be and to go with Jesus for the mission. To be authentic 'contemplatives in action', seeking and finding God in all things, which indeed is the clearest indication of the depth of spirituality, we must continually return to the Spiritual Exercises.

Fr Swebert spoke on the challenges of Higher Education in India. He pointed out that in the Assistance, 230 Jesuits and 4483 lay collaborators cater to the higher educational needs of 79,892 students in South Asia. He called for a concerted effort at improving the quality of Jesuit Higher Education. His presentation on RUSA (Rashtriya Uchatar Shiksha Abhiyan) showed the new possibilities for Indian Jesuits.

Highlighting the possibilities for creative changes in our secondary educational apostolate, Fr Jose Messa made an



Provinces of the Conference. The unique features of this meeting were: It had eight new Provincials taking charge in coming months. It had to also discern and identify candidates for a new POSA, as the present one will complete his term by the end of the year. The agenda included inputs on Higher Education and Secondary Education besides sharing on the Xavier University, Bhubaneswar by Paul Fernandez, its first Vice Chancellor, and discussions on the administrative issues proposed by the POSA. The special inputs for the meetings were by Fr Lisbert D'Souza, the General Assistant from Rome, Fr Jose Messa, Secretary for Secondary Education, and Fr Swebert D'Silva, Principal, St. Aloysius College, Mangalore.

Prior to the meeting there was a two-day orientation for the new Provincials, guided by Frs Lisbert and Edward. Fr Stany, the new Provincial of Karnataka, shared his views on 'Spirituality of Governance and Leadership'. Fr Michael Dhanaraj (JAM) presented the Statutes of JCSA and their implications. Fr Gratian Carlo, outgoing ADF, spoke on our Formation. Fr Alex Mascarenhas (JAM) explained the important aspects of financial management based on our norms and the vow of poverty.

Pierre Jacob, SJ, the veteran spiritual director, led the recollection on the first day. He spoke on 'Depth in Our Spiritual Life'. In order to recover depth in our spiritual life and to maintain it, there is only one way: live out the Spiritual Exercises, he said. Only a conversion, a return to the covenant would help us

impassioned plea for quality educational service, especially for the poor, by means of networking and collaboration. He elaborated on the evolution of thinking on Education from *Ratio Studiorum* to the Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm. He reminded the group that through 2120 schools, formal and non-formal, the Society of Jesus is now serving 2,000,343 students across the world. We need a new imagination to come up with "mission driven" institutions, he said.

The hospitality of the XIMB community helped us beat the sweltering heat of Bhubaneswar. For the first time in the history of JCSA meetings, we had a basket ball match between POSA's team and the XIMB team which, to the merriment of all, was a tough battle of veterans. We had a one-day outing to the new campus of Xavier University, the Konarak temple, and the sea at Puri. Frs Tony Uvary, the acting superior, Paul Fernandez, the director of XIM, Augustine Vattamattam, the administrator and the community of Loyola School were kind and hospitable. Fr Tony S, the Orissa Mission superior, and Archbishop John Barwa, S.V.D. and his team joined us for a meal. 'A Big Thank You' to Mike Dhanaraj, the outgoing provincial of Jamshedpur and the Jamshedpur Province!

This JCSA meet's focus was on the universality of our mission and therefore the need for more intense collaboration. 'Our identity is defined as servant and collaborator in a mission which is also shared' (GC 35).

- George Mutholil, SJ

'The Idolatry of Money'

- With just left-overs we can feed all the hungry, says Pope Francis



In an interview granted to the Spanish-magazine, La Vanguardia on 09 June '14 - a day after the prayer for peace he organized with the Presidents of Israel and Palestine - Pope Francis spoke freely on a variety of issues. The text was translated into English from the original Spanish by CNA's Alan Holdren, Estefania Augirre and Elise Harris. Excerpts from the interview:

Violence in the name of God dominates the Middle East.

It's a contradiction. Violence in the name of God does not correspond with our time. It's something ancient. With historical perspective, one has to say that Christians, at times, have practiced it. When I think of the Thirty Years War, there was violence in the name of God. Today it is unimaginable, right? We arrive, sometimes, by way of religion to very serious, very grave contradictions. Fundamentalism, for example. The three religions, we have our fundamentalist groups, small in relation to all the rest.

And, what do you think about fundamentalism?

A fundamentalist group, although it may not kill anyone, although it may not strike anyone, is violent. The mental structure of fundamentalists is violence in the name of God.

You have broken many security protocols to bring yourself closer to the people.

I know that something could happen to me, but it's in the hands of God. I remember that in Brazil they had prepared a closed Popemobile for me, with glass, but I couldn't greet the people and tell them that I love them from within a sardine tin. Even if it's made of glass, for me that is a wall. It's true that something could happen to me, but let's be realistic, at my age I don't have much to lose.

Why is it important that the Church be poor and humble?

Poverty and humility are at the center of the Gospel and I say it in a theological sense, not in a sociological one. You can't understand the Gospel without poverty, but we have to distinguish it from pauperism. I think that Jesus wants us bishops not to be princes but servants.

What can the Church do to reduce the growing inequality between the rich and the poor?

It's proven that with the food that is left over we could feed the people who are hungry. When you see photographs of undernourished kids in different parts of the world, you take your head in your hands, it incomprehensible. I believe that

we are in a world economic system that isn't good. At the center of all economic systems must be man and woman, and everything else must be in service of men. But we have put money at the center, the god of money. We have fallen into a sin of idolatry, the idolatry of money.

The economy is moved by the ambition of having more and, paradoxically, it feeds a throwaway culture. Young people are thrown away when their natality is limited. The elderly are also discarded because they are not useful anymore. In throwing away the kids and elderly, the future of a people is thrown away because the young people are going to push forcefully forward and because the elderly give us wisdom. They have the memory of that people and they have to pass it on to the young people. And now it is common to throw the young people away with unemployment. Someone told me that 75 million young Europeans under 25 years of age are unemployed. That is an atrocity. But we are discarding an entire generation to maintain an economic system that can't hold up anymore, a system that to survive must make war, as the great empires have always done. But as a Third World War can't be waged, they make zonal wars. What does this mean? That they produce and sell weapons, and with this the balance sheets of the idolatrous economies, the great world economies that sacrifice man at the feet of the idol of money, are sorted out.

The prayer for peace on Sunday wasn't easy to organize nor did it have precedents in the Middle East or anywhere in the world. How did you feel?

Here, in the Vatican, 99% said it would not happen and then the 1% started to grow. I felt that we were feeling pushed towards something that had not occurred to us and that, little by little, started to take shape. It was not at all a political act - I felt that from the beginning - but it was rather a religious act: opening a window to the world.

Why did you choose to place yourself in the eye of the hurricane, the Middle East?

The true eye of the hurricane, due to the enthusiasm that there was, was the World Youth Day in Rio de Janeiro last year. I decided to go to the Holy Land because President Peres invited me. I knew that his mandate would finish this Spring, so I felt obliged, in some way, to go beforehand. His invitation accelerated the trip. I did not think of doing it.

Why is it important for every Christian to visit Jerusalem and the Holy Land?

Because of revelation. For us, it all started there. It is like "heaven on earth." A foretaste of what awaits us hereafter, in the heavenly Jerusalem.

You and your friend, the Rabbi Skorka, hugged each other in front of the Western Wall. What importance has that gesture had for the reconciliation between Christians and Jews?

Well, my good friend professor Omar Abu, president of the Institute for Inter-religious Dialogue of Buenos Aires, was also at the Wall. I wanted to invite him. He is a very religious man and a father-of-two. He is also friends with Rabbi Skorka and I love them both a lot, and I wanted that this friendship between the three be seen as a witness.

You told me a year ago that "within every Christian there is a Jew."

Perhaps it would be more correct to say, "You cannot live your Christianity, you cannot be a real Christian, if you do not recognize your Jewish roots." I don't speak of Jewish in the sense of the Semitic race but rather in the religious sense. I think that inter-religious dialogue needs to deepen in this, in Christianity's Jewish root and in the Christian flowering of Judaism. I understand it is a challenge, a hot potato, but it can be done as brothers. I pray every day the Divine Office with the Psalms of David. We pray all the 150 psalms in one week. My prayer is Jewish and I have the Eucharist, which is Christian.

How do you see anti-Semitism?

I cannot explain why it happens, but I think it is very linked, in general, and without it being a fixed rule, to the right wing. Antisemitism usually nests better in right-wing political tendencies than in the left, right? And it still continues like

this. We even have those who deny the holocaust, which is crazy.

Do you still feel like a parish priest or do you assume your role as head of the Church?

The dimension of parish priest is that which most shows my vocation. Serving the people comes from within me. Turn off the lights to not spend a lot of money, for example. They are things that a parish priest does. But I also feel like the Pope. It helps me to do things seriously. My collaborators are very serious and professional. I have help to carry out my duty. One doesn't need to play the parish priest Pope. It would be immature. When a head of state comes, I have to receive him with the dignity and the protocol that are deserved. It is true that with the protocol I have my problems, but one has to respect it.

You are changing a lot of things. Towards what future are these changes going?

I am no illumined one. I don't have any personal project that I've brought with me under an arm, simply because I never thought that they were going to leave me here, in the Vatican. Everyone knows this. I came with a little piece of luggage to go straight back to Buenos Aires. What I am doing is carrying out what we Cardinals reflected upon during the General Congregations. During the conclave, we all met every day to discuss the problems of the Church. From there come reflections and recommendations. One very concrete one was that the next Pope had to count on an external council, that is, a team of assessors that didn't live in the Vatican.

And you created the so-called Council of Eight.

They are eight Cardinals from all the continents and a coordinator. They gather every two or three months here. Now, the first of July we have four days of meetings, and we are going to be making the changes that the cardinals ask of us. It is not obligatory that we do it but it would be imprudent not to listen to those who know.

You have also made a great effort to become closer to the Orthodox Church.

The invitation to Jerusalem from my brother Bartholomew was to commemorate the encounter between Paul VI and Athenagoras 150 years ago. It was an encounter after more than a thousand years of separation. Since the Second Vatican Council, the Catholic Church has made efforts to become closer and the Orthodox Church has done the same. Some orthodox churches are closer than others. I wanted Bartholomew to be with me in Jerusalem and there emerged the plan to also come to the Vatican to pray. For us it's necessary because it's not conceivable that we Christians are divided; it's a historical sin that we have to repair.

What do you think of the renunciation of Benedict XVI?

Pope Benedict has made a very significant act. He has opened the door, has created an institution, of the eventual popes emeritus. 70 years ago, there were no emeritus bishops. Today so many are there? Well, as we live longer, we arrive at an age when we cannot go on with things. I will do the same as him, asking the Lord to enlighten me when the time comes and that he tell me what I have to do, and he will tell me for sure.

You have a room reserved in a retirement home in Buenos Aires.

Yes, it's a retirement house for elderly priests. I was leaving the archdiocese at the end of last year and had already submitted my resignation to Benedict XVI when I turned 75. I chose a room and said "I want to come to live here." I will work as a priest, helping the parishes. This is what was going to be my future before being elected the Pope.

I am not going to ask you whom you support in the World Cup....

Brazilians asked me to remain neutral (*laughs*) and I keep my word, because Brazil and Argentina are always antagonistic.

How would you like to be remembered in history?

I have not thought about it, but I like it when one remembers someone and says: "He was a good guy, he did what he could. He wasn't so bad." I'm OK with that. ■

Courtesy: La Vanguardia

Winners and Losers:

- What the results of Indian Elections 2014 can mean



BY RUDI HEREDIA, SJ

Surprise and Shock

The results of the Indian parliamentary elections of 2014 came as an undeserved surprise for the winners, and an unexpected shock to the losers. The two largest national parties, BJP and Congress, found themselves at the two opposite extremes with their highest and the lowest tally ever in the Lok Sabha to date. Regional parties with a strong identity within their States, where the national parties had a weak presence, also did well: the TMC, BJD, AIADMK; others without any supporting alliance fared disastrously: the SP, BSP, JDU, RJD and DMK.

The BJP now has 280 seats, and with its allies in the NDA 336; the Congress has just 44, and 60 with its allies in the UPA. Was this a negative anti-incumbency vote against the Congress and the UPA, or was it a majoritarian mandate for the Gujarat model of development and its Hindutva inspiration so successfully marketed by the BJP? What do these results mean for the minorities and the marginalised?

The Congress failed to heed the clear early warning in their losses in nine State legislative elections in 2013. On the other hand, once the BJP anointed Narendra Modi as its prime ministerial candidate, he led single-mindedly and relentlessly pursued his goal, constantly supported by the media owned by corporate businesses

and generously funded by these. They expect a huge pay-off from the development projected on the Gujarat model, which has already paid rich dividends for them in that State.

Congress Loses

The Congress's loss seems a self-filling death-wish. Their campaign never really took off. Senior leaders distanced themselves from the electoral fray. It was very different from the way it fought the general elections of 2004 and 2009. The overall performance of the UPA over ten years at the Centre was better than that of the NDA in six years. "Measures of human development – nutrition, educational attainment, life expectancy, etc – continued to record slow improvement even as poverty fell quite sharply. ... Real GDP grew

at nearly 6% per year under the NDA, which increased to 7.6% during UPA's rule (Ghatak et al, 2014: "Growth in the Time of UPA: Myths and Reality", *Economic and Political Weekly*, April 19, Vol 49, No 34. pp. 34 –43).

Its populist and welfare schemes were expected to yield rich returns at the hustings: NREGA 2005, RTI 2005,

In the context of a global economic slowdown, corruption, inflation, rising unemployment, heightened aspirations and expectations of a new generation of first-time voters, increasing violence against the marginalized and minorities, even populist welfare measures could not retain the core voter base the Congress had always relied on.

In the context of a global economic slowdown, corruption, inflation, rising unemployment, heightened aspirations and expectations of a new generation of first-time voters, increasing violence against the marginalized and minorities, even populist welfare measures could not retain the core voter base the Congress had always relied on.

Recognition of Forest Rights Act 2006, RTE 2009, NFS 2013, Land Acquisition Act 2014, the Lokpal And Lokayukta Act 2014. But the Congress's electoral campaign did not effectively publicize these genuine achievements. It fell victim to the unintended consequences of their earlier success.

Land acquisition for development generated severe conflicts with those deprived of their land; the expansion of education without a corresponding increase in quality led to a shortage of skilled man-power; low quality of services to the ordinary citizen and the failure to tackle corruption that inevitably accompanies the rapid creation of new wealth, alienated the people, particularly the neo-middle class, whose expectations were raised during UPA I, and who then felt betrayed by UPA II. The media played this up as incompetence and crony capitalism. The timid-tepid response of the government only encouraged charges of governmental paralysis, which in fact was more the result of an outrageously unruly Parliament led by an unconscionably aggressive Opposition.

Furthermore, the Congress does suffer from a serious dynastic problem, which is part of the burden of its history. Unless it addresses this urgently it will be unable to reinvent itself and to recover its credibility and relevance in a changed situation.

BJP Gains

The election rhetoric of the Congress was secularism versus communalism; that of the BJP was good governance versus incompetent government. But the real decider was the corporate interests and the media they controlled, which supported the BJP, while anti-incumbency worked against the Congress.

Secularism, as state neutrality on religious matters, (*sarva dharma nirapekshata*) must further extend to an equal respect for all religions (*sarva dharma sambhava*). But here aggressive, liberal secular rationalists, who have no stake in religious belief, have hollowed out this later understanding, putting popular religious traditions on the defensive. These, in turn, responded with an even more aggressive fundamentalism. In all

this the tragic casualty was religious tolerance. Politicisation and conflict readily followed, as religious belief became more a defining ideology than a humanising faith.

In order to mobilise and consolidate their hold on the Hindu community, the BJP had once played on 'Hindu victimhood' - which actually threatened religious minorities experience: 'Religion in danger.' Now Hindutvawadis used 'Hindu pride' for the same purpose: "Say with pride I am a Hindu (*Garva se kaho, ham Hindu hain*). This stuck a chord with the neo-middle class Hindus, who were then readily coopted to a neo-liberal Gujarat model and its supposed promise of rapid progress and higher standards of living. ('Good times are a coming', 'Ache din aane wale hain') Corporate businesses used the media they controlled to promote aggressively this feel-good factor and personalise its appeal in a 'strong' leader.

The BJP now soft pedals their talk of a 'Hindu model of development' in favour of a more globalised one. As a right-leaning party its ideology can best be described as neo-liberal capitalism with Hindu characteristics. We can wonder how much of the 'Hindu' will be left in this development once it is globalised, as much as we can wonder how much of the 'socialism' is left in the Chinese model of development. Authoritarian structures are common to both. India, with its formal democracy, must moderate this tendency. Or else we will have a democracy controlled not by the inclusion and participation of people through their representatives, but by vested business interests through their lobbies. The United States, hailed as the promised land of development by the powerful neo-conservative business elites in this country, is the prime example of this.

The parameters of this development have not been elaborated. A critique of the Gujarat model exposes it as more myth than reality, more

rhetoric than performance, more top-down implementation than down-up consensus. The official development and HRD figures from Gujarat are not better than other high-performing States. This is sure fire evidence of uneven growth and skewed development. No wonder the poor and the marginalised hardly figured in the BJP's campaign rhetoric. Neither did 'growth with equity' or 'equality with development'. The neo-middle class is caught between

then the Gujarat model of development chips in. Violence must cease so that development can accelerate. The early concerns expressed by the business lobby after the riots of 2002 in Gujarat were soon gone, as the *Gaura Yatras* marketed a business-friendly, vibrant Gujarat. Impatient corporate houses were the first to celebrate this neo-liberal development model and project it to the national stage.

However, the inevitable tensions

responsible for the defeat of the NDA. But by 2014 the pogrom of 2002 was no longer the issue. Consumerist societies have very short memories when good times are promised!

Deserving and Discerning

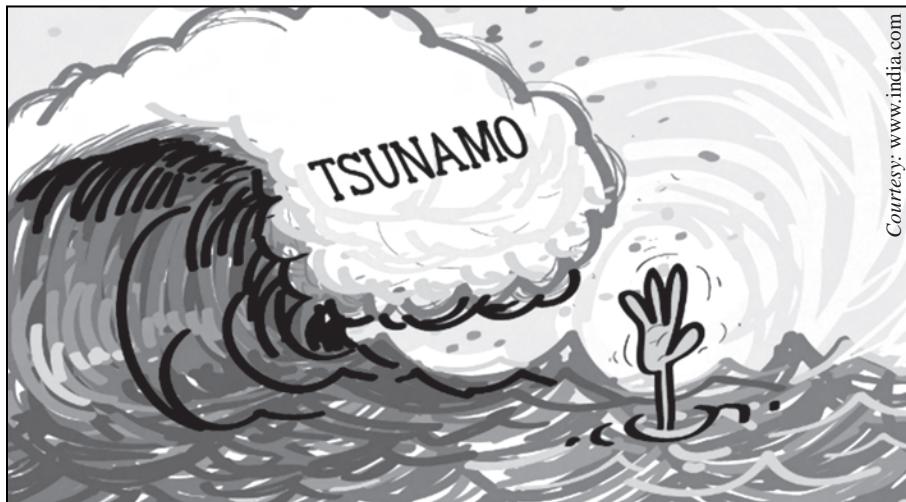
This election was a rejection of the Congress for its corruption and ineptitude. It was lost by the Congress more than won by the BJP or rather won for them by business-sponsored media. This cannot be construed as a massive mandate to extend the Gujarat model to the rest of the country. Indeed, the Gujarat model of communal conflict did not yield the same dividends when extended to Khandhamal in Odisha.

The success of the BJP campaign is an alarming reflection on an uncritical electorate taken in by the mantra of development and good governance. They never asked the obvious crucial questions: Development for whom? Governance by whom? The business lobbies that sponsored the campaign had their answer long ago: capitalists' growth, governance to protect their interests. The consumerist neo-middle class that has been wowed for now may learn from their disillusionment.

The remains of the day seem to be twofold. The Congress needs to find a leader to address the failure of their dynastic politics; the BJP's leader, larger than the party now, may make it subservient to him and bring it down if he flounders. A critical and alert citizenry is essential for an inclusive, participative rights-based democracy. This is the substantive democracy established by our Constitution. Without this, electoral democracy leads to majoritarianism and authoritarianism, and the marginalization of the poor and minorities. It has happened elsewhere in South Asia. It happened during the 1977-79 Emergency here.

It can happen again. ■

Fr Rudi Heredia, SJ (BOM) is a writer and independent researcher. He resides at Campion Jesuit Residence, Mumbai.



the rich who profited most from the economic growth, and the poor who benefited somewhat from the welfare measures. They may well experience short term gains with such neo-liberal development. But the huge costs such development inflicts on the poor and the environment lead to instability in the long term. This will betray the rising expectations of the very classes that initially benefitted from it. But as always it is the weakest in the society who have to bear the greatest burden.

Unjust exclusions and severe inequalities only invite extremism and violence. The Maoist-controlled rural and forest districts in Central India are evidence of this.

Minority Apprehensions

If the poor and marginalised have much to fear in this Gujarat model of development, minority communities have much to dread in the Gujarat model of communal polarisation. Once the majority support is consolidated

and stress of this skewed development will compel these groups to return to the identity politics of Hindutva. In order to consolidate flagging support and contain discontent and dissent, these elements will once again use the politics of difference, even the politics of hate and polarise communities. The violence and insecurity that follow will affect the poor among the minorities the most.

During this electoral campaign the provocation against Bangladeshi migrants in the North-East and the Musaffarnagar carnage that affected hundreds of Muslims proved that these groups, even while talking of development, will not hesitate to use polarising identity politics for electoral gains. No party is above such cynical use of communal violence when electoral gains can be reaped, but the BJP is the party that has used and benefitted most by communal violence. Vajpayee had said that Gujarat riots were mainly

BY HEDWIG LEWIS, SJ

Ignatius' spiritual encounters at Manresa reached a climax one day in what has come to be known as "the sublime illumination". It was the pinnacle of all the mystical graces he had received at Manresa.

The event

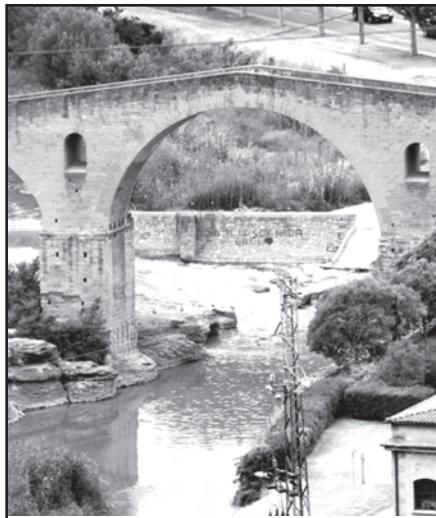
"One time [Ignatius] was going out of his devotion to a church... The road ran next to the river. As he went along occupied with his devotions, he sat down for a little while with his face towards the river which was running deep. While he was seated there, the eyes of his understanding began to be opened; though he did not see any vision, he understood and knew many things both spiritual and matters of faith and of learning, and this was with so great an enlightenment that everything seemed new to him. Though there were many he cannot set forth the details that he understood then, except that he experienced a great clarity in his understanding. This was such that in the whole course of his life, through sixty-two years, even if he gathered up all the many helps he had had from God and all the many things he knew and added them together, he does not think they would amount to as much as he had received at that one time."

(Autobiography (AB) 30)

Effects

There is a tendency to interpret Ignatius' words as indicating that he was given new knowledge, that the content of his knowledge of God and the world was increased. While the text does not exclude such a reading, neither does it demand it. Ignatius said that he was given an intellectual grasp of realities, secular as well as religious, which he already knew. If he had been receiving new knowledge there would be no sense in saying that 'all these things seemed new to him'. They were familiar realities seen in a new light and with a greater profundity.

What Ignatius learned through Cardoner was a deepened understanding of discernment, which became the



CARDONER: A foundational experience:

touchstone for all his later decision-making. In this sense he was constantly referring back to Cardoner. Jerome Nadal noted: "Whenever questions were put to him on matters of importance, he would refer to that grace and light", that is, to what he understood at the Cardoner. Before that he had noticed and wondered (as at Loyola), but did not understand. He was still, in his own word, 'blind' (AB 14). But henceforth there is in him an assurance that was not there before.

Pedagogy

The Cardoner experience did not give Ignatius a direct answer to all the questions that he was facing in his life, still less answers to the questions emanating more broadly from his cultural milieu. But it did give him a tool, a means by which he could approach all questions; it gave him a methodology. Building on his personal experience Ignatius began to fashion a pedagogy by which he could enable others to learn that methodology. He knew that everything lay in the hands of God who alone could gift his people with wisdom and understanding. But, having seen at the Cardoner the interconnectedness of all things, the human and the divine, he also knew that a way could be found to co-operate with God's initiative and activity.

Influences

The 'Principle and Foundation' of the Exercises flows directly from the Cardoner experience: all reality coming forth from God, all reality returning to God, all reality seen and understood only in God. It is finally experienced as an interiorly assimilated, realized and established attitude for life in the 'Contemplation to Attain Love' which closes the Spiritual Exercises in accord with the characteristic Ignatian "world-affirming" spirituality and ideal of "loving and serving the Divine Majesty in all things" (SpEx. 233), or of "finding God in all things, loving him in all creatures and all creatures in him" (see Const 288). The distinctive hallmark of Ignatian and Jesuit spirituality, "inner freedom" or total availability, takes its origin and inspiration from the founding grace of Cardoner. The opening paragraphs of Part X of the Constitutions (812-814) contain a marvellous theological-spiritual synthesis of nature and grace, of transcendence and immanence, of the divine and the human, which then is concretely itemized in the rest of that chapter. At its roots lies the all-integrating synthesis-experience of the Cardoner.

Impact

Ignatius' divine illumination at Cardoner can be described in modern-day scientific terms as an 'altered state of consciousness', the transition from the rational, reflective consciousness to the field of profound intuition. Its effects are long-lasting, and it is usually the point of departure for a person's insertion into the real world. It affects the deepest layers of one's being, so that one becomes aware of the newness of things. 'From that day he seemed to be quite another man, and possessed of a new intellect' (see AB 30). Ignatius felt himself more free, more the creator of his self-identity, open to others in a different way. He gives up his excessive ways, trims his hair, pares his nails, starts eating meat again and abandons the idea of becoming a Carthusian, because he saw "the fruit which he bore in dealing with souls" (AB 29). He is transformed from a recluse into an apostle. ■



BY SEBASTIAN THANGADURAI, SJ

Charles sweated a lot even in that air conditioned room. The news of John's resignation shocked him terribly. He looked for John in the adjacent room through the transparent glass. In that chilly room, people, with headsets on, were busy talking to clients over the phone or replying to e-mails. They were all glued to the computer screen. Some took time off from their hectic work and sipped from a cup. Charles looked all around. John was not there and his absence confirmed what he had just heard. He couldn't believe it.

John and Charles hailed from the same village. Becoming a software engineer was their childhood dream. They grew up hearing about and then seeing men who had always plenty of money, because of the fat salaries they earned in multinational software companies. They followed their dream and realized it five years ago when they entered the posh office of a big MNC in a gigantic skyscraper. There were about a thousand software IT employees. After four years of toil, both were promoted to the position of team leaders. Though they were working in the same company for the same project in adjacent rooms, they hardly got time to meet. Such was their work.

A month ago their monthly salary touched the Rs 200,000 per month mark. Charles was trying to figure out what could have driven John to resign such a lucrative job. He could only recall a brief conversation between them after their salary hike was announced. "Charles, are you happy and able to think freely in our working environment?" asked John. His strange query shook Charles for a moment. He knew for sure the answer

but he groped for words. "John, aren't we happy with our salaries, although the atmosphere here is not so... We need to... forego certain things to be... to be.. happy," answered Charles with much difficulty. "Are you sure, Charles?" John stung him again. "Are you sure you are happy?" That was the end of their conversation that day.

But earlier John had poured out his feelings to Charles many a time. Since they were childhood friends, they could freely open their hearts to each other. John was very clear in his thinking and he would put across his ideas to people in a distinct manner, which always brought appreciation from different quarters. He was of the opinion that when individuals became a part of a large company like that of an MNC, they had to work very hard just to survive. So they had to be constantly learning, updating and presenting their ideas to their seniors. If the seniors were pleased, it will bring them job security and even promotions. So to escape being an unknown part of a big group, they had to devise strategies and invent concepts which would mark them out as smart, unique individuals. This compelled the employees to act in a way which was not natural to them but which they thought would please the seniors. John felt that this was where the compromises began. He was sure that if they continued such a life, they would lose their individuality gradually.

The pressure to excel made life highly competitive where they were constantly chasing success. But just when they would think they have achieved it, they would realize that success has been redefined. So they had to begin again from the beginning. Their professional lives soon destroyed their personal lives. They have innumerable 'friends' but would still find themselves

all alone. Mobile phones, facebook, internet, become means of swift social gratification but they do nothing to cure them of the inner vacuum and emptiness they felt. This is what John said he hated.

John argued that what they called 'outsourcing' was nothing but exploitation. It is not sharing the workload but finding cheap labor. It earned big profits for the companies but the workers who worked really hard had to be satisfied with a poor salary. What is valued is not the person but the work. If the company could find another man for still cheaper remuneration, it will employ him. It is mere exploitation, said John.

Unable to find him anywhere in the office Charles called John. Contrary to what Charles expected, John was quite cool. "Charles, I spoke my mind at different occasions. My conscience did not allow me to work any longer. I thought that I was selfish, wanting a job just for the salary it offered but ignoring my parents and my inner happiness."

John's resignation and the explanation he offered made Charles think. Only a fortnight ago, his parents had come to visit him. He had been asking his aged parents to stay with him permanently. They had no need to rely on farming back in their village as their son earned a handsome salary. But their stay in Chennai was not very pleasant. They could hardly speak to their son as he was busy all the time with his office work. His week-end too was consumed by his hectic emergency work. His parents felt out of place. They couldn't bear to see their son suffer this way. They had a good house in the village and could breathe fresh air there. Here all looked artificial and dangerous: from food to air. They could not enjoy what their son's money could buy.

Hope-givers

They recalled that they had toiled hard to get their son educated. But they didn't expect that the education they gave him would land him in such a life. They felt that they were with him and yet he seemed far away. One day his mother mustered all her courage and told Charles, "Son, we want to get back to our village. We are not happy here. We can't see you suffer this way for the sake of money. Come, let's go and live

use all his intelligence and skills for agriculture.

A few days after Charles talked to John, he received an e-mail from him:

Hi Charles,

I'm sorry for not informing you about my resignation. I didn't want to shock you and further I didn't exactly know how to put things across to you at that moment.

I've now found a new job which is very satisfying to me and to my family. I don't know

be money givers or job givers, but all of us can be hope-givers. I hope you too would become one some day. I need fresh air and people here need fresh thinkers.

I have already had an open air meeting with some of the farmers here. We discussed some of the issues like poor marketing and intermediaries who exploit them. They all remain hopeful about a brighter future. So do I.

**"I need fresh air
and people here need
fresh thinkers."**



a peaceful life in our village." Charles could not digest what his mother said. He obviously did not want to leave his job which brought quick money and take up farming which he considered a waste of time and energy. He thought he earned in a month what his parents took a whole year to make. Finally his parents left Chennai hoping that their son would understand their feelings.

Charles remembered that once John too had suggested something similar. He had once proposed to Charles about taking up farming together after leaving their IT job, but Charles ignored it. John saw farming as an enriching profession that enriches oneself and the society. He wanted to

if you heard about it. I have taken up farming in our village as I've been telling you for a long time. People in the field have experience and I have some scientific knowledge and innovative ideas. If experience and knowledge come together, new things will happen. I'm going to show the way. I'm sure more and more people will follow me.

We have land and labour. What we need is proper planning. The executive meetings and planning we had in our office are going to be of great help to me. I know it's a bit of a risk, but I would say it's a reasonable risk. Farmers here are selling their land to corporate companies, citing poor monsoons and meagre income. They are unaware of mechanized farming and modern irrigation. I think my studies will instill hope in them. We may not

Love,
John.

Charles kept looking at the e-mail. He read it again and again. Then he typed his reply:

Dear John,

Thanks for making me take this step after a long time. I am resigning my job here and going back to my village to take up farming. I too want to be a hope-giver.

*Your friend,
Charles.*

Having finished his studies in English Literature at Loyola College, Chennai, Sch Sebastian Thangadurai, SJ (MDU) is currently a third year student of theology at Vidya Jyoti, Delhi.

Fr Dany Younes, SJ is the new Provincial of the Jesuit Near East Province. For an exclusive interview to Jivan he spoke to Victor Edwin on the current volatile situation in the region:

The Arab Spring created a momentum for change: transparency, democracy, and accountability. What has happened to that momentum?

Nations, just like individuals, have their own internal struggles to overcome before they acquire their real identity. The situation of the Arab nations at the end of the colonial period was calling for such a struggle, where the clashes between tradition and modernity opposed despotism on one side and religious fanaticism on the other. This situation presented to the people a difficult alternative: either support a tyrannical regime that nurtures corruption and military control of the lives of people, or supporting a seemingly democratic movement of religious revival that actually has no understanding whatsoever of the economic and social challenges of the current situation. The tension was building for decades, and exploded mainly on economic grounds when, in Tunisia, a man burned himself to death out of despair. That event sparked an angry crowd movement that very soon caused the end of a despotic regime. Many similar crowd movements followed in different countries, even if under different circumstances. When the population itself is made up of different religious communities, the movement degenerated into a civil war, because one or more of those communities actually support the regime, usually against the demographically dominant one. When the variety of religious denominations is not a major factor, the movement was soon taken over by religious movements who were for a

long time opposing the regime, and had enough political organization to lead, once the regime fell. But the demands of the initial crowd movement have not been fulfilled, and the march towards democracy will continue in as much as the Arab soul persists in the search for herself.

Christian minorities experience different forms of oppression in a number of West Asian countries, including Egypt. How do Christians cope with the prevailing situation?

Christians in post-colonial Arab countries have contributed beyond their proportion to the establishment of modern States, which was the right thing to do. But the tension between the resulting despotism and the latent religious fanaticism proved too much for their precarious existence. As citizens, they were often oppressed just like all other citizens, but as Christians, they had also to face the charge of being against the Islamic movement. Their support of the establishment of a modern State made them appear sometimes as favorable to the prevailing regime. Christians, when persecuted, respond in different ways: some just leave their homeland and seek refuge in Europe, North America or Australia; others make an option either for or against the regime, exposing themselves, and their communities, to the wrath of the other side; in some places they seek to protect themselves with weapons; and some try to make clear their option for a democratic State, unlike both the old regimes and the religious movements. What the Christians lack mainly is a strong leadership and a clear statement of their intention.

A large number of South Asian Muslims draw nourishment from the Sufi spirituality. Is Sufi spirituality popular among West Asian Muslims?

What is happening in West Asia?



While Sufi spirituality is strongly present in different parts of the Arab world, it remains a marginal movement. The prevailing movements belong mainly to political Islam, drawing more on a literal understanding of Islamic Law, or on a political vision of the mission of Islam, than on spirituality. Some writers explain the current situation much more on the basis of post-colonial feelings than as a manifestation of Islam as a religion and worldview. Others see it as the result of centuries-long clash between Sunnis and Shias, the two main families of Islamic communities - a reminder of the religious wars between Catholics and Protestants in Europe.

How do you read the tension between political and religious movements of Islam in your part of the world? Is the political dimension an essential aspect of Islam?

The struggle is within the heart of Islam. It is like a spiritual warfare that will decide what Islam will look like in the future. It is, of course, up to the Muslims to decide, but we need to see clearly the drive beneath the rise of political Islam. It would be very naïve to think that the political configuration of the world has nothing to do with it. In this struggle, we need to hear the voice of those among the Muslims who want peace and freedom. Most of my Muslim friends, even those who actually are militant politically, desire a reconciled society as much as I do, but you cannot escape the struggle, exactly like, on an individual level, in the Spiritual Exercises. The tension between worship and political involvement is not strange to the Christian tension between the two main commandments: love of God, and love of the neighbor. The real question is: can you love God without struggling to achieve justice? Can you struggle to achieve justice without facing the structures of injustice? Can you face those structures without fighting them? Of course, luminous examples of non-violent struggles do exist; some of them come to us from South Asia. Those are, alas, the exceptions. Spirituality has a lot to offer to the political realm, but for this to happen we need imagination and innovation.

Like quite a few Arab Christian theologians have done in the past do Jesuits of the Near East Province contribute to the dialogue with Muslims?

The Jesuits arrived in the Near-East mainly to help in the formation of the clergy. Very soon, they were involved

in education, founding hundreds of small schools and a University. Eventually, they were more and more in communication with the Muslim community. Now we have a Center for Islamic-Christian Studies at the University, which was created by both a Jesuit and a Muslim friend during the civil war in Lebanon. The same movement of communication led to another event: the creation of a Muslim-Christian national feast in Lebanon on 25 March, celebrating together Our Lady. This feast, endorsed by the Lebanese government, gives place for a yearly joint celebration held in the Jesuit high-school in Beirut. A Center for Studies of Christian-Arab Literature seeks to support the current theological dialogue with a better knowledge of the predecessors. In Egypt and Syria, we give spiritual retreats for Christians and Muslims together. In Turkey and Algeria, the communication with Muslims takes more a personal approach, through friendship or cultural gatherings. Actually, we aim at making dialogue with Islam not so much a ministry in itself, but a dimension of all our ministries. We thank God for the steps we have already taken in that direction, but a lot is still waiting to be done.

West Asia is the home of many ancient Christian Churches. Do Jesuits contribute today toward ecumenical relations between different Churches?

Actually most of the Jesuits of the Province come from those different Churches, of whom many are in communion with Rome, and many are not. So the first ecumenical effort is made within the Society herself, reconciling rites and traditions, sometimes with ease, sometimes after some effort. As for the relations with non-Catholic denominations, I think we still have

a lot to do. Mainly, we contribute to what the Catholic Church in general offers, through our institutions and personal relations. Our pastoral care reaches out for many Orthodox and Protestant believers who are interested in the Spiritual Exercises or the Youth Movements that we animate.

What are the other apostolates Jesuits are involved in?

We are involved in education: two schools in Egypt, five in Lebanon, a University. We are involved in the social apostolate: through JRS serving thousands of people across the different countries of the Province, as well as through the Center for Migrants, serving mainly Asian and African household workers coming to Lebanon from Sri Lanka, the Philippines, Ethiopia and many other places, then through different NGOs in Egypt and Lebanon. We are involved in the intellectual apostolate through our Publishing House (called Dar el Machreq), and the Centers of Research within the University. We are involved in pastoral and spiritual apostolates through the Exercises, the formation of Clergy, Spiritual Direction, Movements of the Youth.

Could South Asian Jesuits help their counterparts in West Asia in some way?

The first answer that comes to my mind is: "Come and see". I believe that we need to have a better mutual knowledge before we can name the areas of possible collaboration. We are so happy to have Bimal Kerketta with us. His contributions to our life and mission are greatly appreciated. I wonder if our Province could serve as a place among others for Regency or Tertiationship experiments for Jesuits of South Asia, or for a sabbatical. Such ties can be of great help for the future. ■

BY WESLEY D'COSTA, SJ

Here are 10 traits of the extra-ordinary man whose feast we celebrate on 31 July. Not merely those who belong to the Society he founded, but all those inside and outside the Catholic Church who admire St Ignatius of Loyola can consider these traits and ask themselves how many of these they can claim to have or practice.

1. A Personal Love for Jesus: We know what happened. Having been injured in the battle of Pamplona, St Ignatius was convalescing in the castle of Loyola. It was here that he encountered Jesus. Not having much to do he read the books, *The Life of Christ* and *The Lives of Saints*. Spending hours contemplating the events in the life of Jesus Christ, he grew in knowledge of Christ, fell in love with him and was filled with a deep desire to serve him.



How many of these 10 Ignatian Traits do you have?

This intimate personal knowledge of Christ is what we need to strive for. We, of course, know a lot about Jesus. But what matters most is that we know Jesus and experience Him personally. Only then can we love him. Only then can we imitate Christ in the way we think, speak and act, keeping always at the back of our minds the secret formula: what would Jesus do in this situation?

2. Intent to edify:

St Ignatius was very particular that he should not mislead anyone, that what he said and did should not cause a scandal. So he reflected deeply about what he said and did, even more about everything he wrote, because he believed that the written word was permanent. Never did he utter a useless word. Always did he speak of the things of God and encouraged spiritual conversations. Those who knew him said his meals were frugal but his manners were regal, as the sole purpose was the edification of all to the greater service and praise of God.

In his letters and the Constitutions he stressed the need to constantly edify those around. He takes it a step further when he states that even in illness, when a person is most prone to fluctuating temperaments and moods, one must be a source of edification. Therefore followers of Ignatius should constantly monitor the impact of their speech and actions and check if they edify or scandalise others.

3. Review and Reflection:

"A life unexamined is a life unlivable," said Plato. In today's world the review has become a popular management procedure. The corporate world, sports teams and educational institutions have regular reviews of performance. Already back then in the 16th century St Ignatius stressed the need to review - to review our life, our actions, our words, thoughts and even our prayer. The review helps us know if we have failed or succeeded- and if we have failed, to take steps to improve and if we succeeded, to build on that success. It also helps us to see the 'hand of God' in

our lives, in the pleasant and unpleasant events, how God is always working for the good of all those who love him.

We seldom find time in our busy schedules for reviews. Yet, for us to grow in our spiritual lives and encounter God it is of utmost importance that we make the review a daily practice.

4. Solidarity with the poor: Though hailing from a noble family, St Ignatius chose to live a life of poverty. He considered poverty to be the foundation of religious life and loved it like his own mother. In this he just imitated Jesus, who had nowhere to lay his head. He desired and tried to serve the poorest of the poor. He would often beg for alms and distribute it among the poor. He and his companions, though being some of the most learned men in Europe, would find time while studying to serve the poor and the sick. The sons and daughters of Ignatius, therefore, should similarly serve the poor.

5. Considering God alone as refuge:

St Ignatius calls himself 'the Pilgrim'. He often went on pilgrimages without food or money, travelling on foot, placing his complete trust on God and relying only on the dependable providence of God. He even refused to take along with him a companion on any of his pilgrimages, lest in times of his weakness or need he would turn to his companion for help rather than God. He wanted only God as his refuge.

Very often we place our trust in our abilities, intelligence, influence, money, positions etc. Like Ignatius, we must learn to trust our Father in heaven who loves us dearly.

6. Finding God in all things:

Ignatius grew in his spiritual life to the extent of finding God in all creatures and creation. He considered all of creation as a loving gift of God and that God is laboring and working for each one of us in his creation. Whether it was a bird soaring in the sky, or a worm squirming

on the ground or an acquaintance he met - everything drew this mystic to God and His love that was manifest to him in everything.

This is the grace every exercitant prays for at the end of the Spiritual Exercises. Every follower of Ignatius should ask for this grace - a hallmark of Ignatian spirituality. We need this grace in order to be aware of God's involvement in our lives. If we experience God's presence in creation, we will treat it with respect and reverence and safeguard its beauty and diversity.

7. The art of discernment:

The 'discernment of spirits' is a main contribution of St.Ignatius to the Church. It

far as.' The purpose of our life, as taught by the Church and many saints like Augustine, is to attain our salvation. St Ignatius called this the end of our lives and believed that everything else on the face of the earth was geared to help us attain this end. So we use everything, in as much as it helps us attain salvation.

So Ignatius pursued his studies at a late age - not to fulfill his personal ambitions or for self glorification but because he felt it was necessary to attain his salvation. All the material goods provided by generous benefactors were also used by him not for his own fulfillment but rather in the service and praise of God.

or applause. We may do something good, only for being trumpeted in public. Many people ask, 'How discreet must we be?' Our left hand must not know what our right hand is doing. Very often our involvement in works of charity, parish activities or even my writing this article could be so that we may be noticed and appreciated. But a pure intention will look for only the glory of God and the good of others.

10. MAGIS: St Ignatius had an unmatched spirit of generosity. The attitude of mediocrity, the "chalta hai" attitude was unacceptable to him. He would do even the daily ordinary tasks extraordinarily well because he did it all out of an immense



was he who explained the process of sifting the various spirits acting upon us. It is this that enables us to become interiorly free, enabling us to make decisions, so that none of the choices we make come from our own selfish motives and inclinations but from a desire to act always in accordance with the will of God.

In this too Ignatius followed Jesus who said that his food was to do the will of his Father. He was ready for a complete surrender - of his mind, memory, intellect and will - placing himself in the hands of God, allowing God to use him 'as an old man carries his walking stick'.

Part of learning Ignatian spirituality is learning the art of discernment. The goal, of course is to live the will of God, keeping in mind that the wisdom of God surpasses all our understanding and knowledge.

8. Tantum Quantum

"Let a man possess his goods and not be possessed by them," said St Ignatius. 'Tantum Quantum' means 'in so

If any of these were taken away it did not disturb him because he knew that these were the means - not the end. This is what gave him inner freedom.

The followers of St Ignatius can never, therefore, forget the purpose, the end of their lives.

9. Purity of Intention :

Ignatius made tremendous efforts so that he may not fall prey to the folly of vain glory. i.e. the desire to be appreciated, to be spoken well off. He overcame this by constantly examining himself and becoming aware, making sure that all his actions, operations and intentions were solely for the praise and service of God. Even something as sacred as prayer could be contaminated by impure intentions. St Ignatius gives us the formula to overcome these impure intentions: "Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam". 'Do everything for the greater glory of God not for self- glorification.'

Jesus says that we must do good for the sake of God alone, not for appreciation

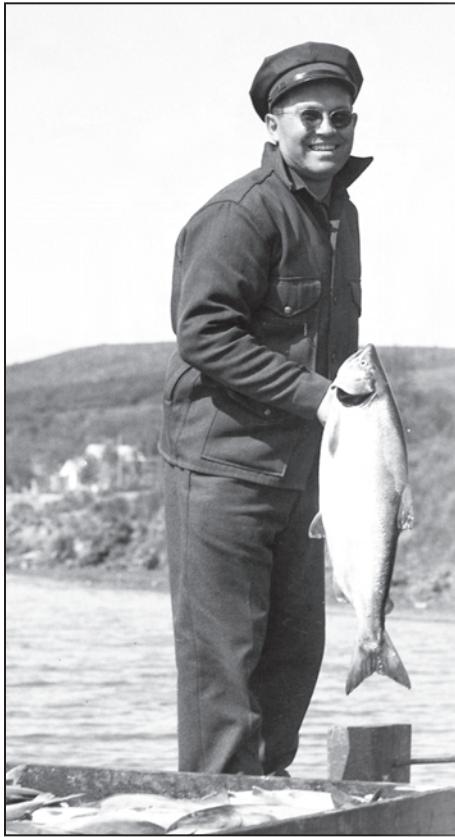
Every follower of Ignatius should ask for this grace - finding God in all creatures and creation - a hallmark of Ignatian spirituality.

love for God. He wanted to do as much as he could in the service of the eternal king. " What more can I do for Christ?" is the question that drove him to do more and more - to do things better and better.

In one of his letters addressed to the young Jesuits he tells them that it truly would be a cause for embarrassment, if the ones who in their quest for worldly treasures worked with more vigour and zeal towards their goals, than we who were on the quest for the treasures of heaven.

Conclusion: So in this month of July, while preparing for the feast of this great saint whom we claim as our father, we can assess ourselves to see if we are truly his sons (and daughters) - if we truly have his traits - if we practice his spirituality in our daily lives.

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An Indian Jesuit goes in search of the Apostle of the Eskimos

BY JOHN ROSE, SJ

When I was still a Scholastic, an elderly yet very active missionary - Garriz Bapu to his people of North Gujarat - placed a book, *Memoirs of a Yukon Priest*, in my hand and told me to read and relish it. As usual I glanced at the last chapter, not expecting much, but there was something in it which gripped me immediately. So, after supper, I began at the very beginning and it kept me fully awake, well beyond midnight.

It was an autobiography of Segundo Llorente (1906-1989) who was the first ever Spanish Jesuit missionary to Alaska, relating his experiences to his Eskimo flock that lived in North Alaska in a territory even north of the Arctic Circle. Though the geography and names of places were not familiar to me, his reflections and hilarious narration of experiences kept me completely enthralled. Here is a sample:

"I arrived in Spokane, Washington, on October 1, 1930, and was told that I was to spend one year in Gonzaga University learning English....It was a very difficult

year for me...because I did not know any English. My confreres at recreation were having a good time cracking jokes and laughing while I stood there with a silly grin, looking like a perfect idiot. Then English itself made me very angry....Take the word *laughter*. But if you put an 's' before it, then you have *slaughter* with an entirely different sound. The only person in the university who knew Spanish was Fr Julius La Motta, who was a linguist. I would go to his room once a week just to hear myself speak Spanish. He was the type of man who spoke very little....I was living in a vacuum. Since nature abhors vacuums...I turned to the Lord, who did not disappoint me....I conversed with the Lord in the Blessed Sacrament to my heart's content. He knew Spanish better than I did, so we two had a good time. But that implied faith, deep faith, because the Lord never spoke audibly to me (a good thing He didn't!), but the soul hears, and that is enough."

Llorente travelled by dog-sleds during winter and in boats during summer. I had a chill up my spine as he described how he was almost killed when his dog-sled plunged into broken ice. While I was reading about his experiences, I also

began to dream that one day I would also be where he had been: to meet with Eskimos, especially the ones he had baptized and taught catechism, to see the aurora borealis and the sun at midnight, to ride on the frozen Yukon river.

I still can't believe that I am not dreaming when I write that I've been to Alakanuk and Emmonak about where Segundo Llorente built churches, dedicated to St Ignatius and to the Sacred Heart, in that order. The daydreams became a reality after I was requested by the local bishop to help out in those parishes during the Easter break this year. Magnificent statues of St Ignatius and St Theresa of Avila and a painting of St Francis Xavier at the altar give indications of what charged Segundo's childhood devotion, his missionary zeal, and his adult spirituality. What I saw of his delightful people and what I experienced of the harsh elements he had to bear with only increased my adulation. No wonder his close friend, Louis Renner, SJ, the editor of *Alaskan Shepherd*, with whom he maintained a voluminous correspondence, recalls him as always joyous and exuberant and refers to him as a modern-day mystic. Thomas Merton described him as a "remarkable person, a sort of legend" in Alaska.

Llorente was born near Leon, Spain, on 18 November 1906, the oldest of nine children - seven boys and two girls. Amando, one of his brothers, also became a Jesuit. In 1923 he entered the Jesuit novitiate at Carrion de los Condes in Castile and, after philosophical studies, went in 1930 to Gonzaga University, Spokane, to learn English. During 1931-34 he did his theological studies at St Mary's, Kansas, and after his ordination he was assigned to the Alaska Mission.

When Segundo first arrived at Alaska, he was with two Italian Jesuits, Lucchesi and Tornielli, and the locals gave his surname an Italianate ending, so that even today Segundo is known as Lorenti—the Spaniards pronounce Llorente as "Yorente." The locals were nearly all Yup'ik Eskimos living on the banks of the Yukon River that propels expensive salmon fish into their nets. The early days were not easy for him, and not only because of language problems. His Jesuit companions gave him the impression that Alaska was like a mad house without a keeper, the situation made worse by the sun appearing only for an

hour during winter and disappearing just for an hour during summer. He wrote in the Kotzebue house diary: "Three things kept me from going insane: the tabernacle, the typewriter, and the catechism children."

Llorente not only survived but even got to feel that Alaska was like a mother to him, a fact that he movingly describes in his memoir. He had good rapport with the people and made it a point to visit every home at least twice a week. Adults came every Wednesday, and children daily after school, for catechism. He learnt to cut hair and never charged for services. It is obvious that his love was amply reciprocated, for I came across so many fathers and grandfathers that bore "Lorenti" as their first name. During this year's Easter Vigil I had to give two children, out of the thirteen I baptized, that same name.

Everything I heard about what Llorente said and did from all the seniors I encountered made it clear that he was one of the most extraordinary missionaries of the twentieth century. He was an excellent and prolific writer too. Through his writings he not only communicated the depths of his own personality but also the cultural wealth of the Eskimos he lived with and for. His style and clarity made him well known in the English-speaking world and, since those characteristics of his writing lent themselves easily to translation, he was also well-known especially in Spain and South America. He wrote a steady stream of articles about everyday life where he was stationed for the Spanish mission magazine, *El Siglo de las Misiones*, for over 30 years. But it was in his simple naturalness that he was most effective. His catechist, 97-year old Benedict, fondly recalled to me: "Father Llorenti was excellent with children teaching catechism and telling them scary ghost stories to entertain them. But when it comes to prayer and devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, Hitler's army had to learn from him [laughs]. Nobody could talk inside the Church premises. He taught us how to converse with and listen to Jesus in silence."

Llorenti became a citizen of the United States in 1956 and when Alaska became the 49th State in 1959, he was the first to be elected consecutively for two terms, by write-in votes to serve in its newly formed House of Representatives. Later on, in Juneau, the State's capital, he was honored by the Sixteenth Alaska

Legislature with a special *In Memoriam* document. This states that "he served



with distinction and was loved by all who worked with him." He is cited, too, for being "a perceptive and knowledgeable



legislator who gave outstanding service during his term."



In Washington DC, Llorente's close friend and admirer, Alaska's Senator Ernest Gruening, after pointing out that Llorente had made history in as much as he was the first Catholic priest to hold elective office in a U.S. State, asked that the lengthy cover-story that



appeared in *Time* magazine, when Llorente was elected unanimously to the House of Representatives, be printed in the *Congressional Record*. There being

no objections raised, it was.

About the final year of his life, Renner writes: "In mid-November 1988, in Lewiston, Idaho, where Father Llorente was still active as chaplain at St Joseph's Hospital, he collapsed after struggling through Mass. He was found to have cancer of the lymph glands. Told that it was treatable, he said: 'No. I'm eighty-three years old. I want to meet St Ignatius and his first companions.' This he did, at the Jesuit House, Gonzaga University, Spokane, Washington, on January 26, 1989."

It was around -12°C during my Alaskan ministry this Holy Week. I asked the people what the temperatures would be like during winter and summer. "-35°C to +20°C," they replied. John de Britto, working in the area where I come from, Ramnathapuram District in Tamil Nadu, in southern India is supposed to have described the local seasons to his mother as hot, hotter, and hottest. Were I to write to my mother about the Alaskan seasons, I couldn't do better than simply state: cold, colder, and coldest.

Whatever I heard of Llorente reminds me of the Spanish Jesuits in what was formerly the Bombay Presidency. Their pioneering work led to establishing viable Christian communities from Ugalde Nagar in the Southern hills to Xavier Nagar in the Northern plains of Gujarat. They came over from the Aragon and Castilian Provinces, and those yet living are in their 70s and 80s, still very active: Feliu, till recently Socius to the Bombay Provincial and still teaching in the Bombay Seminary; Sopena, famed missionary, with a prosthetic foot ever ready to stomp the Katkari highlands; Juan, at St Peter's, Bandra, whose pastoral zeal and jauntiness is unmatchable; Isudas, an acclaimed translator of the Bible in Gujarati; Larumbe, going up and down the Aravalli hills to visit his parishioners; Heredero and Terrasa, experts in the Spiritual Exercises and sought after as guides; Aizpun, Arana, Berechi, Castiella, Corral, Galdos, et al, dedicated to the lives of the Adivasis. I have been inspired by their work and affected by their spirit, and this helps me to understand why Llorente had such a big impact on the opposite and very different part of our hemisphere. ■

John Rose, SJ (BOM) is pursuing his Ph.D. at Santa Clara University, California.

ANTHONY P. MILLEDGE, SJ (DAR) 1924 - 2014



Fr Anthony Paul Milledge was born on 11 Feb 1924 in Bournemouth, England. The details are important: the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes will go down in local history, not only as the day of his birth, but

as the name of the mission station in the Darjeeling Terai which he pioneered in 1963. He landed in Montreal, Canada with his parents on 29 Sept 1929, and spent the rest of his life in Montreal, before joining the Jesuits on 7 Sept 1946. He landed in India on 3 Feb 1953, to begin his long Jesuit life in India, for the second time as a migrant in a new country.

He spent some early years in the Darjeeling hills for (Nepali study and theology at St Mary's College, Kurseong), but the rest of his life was spent in the Darjeeling Terai, among tea garden labourers. In July 1962, he received the appointment that would determine his fixed residence for the next 16 years when he was given the task of searching for land south of Gayaganga that could be the centre for a parish on the southern-most boundary of what would become in October of that year, the new diocese of Darjeeling.

In the years to come, Fr Tony became familiar in other stations in the Terai also: first in Hatighisa (1978), Gayaganga (1987), and to pioneer a new parish (1990) at Goomgooma, a spin-off from Hatighisa. There he stayed until 2004 when he moved to Jesu Ashram to become, over the years, its acting director, Treasurer and Spiritual Father, and latterly mentor for student nurses and the sick. Two days before his 90th birthday, he had a fall which rendered him bedridden, until he died on 9 June. He is buried in the Gayaganga cemetery.

Fr General Kolenbach said it all when he wrote in 1996 to congratulate Fr Tony on his Golden Jubilee: "Though you have always been busy with material work and helping the disadvantaged, you see yourself chiefly as a pastor, spending yourself in your far-flung parishes."

- Wilfred Lobo, SJ

DHAVAMONY MARIASUSAI, SJ (MDU) 1926 - 2014



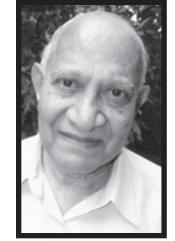
Fr Dhavamony Mariasusai, 88/67, went to his eternal reward on 31 May 2014 in Chennai after a prolonged illness and disability. An exemplary man of commitment, devotion to one's mission and academic excellence, he was a scholar of high repute, a prolific writer, a capable editor, and a revered professor. He spent a large part of his life (43 years) at the Gregorian in Rome, in different capacities as the Dean of the Faculty of Missiology, professor, doctoral guide, writer and editor for many years of *Studio Missionaria*. He was an excellent teacher and students thronged to his classes. His courses on Phenomenology of Religion, Comparative Religions, Classical and Modern Hinduism were the most popular ones. He taught at undergraduate, licentiate, and doctoral levels with ease and competence. He was also a visiting professor in USA and Canada.

Fr Dhavamony hails from Kuthalur, a prominent parish of the New Madurai Mission. His baptismal name was only Mariasusai. Since his mother got him after 12 years of prayer and penance she fondly called him Dhavamony (the pearl of penance). After he joined the Jesuits and completed his formation, he was sent to Rome to study philosophy. He returned to teach philosophy (epistemology) at Sacred Heart College, Shembaganur, Tamil Nadu. Chosen to teach Indology at the Gregorian, he went to Oxford University for his second doctorate, before starting his career at the Gregorian. He returned from Rome seven years ago and joined the community of Loyola College, Chennai. Though reserved and withdrawn by temperament, with those he felt at ease he would speak of his achievements and publications, tease and joke, and allow himself to be kidded. Last two years, he was cared for by the Little Sisters of the Poor in Chennai. All through May, he suffered from fever and high sugar. The life of a scholar lived mostly in silence and solitude ended on 31 May.

- Joseph Sebastian, SJ

FRANCIS PEREIRA, SJ (BOM) 1931 - 2014

For those of us who lived with Francis, he came across as a man who lived in his life what he wrote. He was 'in Christ' and spread God's message of love and grace. Our Pre-Novices used to go to him for the



Sacrament of Reconciliation. When I had my monthly chat with them and asked them about the highlight of the month, they would always reply, "My confession to Fr. Francis." "Why do you say that?" "Father is so good in confession. He advises so well and we feel encouraged and come away consoled and joyful." On the occasion of his 50 years of priesthood, he shared with us in his community the inner secret of his priesthood. He said, "After my ordination, as I stood before my parents, who were devoutly kneeling before me with their hands joined and with tears in their eyes, a thought flashed across my mind making me feel humble. I knew from experience that although my parents were simple, uneducated people they were certainly more holy and had a deeper faith. What did they see in me now, who was a priest of Christ? I was in my room in the Manickpur community after the Ordination. There was a knock at my door. I said, 'Come in.' The door opened. It was the Rector, Fr Dominic Pereira. He just said, 'Fr Francis, I want to make my confession.' I nearly froze. He came and knelt down next to my chair. I was struck by the humility, simplicity and frankness of the man, He was the Rector, a tall, imposing person and very strict. And this same man was now kneeling at the feet of this newly ordained priest, who just hours before was only Bro. Francis! What did he see in me now as he was confessing his sins in all humility? The message the Lord was giving me was clear. People saw in me now as a priest, the person of Jesus Christ himself." This grace of his ordination captured his being and he indeed became a living Christ to all those who came in contact with him. Fr Francis was a good man, a good Jesuit and a man fully human.

- Tony V. D'Souza, SJ

GERALD KERKETTA, SJ (JAM) 1951 - 2014



Fr Gerald Kerketta, popularly called Gerry, joined the Society when he was 22 years old. He did his novitiate in Newman's Hall, Ahmedabad, Gujarat, ordained a priest at the age of 34, 7 years later did his Tertiationship at St. Stanislaus, Sitagarha and 5 years later took his Final Vows. He seemed to have worn many hats in different fields at different times.

His pastoral ministry began in Chaibasa from where he moved to the more interior areas as associate pastor. From the pastoral field he moved to the field of education. Once again it was always in the deep interiors of the tribal area. As he had begun as a pastor so did he end his life as a pastor in Gomoh.

Not everyone can walk into these remote areas that lacked electricity, a steady source of water, fewer home comforts to lead more or less a 'hidden life'. But Fr Gerald was the right man, in the right place at a time when there were few who would accept such a spartan way of life. One can be sure that Gerry was a Jesuit who was not called to do great things but he did small things with great love that called for stern discipline from those he ministered to.

His end came suddenly. On the evening of 17 May he was riding a bike. He ran straight into a stationary trolley and died on the spot. His funeral Mass was presided over by Bishop Felix, Provincial Mike T Raj, and Provincial-Designate, Fr George Fernandes. His companion in Gomoh, Fr A Alexander touched upon the high points of his 41 years in the Society, while Fr. Bene Soreng attempted to make Gerry come alive through his short and sweet eulogy. Fr Joe Xavier from the Gregorian in Rome said it well when he wrote, "It was a shock to hear the news of Gerry's unfortunate and untimely death. It arrived unannounced. That makes us all really shocked and sad. I am sure that Gerry's innocent and sincere face will remain in our memory. And we take comfort in knowing that Gerry is now resting in the arms of our Lord."

- Eric Cassel, SJ

PAUL CHINNAPPAN, SJ (MDU) 1928 - 2014



At 12.50 a.m., on 14 May '14, Br. Paul Chinnappan joined the company of saints, particularly, St Alphonsa and Bl Devasahayam to whom he had a special devotion. In the first week of May, he ended up in the ICU of St Joseph Hospital with several complications. He was scheduled to have an MRI scan on 14 May but the end came hours before it could be done.

Paul Chinnappan was the sixth among seven brothers. His father was Mr Swaminathan, a staunch Hindu who converted to Christianity. He was a native doctor (asan), catechist (upadesiar), a teacher and a community leader. His parents brought him up in devout Christian faith. Chinnappan was an active member of the Catholic Action group and taught catechism to the children in the neighbouring villages. From this he got his religious vocation and joined the novitiate in Shembaganur in 1952. He worked in the Shembaganur bakery, in a farm in Kerala (1956-1963) with the celebrated Italian Jesuit missionary, Fr L.M. Zucol, and, then managed our farms in Palayamkottai, Trichy, Dindigul, Singarakottai, Perumalmalai, Oriyur, etc. He was known for his total dedication to his work. Paul Chinnappan's greatest work began when he was transferred to Carmel, Nagercoil. From 1999 to 2013 he worked on the cause of Martyr Devasagayam. Week after week, he would go on Fridays to Kathadimalai, the place where Devasagayam was martyred, and return to Carmel only on Sundays or Mondays. There he spent the time receiving the pilgrims, instructing them on Martyr Devasagayam and praying over them. He printed books and brochures on the Martyr and dispatched them all over the country. He also produced CDs, DVDs, etc. to promote the knowledge of and devotion to Martyr Devasagayam. Chinnappan did live to see Martyr Devasagayam beatified on 02 Dec 2012.

His Funeral Mass was on 15 May at Beschi Domestic Chapel.

- Maria Jeyaraj, SJ

VERUS PEREIRA, SJ (BOM) 1923 - 2014

Fr Verus Pereira died as he lived, totally in tune with what God wanted him to do. He was born on 23 Oct 1923, and joined the Society on 28 June 1943. He took his first vows on 28 June 1945 and from that moment on lived fully the life of a Jesuit.



Fr Verus had a childlike attitude. No matter what position he held and what responsibility he was given, this attitude remained with him throughout his life. It was manifested in the manner in which he trusted people and God. He did not have a single enemy. He never stopped working and this desire to do good was the result of his deep union with God.

He was appointed Assistant Parish Priest and Minister at St Peter's Parish, Bandra, served as the Rector and Parish Priest of St Michael's Church, Manickpur, (1966-72) St. Peter's (1972-74), Bhusawal (1974-78) and back to St. Peter's (1978-96).

He was transferred to the Shrine of the Infant Jesus in Nashik when he was 73 years of age and yet went with alacrity and determination because he believed that as long as he was given an opportunity to do God's work through reaching out to people, the place and kind of work did not matter.

In 2003 he was transferred to St. Peter's again where he took on the responsibility of Minister of the house and also Assistant Parish Priest. Though this was tiring it was what he wanted to do and which gave him great joy.

He was a Jesuit of unconditional and total obedience. No matter who the Superior or Provincial was, that Jesuit stood in the place of Christ. This quality was shown in his joyful response to any work or responsibility that was given to him. Ignatius expected obedience to be the hallmark of a Jesuit and in this regard, Fr Verus received full marks.

On 14 April Fr Verus spent close to four hours administering the Sacrament of Reconciliation. The next day he went back to his Father. He had been a Jesuit for 70 years and a Priest for 58 years.

- Errol Fernandes, SJ

Marks go up, standards come down

As we begin yet another academic year, this should be one of the concerns of every educator. Ever since marks secured at qualifying examinations were made the 'sole criterion' for admission to professional and higher education courses in the early 1990s, the pressure on students to obtain higher marks, by any means whatever, has increased enormously. As a result, students began choosing subjects and courses in which they were sure they could secure better marks. Other disciplines began losing students and faced the grim prospect of having to close down.

To ensure their own survival, the schools too began awarding higher marks to students to attract larger numbers. Today, even in subjects in which students rarely secured first class or distinction in the past teachers are giving over 90% marks to quite ordinary candidates. Thus, while the number of 'geniuses' securing over 90% marks in different subjects keeps rising year after year, we find that educational standards in our country keep falling even below those in many third world countries, as shown by reliable studies conducted by world bodies. This can also be verified by competent persons interviewing our exam toppers for job placements.

The indiscriminate inflation of marks and percentages by Departments and Boards of education, ultimately leads to their cheapening and devaluation, leading to frustration for the truly bright students and a fall in standards of both teaching and learning. Higher marks and percentages give false impressions of academic success to students, parents and the public. There is no longer any incentive to study hard, to teach really well and to go beyond the routine syllabus. Rote-learning merely to secure better marks gets precedence in all courses, while creative thinking and originality get stifled. The only way to remedy the situation is to broaden the criteria for selection of students wishing to pursue higher education and professional training. It is only when the system of evaluation is designed to measure more accurately intellectual prowess and all-round ability, that we can expect to see an improvement in our educational system.

- Joseph M. Dias, SJ
Andheri (E), Mumbai - 400 069

Gandhian Sarvodaya Patra

The Gandhian schools (especially the primary schools) have a practice of placing a vessel called 'Sarvodaya Patra' daily in the school prayer assembly, held daily before starting the classes. The pupils are asked to put some money or some grain . . . etc in the vessel. The purpose behind this practice is to teach the pupils to think of the neighbour (manavbandhu) and help her/him - to put it in the words of Fr Pedro Arrupe, of happy memory, to form the students into "men/women-for-others". This is a very practical method of inculcating in the pupils, the habit of thinking of the needy and helping them (even if in a modest

way). This could help in forming them as good and responsible citizens of the country. The inspiration behind this practice is, of course, Gandhiji whose sole purpose of establishing the educational institutions, was to form the future citizens of 'the India of his dreams'.

Here is something for us, Jesuits engaged in the educational apostolate, to learn and imitate if we want our educational apostolate to be productive, to contribute to the welfare of the nation and thus make our deprived brothers and sisters reap the fruit of true freedom.

- William Macwan, SJ
Vidyanagar, Gujarat - 380 001

The foundation is love

Permit me a few comments on the well-written cover feature in the April '14 issue: 'Our Values & Ways' by Joseph Pulickal, SJ. The foundation or basis is the *love* which the Holy Spirit imprints on our hearts. Love of God is an experience; it is poured into our hearts (Romans 5:5). This love flows into our hearts and overflows; the horizontal overflow is via a human conduit which is as creative and as powerful as the depth of the experience. It should not be tainted, cold or disordered. Love is fostered by prayer which strengthens this vertical relationship between God and man. Philosophers would say that action reveals the agent; if the agent has experienced this love of God then his actions or ways will be in accordance with this experience of love. That is our way of proceeding in conformity to our God experience.

- Ranjit Yawu, SJ
Sri Lanka

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Lessons for Life

I've learned from California

BY ARJEN TETE, SJ

Hospitality

When I landed in San Francisco and walked out of the airport, the Rector of the community received me with a smile and an American hug. Americans generally greet strangers with a smile. To the acquaintances, courteous words, like, "good to see you!" or a warm hug follow. One can really relish an engaged conversation and the joyous hospitality of the host when invited. But, if uninvited, one must not sneak into the party even when the host happens to be a friend or a neighbour.

Academic integrity

Honesty is the best policy in the American educational system. The policy is based on respect for oneself and others, and is part of the principles of the academic institutions. Any form of academic dishonesty, such as plagiarism, cheating, etc. is subject to stern academic and judicial action. Plagiarism isn't just for students. High profile politicians, writers, artists and educators are all scrutinized for plagiarism.

Enjoyable education

Learning and studying here are immensely enjoyable and creatively engaging. Free from parental pressure and the burden of "private tuition" the process of schooling itself adds greatly to the quality of life of young people, quite apart from the other benefits they receive from it. This is not the case with the average Indian schoolchild, who often studies in a drab or hostile environment, and is occasionally even exposed to physical punishment.

Knowledge alone is not enough

Indian children can fool themselves into believing that mere bookish knowledge is enough. Here an all round development is emphasized. Talents in sports, athletics, and fine arts are all valued, as they can lead to bright careers that mean a lot of money.

Responsibility and accountability

Americans work hard for the 'fun' they expect in life. One is ultimately responsible for one's own life. You can do what you want. Self-reliance is emphasized and expected. But it leaves very little place for interdependence, as self-reliance implies being alone. American individualism has forced me to take responsibility for my life here as a Jesuit scholar, although I am aware that individualism can bring isolation and self-absorption.

Strong work ethic

The Americans have a strong work ethic. They routinely plan their work days and work hard during the week but plan and enjoy

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their weekends. They reach their workplace punctually and work until the last minute of the working hour. They try to avoid being stressed and overtired. Their relaxation, during working hours, is intended for greater productivity at the resumption of the work.

Direct and honest

I have occasionally absorbed the shock of American bluntness. In general Americans prefer to be direct, honest, and open to tell the "truth." They discuss everything openly. Many in India would not speak out what is negative, but they would gripe and grumble behind one's back. Americans prefer to communicate their feedback, whether it is positive or negative.

Taking only one's share

Not everything in American life and culture is good and glorious. According to the American theologian, Sallie McFague, the current dominant American worldview is that they are individuals with the right to happiness, especially the happiness of the consumer-style "abundant-life." The market ideology has become their way of life, almost their religion, telling them who they are (consumers) and what the goal of life is (making money). If everyone follows this pattern of consumption, we will need several planets to survive. I am careful not to be swallowed up by this consumerist culture. I am instilling within me three house-rules: take only your share, clean up after serving yourself, and leave the house in good condition for others.

Robust but drunk

The Wall Street Bull (symbol of America's economy), at Manhattan, seems robust but drunk and stunted.

It cannot charge forward without wreaking havoc to itself and others. 2011 witnessed demonstrations called "Occupy Wall Street" raising issues of social and economic inequality, greed, corruption, and undue influence of corporates on the government. Capitalism does not seem to address some of our most pressing concerns - poverty, inequality, weapons, wars, ecology...

McDonaldization of cultures

The McDonaldization, which is basically homogenization of societies through the impact of multinational corporations along the principles of fast-food restaurants, seems to be invading large sectors of American society as well as the rest of the world. It tries hard to reduce the amazing diversity in cultures and erode what makes life worthwhile. No wonder, Indian spiritual capital enjoys a special place in the American quest for well-being, as evidenced by the popularity of Indian gurus, cuisine, yoga, and meditation.



Dear God,

*Bless me, heavenly Father,
forgive my erring ways.*

*Grant me strength to serve You,
put purpose in my days.*

*Give me understanding,
enough to make me kind.*

*So I may judge all people
with my heart, not my mind.*

*Teach me to be patient
in everything I do,*

*Content to trust Your wisdom
and to follow after You.*

*Help me when I falter
and hear me when I pray,*

*And receive me in Your kingdom
to dwell with You someday.*

Amen.

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

MOMENTS



*“Believe. No pessimist ever discovered the secrets of the stars,
or sailed to an uncharted island,
or opened a new heaven to the human spirit.”*

- Helen Keller

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