

JIVAN

News and Views of Jesuits in India

May-June 2017



The Spring Tide of Saffron Power

Jesuit student
at JNU

Church and
sexual abuse

Fr Joe Currie, SJ
Tribute

*The leaping lambs rejoice when spring appears
though snowdrifts linger in the winter hills;
the thought of falling leaves in Autumn chills
the green delight of summer woods. Long years
will dull the stars. Dark doubts and looming fears,
regrets and twilight whispers haunt our thrills
of rarest joy. Nor age nor sorrow stills
our yearning restlessness. No rapture nears
the clouds and peaks of God. Down strange byways
our hearts like children wander far. No lyre,
no lullaby can sooth a child astray
in shadows and mirage. Past mist and haze,
beyond each burning star, our wild desire
for Beauty's self serene in cloudless day.*

No Lasting City

BY JAMES SMYTH, SJ

Courtesy: www.messenger.ie



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As a service of information for the South Asian Jesuit Assistency, *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.

Isn't it always good to return to the place where you started from? So before writing this column in the last issue that I'd edit, I looked at the very first issue I edited, dated July 2000.

In his message to the readers about the change of editor, Fr Lisbert D'Souza, then POSA and so, the publisher of *Jivan*, wrote: "What will happen to *Jivan*? This was the question that agitated us when we received Fr Myron's decision to step down as *Jivan* Editor after more than ten years at the helm. The answer came almost as soon as the question: Fr Joe Antony. But it is one thing for a solution to occur to one, and quite another for the other to accept to be the solution. But Fr M.A. Joe Antony, SJ, Editor and Publisher of *The New Leader* graciously accepted my invitation. Great was my relief, and that of the Jesuit Major Superiors, that he did. It would have been intolerable to have anyone less competent and creative, for *Jivan* has now become prized reading for many Jesuits and others."

What did I say in my first editorial column in that issue? "They say we always remember our 'firsts' – our first day in the school, our first holy communion, the first day on the job etc. What will these be for Jesuits? The first Mass, the first sermon, the first retreat...I guess. Well, I remember the first editorial I wrote for *the New Leader* (I've now written 230 of them).

"This is the first for *Jivan*. I must confess I was reluctant to accept to be *Jivan's* editor. My hands were already full. ...What made me say yes to *Jivan* then? The great confidence that Fr Lisbert, Fr Francis P. Xavier, Provincial of Madurai, other Major Superiors and Fr Myron had in me did not let me disappoint them. Acknowledgement and appreciation from fellow Jesuits, rare as they are, work like an invigorating tonic, as you'd have learnt through experience. And, of course, the feeling that this would be a significant and direct contribution to the Assistency. And the unshakeable conviction that He is there, as always, to bless my efforts, however inadequate they may be."

That is what I had said at the beginning of this journey. As I stand at the finish line and look back, I can see that He has walked with me, the Blessed Mother has mothered me, and several Jesuits have helped me all these 17 years.

Starting from Fr Lisbert, all those who have been the POSA have supported,

appreciated and encouraged me. I must especially mention Fr Hector D'Souza and Fr Edward Mudavassery. My predecessor, the talented Fr Myron Pereira (BOM), identified me as one who could succeed him. Thank you, Myron. There was an enviable understanding and collaboration between the editorial office in Chennai and Anand Press, which did a marvellous job of printing and circulating *Jivan*. I gratefully remember Br Saul Abril and Fr Agnelo Vaz.

John Rose (BOM) and Victor Edwin (DEL) have been the most dynamic and helpful Correspondents, coming up with one excellent interview after another. Benedict Santosh persistently tried, for a while, to get our young Jesuits to write.

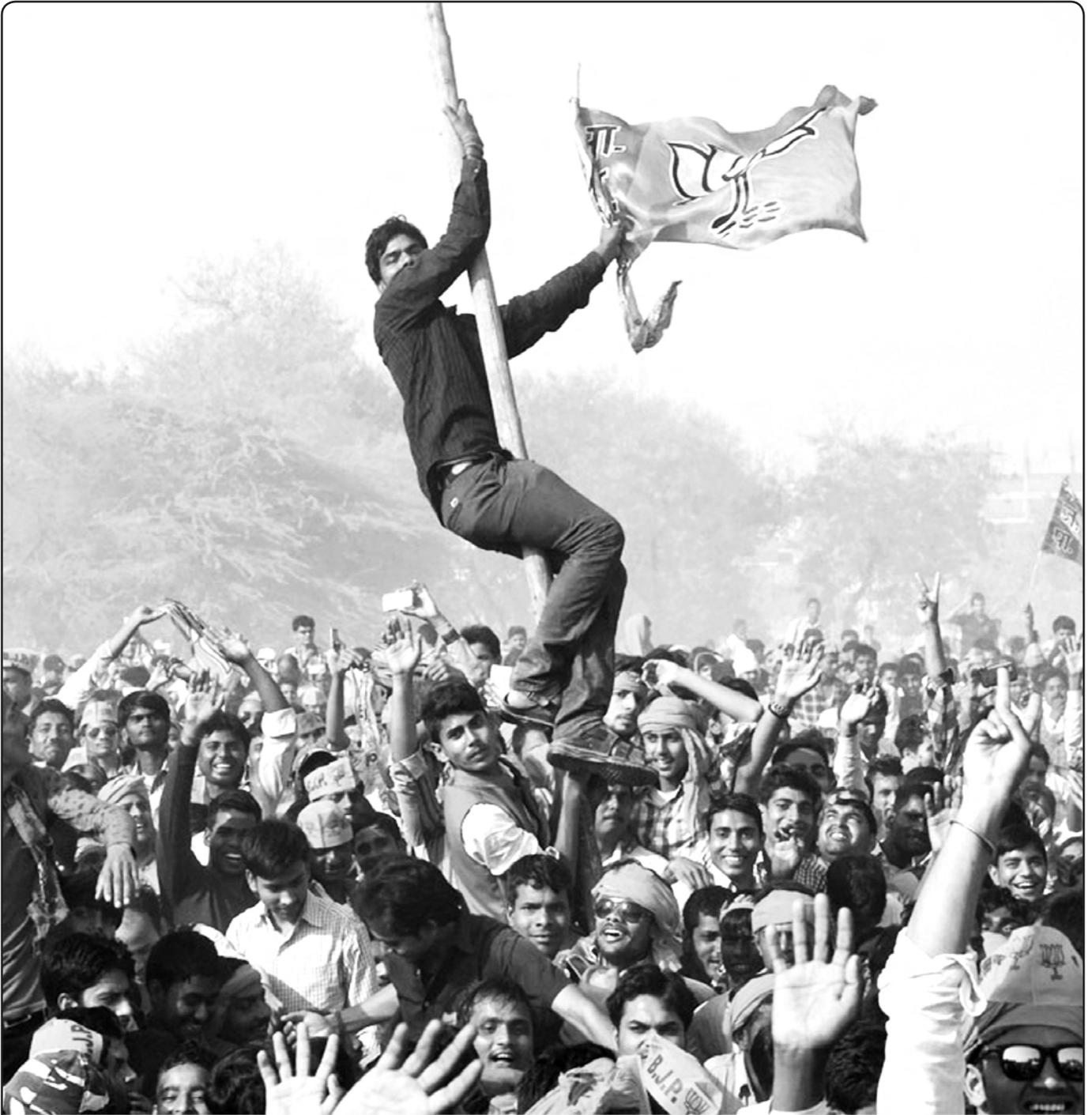
Among the members of the Advisory Board the most helpful were Frs Michael Amaladoss, Jerry Rosario and Rex Pai. Fr Amal was graciously ready to read and give his feedback anytime I sought his help. There were talented writers I could always rely on: Frs Hedwig Lewis, Francis Gonsalves, Cedric Prakash, Rappai Poothokaren, Rudi Heredia and Ms Astrid Lobo Gajiwala.

Among the regular, careful readers there were many who empowered me with their sincere appreciation: Frs Cedric Prakash, Peter Raj, Michael Alosanaya, Rex Pai, Jerry Rosario, Felix Joseph, Ranjith A...

My heart-felt thanks to every one of these wonderful people.

To whom am I handing over the baton? Myron was asked to identify a prospective successor. Nobody asked me to do so. Even if I had been, I wouldn't have been able to point to Fr Vinayak Jadav (GUJ), simply because he is not known as an editor or a writer in English. Nor has he written for *Jivan* all these years - except once. But from the brief interactions I have had with him now, he seems to be an excellent find: a wonderful person, a fine Jesuit and a great talent. Although he says he hasn't written much in English, he has done a lot in Gujarati, which he teaches at St Xavier's, Ahmedabad. He is the founder-publisher of the successful *Adilok* magazine in Gujarati. I was delighted to learn that he studied journalism exactly where I did - Marquette University, Milwaukee, U.S. So with Vinayak at the helm, there is a lot to hope for, a lot to look forward to.

May *Jivan* continue to flourish and may God bless us all! - M.A.J.A.



The Spring Tide of Saffron Power

BY RUDOLF C. HEREDIA, SJ

The national election for the Lok Sabha in April-May 2014 was a watershed in India's democratic polity. The Bihar legislative assembly elections might have presaged a new dawn with a united opposition. Now the UP election this year marks a quantum leap in the rising saffron tide. There is no credible national political party in the opposition, to oppose the severe suppression of dissent and escalating

of poverty and marginalisation, of inclusion and participation, of rights and freedoms are compromised in favour of the vested interests of the rich and powerful.

People of goodwill must urgently come together on the common ground of our basic humanity to affirm human rights and fundamental duties, and to stand by Gandhi's last and least Indian in our quest for a decent and just society. We must draw on the best in our Indic traditions to realise together the 'idea of India' so eloquently expressed in the Preamble of our Constitutions as a sovereign, socialist, secular and democratic

caste and religious communities. The consequent cascade of crises and disruptions leaves us with an unresolvable contradiction between the Constitutional idea of a republican India premised on liberal social democracy, and a Hindu Rastra premised on an aggressive Hindutva.

Electoral appeals on the basis of religion and caste or disaffection and hatred against another community is forbidden by law. Recently on 2 Jan 2017, a seven judge bench of the Supreme Court, recently clarified and reaffirmed the section 123 (3) of the People's Representation Act of 1951: no candidate or his agent can

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intolerance, leaving minorities and marginalised peoples insecure and fearful. This breeds a culture of terror, already spilling over into conflict and violence.

The New Context

Caste and ethnicity, religion and region have become fault-lines along which collective violence periodically rips apart the fabric of our society, leaving wounded people in broken communities, crying out for relief and justice that is too often delayed and even denied. The real issues

republic in our quest for justice as liberty, equality, fraternity.

Regrettably, over the years, the mainstream political parties and the successive governments they have formed have failed to effectively address the very real long-term challenges that still confront India. Lesser short-term goals and vested interests, poor governance and blotted bureaucracies have prevailed. 'Identity politics' has displaced 'interest politics'. Our political class, has polarised our society into regional and linguistic,

appeal for votes on the grounds of religion, race, caste, community or language. It went further: "Religion has no role in electoral process which is a secular activity... Mixing religion with State power is not permissible while freedom to practice profess and propagate religion of one's choice is guaranteed. The State, being secular in character, will not identify itself with any one of the religions or religious denominations."

The secular left now sees a connection between

“Saffronisation and Liberalisation.” The liberal right and “saffron neo-liberalism” (Telumbde 2014) make willing bedfellows. Some view our predicament as due to the “pragmatic communalism” of “pseudo secularists”, who

in a uniformised national identity, “imagined communities” (Anderson 1983) with the “invented traditions” (Hobshawn and Ranger 1983) based on selective memory. This has, by and large, been replicated by *New States in Old Societies* and in

cultural nationalism and chauvinist ‘majoritarianism’, is really such an attempt, precipitated by the failure of earlier governments to do what they were elected to do: protect and promote the constitutional rights of citizens, implement the Constitutional agenda on the integral development of society and the progress for all its citizens.

Nationalist movements have powered colonised peoples into independence. However, the postcolonial states, often sacrificed real freedom for their peoples for the supposed glory of the nation. In India, Gandhiji, was very wary lest the nationalist movement might merely succeed in getting *swatantra*, (independence), from the British for the political and other elites, and fail in achieving, *swaraj* (freedom), or rather *purna swaraj* (integral self-rule) for the Indian people, especially the last and least among them. His ‘Ramrajya’ was not just ‘freedom from’, but more so ‘freedom for’, fulfilling freely one’s duties - not merely affirming of one’s rights. This was not just an economic-political agenda, but a socio-cultural revolution. He saw no point in replacing white sahibs with brown ones. Today we find his fears were all too prescient as amply witnessed by our netas, our leaders.

The freedom struggle had constructed a new ‘idea of India’ as a multi-nation state in the making with multiple, fluid, porous, inclusive, personal and community identities. The Constitution spelt this out in in terms of statutory rights and liberties, and contextualised in the directive principles. The Gandhi-Nehru legacy was a consensus that interpreted these for both governance and civil society. Granville Austin, an early authority on the Indian Constitution, insisted that it “is first and foremost a social document. The majority of its provisions are either directly aimed at furthering the goals of the social revolution or attempt to foster this revolution by establishing the conditions necessary for its achievement.” (Austin 1966: 50)

In Gandhian terms this

All dissenters of whatever hue are targeted as ‘anti-nationals’, thus identifying the party with the government and the government with the nation.



have used the communal card to appease the minorities. Others explain it as the well-planned “programmatically communalism” of the Hindutvawadis, who manipulate religious sentiment and polarize religious communities. Modernists see this revival as a failure of rationality and a regress into a reactionary tradition; post-moderns blame the homogenising nationalist state (Gellner 1983) with its “technocratic mind sets” (Kothari 1988: 2227) for precipitating a communal reaction.

A Multi-nation State

In the West, where the idea of a nation-state originated, nation-building was premised on the imperative for political unity and brutal uniformity. As people constructed a common socio-cultural identity, they sought to give political and economic expression to it as a nation-state. Local languages and dialects, ethnicities and subcultures were all subsumed

The Quest for Modernity. (Geertz, ed. 1963)

Enforced uniformisation would hardly be possible in the Indian Subcontinent without a Balkanisation of the subcontinent. Differences of caste and class, religion and region, ethnicity and language are still deep and volatile, and could easily explode into violence, if exacerbated by forced repression rather than being contained and constrained by a consensual overarching unity embracing the bewildering diversity of India’s rich religious and cultural heritage. This was the dominant inspiration of our freedom struggle against the colonial Raj: to celebrate an inclusive political unity in our rich cultural diversity.

For the idea of India in our Constitution cannot be forced into a sectarian, communal interpretation without doing violence to its basic structure. Hindutva’s pursuit of Hindu Rastra, with its

meant going the distance from *swatantra* to *swaraj*. For Nehru the challenge was “Creating a just state by just means, ... creating a secular state in a religious country.” (Malraux 1968: 160).

We can be proud of our democracy which has shown enduring resilience in spite of the hiccups, like the Emergency of 1975-77. But this is as yet electoral democracy. A substantive democracy has still a long way to go to bring *purna swaraj* to the last Indian that Gandhi spoke of. However, today this idea of India is being contested as never before. The 2014 general election was an alarming warning of the real and present danger of our Republic being hijacked by an aggressive majoritarian nationalism. The UP election has emphatically

It went further to say: “Religion has no role in electoral process which is a secular activity...Mixing religion with State power is not permissible while freedom to practice profess and propagate religion of one’s choice is guaranteed. The State, being secular, in character will not identify itself with any one of the religions or religious denominations.”

The reality on the ground is so very different. In the meta-narrative of a “Hindu superpower”, Hinduva ideologues are now pushing an agenda for a Hindu Rastra. It finds its avatar in hyper-nationalism and those who have embraced the neo-liberal free-market state have jumped on the bandwagon. This privileges the urban neo-middle class but it will marginalise further

political agenda and bring justice to oppressed victims. They are better able to deliver on this than our politically weak-willed governments, whose first priority is getting re-elected. But winning an election is not the same as running a government.

A government cannot be run on promises to a people, which political parties make to the electorate during election campaigns. To be credible it must begin to deliver and to stay relevant it cannot default on this. And there’s the rub! Nor can good governance be premised on a sectarian nationalism in a multicultural, multilingual, pluri-religious country as diverse as India. Gandhi and Tagore rejected a narrow aggressive nationalism, for a broad inclusive patriotism: “In this ideology of patriotism rather



If the poor and marginalised have much to fear from this Gujarat model of development projected to the national scene, minorities have much to dread.

confirmed it.

Hindu Nationalism

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the poor and the minorities, who are then asked to make a sacrifice for the ‘nation’! Here the perceptive comment of Samuel Johnson is pertinent. “Patriotism is the last refuge of scoundrels,” he said.

In a globalising world the free-market eventually compromises even the sovereignty of the state in favour of multinational corporations and multilateral institutions. Only an empowered civil society and alert human rights activists can monitor the

than of nationalism, there was a built-in critique of nationalism and refusal to recognize the nation-state as the organizing principle of the Indian civilization and as the last word in the country’s political life.” (Nandy 1994:2)

The Gujarat Model

Hindu pride strikes a chord with the neo-middle class Hindus, looking for their place in the new emerging social order. These are readily co-opted to aspire to the free

market neoliberal Gujarat model and its supposed promise of rapid progress and higher standards of living. Corporate business use the media they control to promote this unashamedly and personalise their appeal in the promises of an authoritarian leader who would get things done and brooks no opposition. The Gujarat model already presaged huge advantages for them, with a supposedly 'vibrant Gujarat'. Little wonder that business leaders were the first to promote Modi as the PM needed for India - saying that he

gross inequalities between the haves and the have-nots make for long term instability, which will - sooner rather than later - betray the aspirations of the very classes that initially may have benefitted from it. But the obvious question is: what kind of development and for whom?

The parameters of this Gujarat model of development have not been elaborated. Nor has its performance been subject to critical public scrutiny. But the results speak louder than rhetoric. A critique exposes the Gujarat

high-performing states in the country. There is sure fire evidence of uneven growth and skewed development. Thus with regard to capital inflows from abroad, "Gujarat's share in the cumulative FDI inflows into India since 2000 is only 4%, which is exceeded or matched by many states (Maharashtra 31%, Delhi 19%, Karnataka 6%, Tamil Nadu 6%, Andhra Pradesh 4%)." (Ghatak 2014: 39)

The eventual failure of this neo-con developmental model will compel the BJP to return to the identity politics



Will the saffron sweep at the hustings in UP begin a 'dance of death' for the 'idea of India' envisioned in our Constitutions?

could then do for the entire country what he had begun in Gujarat.

In the aftermath of the post-Godra carnage with the strident new polarising politics, the Gujarat model is being replicated across the country. 'Growth with equity' is not its a priority. Caught between the rich who profit most from the economic growth, and the poor who benefit from the welfare measures, this free-market model of Capitalist development may well benefit the neo-middle class in the short-term. But the huge costs it inflicts on the environment and the poor, the

model as more myth than reality, more propaganda than performance, more top-down implementation than down-up consensus, based on a trickle down economic theory, rejected by sensible economists like Amartya Sen and good pastors like Pope Francis. An IMF report on the "Causes and Consequences of Income Inequality" has rejected trickle-down theory, and the World Bank's President, Jim Yong Kim, now speaks of "shared prosperity".

The official statistics for growth and the HRD figures for Gujarat do not compare favourably at all with other

and polarise the electorate to enthuse their cadres and mobilise party support before it begins to fatally haemorrhage. We have seen this strategy before: polarising communities to mobilise them, using the politics of difference, even the politics of hate to consolidate support. Already with the UPA "the growth process is so biased, making the country look more and more like islands of California in a sea of sub-Saharan Africa." (Dreze and Sen 2013: ix)

Now with growth being so uncritically and exclusively privileged,

such contradictions are likely to increase by leaps and bounds. Indeed, 'economic growth can certainly help to improve people's lives (not only by raising per capita income but also by generating public revenue that can be used for purposes of social advancement of the people) ... a deeper analysis of the relation between economic growth and social progress is seriously overdue in India.' (Dreze and Sen 2013: ix)

A rising tide of growth may lift all boats, but does not bring a more equitable relationship between big and small ones, and those with none are drowned.

The Dance of Democracy

However, the socio-economic inequalities created by the neo-liberal development model of growth without equity precipitates dangerous tensions and political unrest; unequal distribution further stymies growth. As the model begins to unravel, democratic institutions and procedures become the first casualty of an authoritarian response. This has happened elsewhere before. It happened here with the Emergency of 1975-77. And then as now, the biggest losers are the weakest in society, the poor and the minorities on whom the greatest burden is inflicted.

If the poor and marginalised have much to fear from this Gujarat model of development projected to the national scene, minorities have much to dread with the Gujarat model of communal polarisation re-enacted on the national stage. Now the saffron agenda is married to the neoliberal and this 'odd couple' legitimised with the grab-all shibboleth of "nationalism".

All dissenters of whatever hue are targeted as 'anti-nationals', thus identifying the party with the government and the government with the nation.

This subverts any substantive democratic politics, which get hijacked by a corrosive identity politics of hate for short-term electoral returns. This is surely a gross perversion of the democratic republic envisaged in the Constitution. Ambedkar repeatedly cautioned against this.

There is an inherent contradiction between the exclusive particularism of Hindutva, and the expansive pluralism of Hinduism. Sooner rather than later this must unravel. There will be many other anomalies and contradictions and blaming all uncomfortable difficulties as inherited from an earlier mismanagement will soon begin to wear thin. Our present predicament is one of "intense politicisation and fierce contests for power together with violence, fragmentation and chaos, and a concomitant longing for authoritarian control." (Mishra 2014) Delivering on the BJP campaign promises, "*ache din aane wale hain*" (Good times are coming!) will demand a very strong Prime Minister who will have to be projected as increasingly larger than life, who gets things done, and not sensitive and concerned with the rights of the minorities and the marginalised. This is where a majoritarian government tips over into an authoritarian one. And it is happening already!

Even as we celebrate the 'dance of democracy' with each major election of our Republic, we cannot be unaware that the very idea of India as envisioned by our Constitution is now under stress, and we must draw on the historical roots of our tradition of public reasoning to rescue our democracy (Sen 2005). For the only remedy for a failing democracy is more effective democracy, and for a multicultural, multilingual, pluri-religious civilisation like ours, there can be no other route to fulfilling our 'tryst with destiny' than in an egalitarian, pluralist, secular, democratic state. The challenge now is to fight for the social revolution envisaged by our Constitutions.

We now seem to be at the cross roads once again. We have been there before in 1975-77. The slogan then was 'India is Indira and Indira is India'. Now it seems to be Modi is the new India and the new India is Modi. What we now have is developing into an undeclared emergency. Will the saffron sweep at the hustings in UP begin a 'dance of death' for the 'idea of India' envisioned in our Constitutions as a socialist, secular democracy? The jury is still out on this.

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Seminar at JDV on Ethics of Child Protection

The Center for Pastoral Management at Jnana Deepa Vidyapeeth (JDV), Pune organized a five-day seminar on the 'Ethics of Child Protection' at the Post Graduate Block of JDV. The seminar was on 27-31 March '17 and was attended by 40 participants. The participants were Jesuits and non-Jesuits - laity, clergy, and religious, men and women. They came from Hazaribagh, Ranchi, Maharashtra, Goa, Kerala,



and Karnataka. There were teachers, formators, lawyers and social workers in the group. The topics in the seminar touched on the sociological, affective and psychological dimensions of abuse in general and child abuse in particular. Civil and canon law, and moral theology aspects were also discussed.

A procedure for setting up an internal grievance cell was also discussed. Sessions, handled by experts, were highly interactive, as the participants were motivated to learn more about the issue. The participants who registered early, were given access to the online course being conducted jointly by the Center for Pastoral Management (CPM), JDV and the Center for Child Protection at the Gregorian University (PUG), Rome. On completion of the online component, the student will get a joint JDV-PUG certificate. The seminar ended with the participants expressing appreciation for all that they learnt through this seminar on a sensitive issue.

- Konrad Noronha, SJ

DNC, Pune builds Tribal unity

De Nobile College, Pune, is well known for its efforts in building up unity among the different tribal groups like Oraons, Mundas, kharias, Hos and Santals through the ministry being carried out by the Chottanagpur Cultural Association. DNC reaches out to these tribal groups by organising different mega events. At the outset of the new academic year the tribal festival of Karam, popular in the central region, was celebrated with great joy and vigour. The other uniting factors are hockey matches, pre-Christmas and Christmas celebrations and Baha Porob or Sorhae (Festival of Flowers). All these festivals are celebrated within the DNC campus.

Catering to the spiritual, social and emotional needs of the tribal people throughout the year adds to the meaning of those celebrations and helps in uniting the tribals to work for a better life and to retain their rich cultural heritage. Fr Edward Mudavassery, SJ, Rector, DNC was one of the many speakers at these celebrations. He pointed out the three fundamental points of tribal life - social, cultural and political. His words made the tribal elites realize how they could make use of their resources to help the tribal people, especially in villages, improve their lives. The talks and the celebrations reminded the participants that it was the richness of their culture that gives them the very identity of being tribals. This is endangered right now due to various social, political reasons. Hence promotion of tribal culture among the younger generation is what is required. The present political scenario in the tribal states is in a pretty bad condition, causing pain and suffering to many. The tribals should together face and fight these forces.

This year too the Sorhaek, festival of the Santal tribals, witnessed a crowd of more than 300 people at DNC. This auspicious occasion was marked by vibrant and colourful cultural programs and competitions. Fr Thomas Kattathara, SJ, the animator of Santal ministry, guided all who helped in making the day a grand success.

- Sudhir Ekka, SJ

REVISED SUBSCRIPTION RATES FOR JIVAN

JCSA has decided to revise the subscription rates of Jivan from June, 2016.

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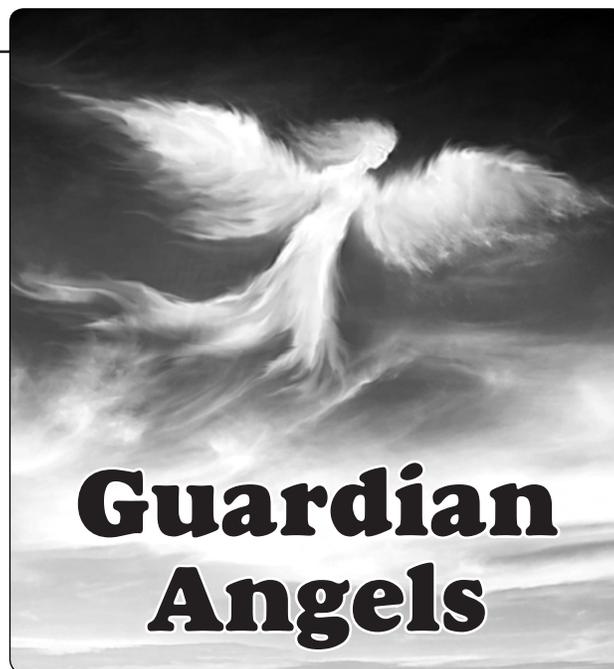
BY NOEL OLIVER, SJ

Is there one small thing that happened that has made a real change in your life?" There is something that did happen to me, which seemed very small then. But I have very belatedly realized that this small incident, just 3 minutes long, has been something that has really changed my life. Now I realise that it is actually one of the most important things that have happened to me in my life!

I must have been a young lad of about 8 or 9 years of age then. Once I was returning home all alone. As I was going home from my school, St. Vincent's, Pune, I passed through St. Xavier's Church. We normally went by the left side and would come out just in front of the Cantonment market. That was in the late forties when Pune was not as big, crowded and messy that it seems to be now.

When I reached the left wing of the church (built in the shape of a cross) there was a man standing at the foot of the steps. There were about 8 steps to the entrance of the church. As I was passing him by, he just held my hand and took me up to the last step up near the entrance and made me sit down. I was too naive to know what this was all about. But, before he could say anything to me or do anything to me, another man appeared at the foot of the steps. He looked up and with a fierce look on his face shouted: "Hey you there, let that child go!" He then waited at the foot of the steps till I came down and went home. All this happened in about just 3 minutes.

I never forgot this incident but never gave it much importance either. In the last few years we have started hearing about many child abuse cases. We have heard about how this has affected so many who are forced to live the horrible consequences all through their lives. Only now I realize that this man at the foot of the steps was actually my guardian angel in a very real sense. I just cannot imagine what could have happened if he had not turned up. Maybe I would have been abused that day and then again and again. Today I could have become a miserable person, paying the price for the abuse. Maybe my school life would have suffered and I



Guardian Angels

would then have become one who later harmed others. All it had taken was 3 minutes or so for my guardian angel to look up and shout: "Hey you there, let that child go!" He then waited a short time till I went free.

That guardian angel of mine will either be a very old man now or he will be up there in heaven waiting to embrace me. I will say to him something that I should have said long ago: "Thank you so very much. What you have done for me with those 3 minutes of your life, was to

set me free!"

It is now over 56 years since I joined the Jesuits. Over the years I have been involved in a wide variety of activities not only in India but also in Cambodia, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka and Timor Leste and am now back in Cambodia. I am truly grateful for the companionship and support of the Jesuits and other friends. Without all this support I doubt that I could have achieved even one tenth of what I think has been achieved.

In order to support and give life to the various initiatives, I have had the positive support of our Mission Offices in Germany and Switzerland and later on friends from other countries as well. It is with the help of many individuals, big and small, that the Mission Offices have been able to support not only me but many others in different missions around the world. I have actually been supported from way back the 70's. For all of this I am ever grateful.

I know that many of those who contribute generously for our works are simple people. They could have actually used what they have contributed for our work, to better their own lives a bit more. But they thought of us!

I believe that these friends and supporters who have generously contributed to my mission are all guardian angels. What they have done for me and for all whom we have worked for is immeasurable. I am always grateful and pray for them. I thank God who has sent these guardian angels of the poor we serve. May God bless them abundantly. ■

Br Noel Oliver, SJ (PUN) is a veteran missionary, who has worked for the poor and refugees in Cambodia, Thailand, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka and East Timor. Now he is back again in Cambodia.



Assistancy Appointments

JDV, Pune:

Sch. Sandeep Jagpat SJ (PUN) - Assigned for Common House, Faculty of Philosophy.

Sch. Ryan Rodrigues SJ (KAR) - Assigned for Common House, Faculty of Philosophy.

Fr Jayaraju Ghattamaneni SJ (AND) - Assigned for Common House, Faculty of Theology.

DNC, Pune:

Fr Paul Raj M. SJ (KHM) - Sp. Dir. for DNC, wef 15th May, 2017.

Fr George Beck SJ (DUM) - Sp. Dir. for DNC, wef 1st June, 2017.

Vidyajyoti, Pune:

Fr Ceasar D'Cunha SJ (GUJ) - Sp. Dir. for VJ, wef 1st July, 2017.

Sch. Midun F. Kochukallan SJ (KER) - Assigned for Islamic Studies for Assistancy Common Works.

Fr Vinay Kumar Ekka SJ (MAP) - Assigned for Common House, Faculty of Theology.

Fr P.R. John SJ (AND) - Acting Principal of VJ wef 10th April, 2017.

Arul Kadal (RTC Madurai):

Fr Sahayaraj J. Stanley SJ (MDU) - Apt as Director of Studies at Arul Kadal – Chennai.

Satya Nilayam, Chennai:

Fr Medard Xalxo SJ (RAN) - Sp. Dir. for SN, wef 15th May, 2017.

Raia Tertianship (Goa)

Fr Manickam Irudayaraj SJ (GUJ) - Apt on 23rd Mar, 2017, as co-instructor of Tertianship at Raia – Goa.

Assistancy Secretaries:

Fr Ranjeet Kindo SJ (JAM) - Assistancy Sec. JEMAI, wef 27th March, replacing Fr Alex Ekka(RAN).

Assistancy Committees:

Renewal for Greater Apostolic Effectiveness (REGAE) Core Group Phase II:

Fr Franco Fernando SJ (GUJ) – Co-ordinator, Fr R.C. Chacko SJ (HAZ), Fr Joseph A. D'Mello SJ (KAR), Fr Francis Minj SJ (RAN), Fr JeyarajVeluswamy SJ (CCU).

Committee for updating the JCSA Statues:

Fr Sebastia L. Raj SJ (MDU) – Co-ordinator, Fr Francis Parmar SJ (GUJ), Fr Rosario Rocha SJ GOA), Fr Xavier Soreng SJ (RAN), Fr Joy Kariampuram SJ (PAT).

Fr Vinayak Jadav SJ (GUJ) - Appointed as the new Editor of *Jivan* w.e.f 1st July, 2017.



PWPN & CYM:

Fr JagdishParmar SJ (DAR) - Assistancy Co-ordinator for Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network (PWPN)&Eucharistic Youth Movement (EYM).

Non-Jesuit houses:

Fr Anthony (Tony) Andrade SJ (DEL) – Assigned to Diocese of Port Blair for spiritual ministry.

Appointments outside South Asia:

Fr Syriac Panjikanan SJ (KER) - to Timor Leste (JCAP)
Sch. Pradeep R.S. SJ (KAR) - to Timor Leste (JCAP)
for Regency – Jesuit High School, Colegio Santo Ignacio de Loiola.

Sch. Kadavil Puthanveed Saji Geroage SJ (AND) – to Timor Leste (JCAP for Regency.

Fr Stephen Selvanathan SJ (MDU) - Assigned to Guyana Mission for 3 years wef 1st June, 2017.

Gratitude to those who served in the Common Houses and works of SA. :

Fr Jerome Kerketta SJ (JAM) - Discontinued Doctoral Studies, Returned to his province (Mar 2017)

Fr Valentine Ekka SJ (MAP) - Returning to his province after teaching at SN.

Fr Joseph V.S. George SJ (AND) - Returning to his province after teaching at SN.

Fr Joseph Njarakulam SJ (JAM) - Returning to his province after 11 years in two tertianships.

Fr Alex Ekka (RAN) - Outgoing JEMAI Sec.

Fr Maria Arul Raj A. SJ (MDU) - Outgoing Director of Studies at Arul Kadal, Chennai.

Fr M.A. Joe Antony, SJ (MDU) - Outgoing Editor of *Jivan*.

- Fr George Pattery, SJ, POSA

“Not the bishops and priests, the true heroes of the Church are the saints”

BY ANTONIO CAÑO & PABLO ORDAZ

Here are excerpts from an interview Pope Francis gave to El Pais, a Spanish newspaper, in January this year.

Your Holiness, after nearly four years in the Vatican, what is left of the street priest that came from Buenos Aires to Rome with the return ticket in his pocket?

He is still a street priest. Because, as soon as I can, I still go out on the streets to greet people at the general audiences, or when I am traveling... my character has not changed. I'm not saying that is a deliberate thing: it has been a natural process. It is not true that you have to change once you get here. To change is unnatural. To change at 76 is tantamount to putting on makeup. Perhaps I cannot do everything I want, but my street soul is alive, and you can see it.

In the last days of his papacy, Benedict XVI said about his last years at the helm of the Catholic Church: “There was a storm and God seemed to be asleep”. Have you felt that loneliness too? Was the Church hierarchy asleep with regard to people’s problems, both new and old?

Within the Church hierarchy, or among the Catholic Church’s pastoral agents (bishops, priests, nuns, laymen), I am more afraid of those who are anesthetized than of those who are asleep. I am talking about those who are anesthetized by worldly affairs. They sell out to worldliness. That is what worries me. ... An anesthetized person is not in touch with people. He protects himself against reality. He is anesthetized. Nowadays there are so many ways of anesthetizing oneself against daily life, aren’t there? Maybe the most dangerous illness for a pastor is the one produced by anesthetics, and that is clericalism. I am over here and the people are over there. But you are those people’s pastor! If you don’t take care of those people, if you give up on taking care of those people, then you should pack your bags and retire.



Is there a part of the Catholic Church that is anesthetized?

It is a risk that we all run. It is a danger, it is seriously tempting. Being anesthetized is easier.

The troubles that Benedict XVI faced towards the end of his papacy, and which were contained inside that white box that he gave you in Castel Gandolfo, what are they?

A very normal sample of daily life within the Church: saints and sinners, honest people and crooked people. Everything was in there! There were people who had been questioned and were clean, there were workers... Because here, inside the Curia, there are some true saints. I like to say it. We talk too easily about the level of corruption in the Curia. And there are corrupt people. But there are also many saints. Men who have spent all their lives serving people anonymously, behind a desk, or in conversation, or in a study... So we have saints and sinners here. That day, what struck me the most was holy Benedict’s memory. He said: “Look, here are the records of the proceedings, inside the box”. “And here is the sentencing of all the individuals. So-and-so, he got that much.” He remembered everything! What an extraordinary memory! And he still retains it.

Does he feel all right, health-wise?

His head is fine. His problem is the legs. He needs help to walk. He has an elephant’s memory, even in nuances. I may say something

and he goes: “No, it wasn’t that year, it was that other year.”

What are your main concerns with regard to the Church and the world in general?

With regard to the Church, I would say that I hope that it never stops being close to people. A Church that is not close to people is not a Church. It’s a good NGO. Or a pious organization made up of good people who meet for tea and charity work... The hallmark of the Church is its proximity. We are all the Church. Therefore, the problem we should avoid is breaking that closeness. Being close is touching, touching Christ in the flesh and blood through your neighbor. When Jesus tells us how are we going to be judged, in Matthew chapter 25, he always talks about reaching out to your neighbor: ‘I was hungry, I was in prison, I was sick..’ Always being close to the needs of your neighbour. Which is not merely charity. It is much more.

As for what worries me about the world, it is war. We already have a World War III in little bits and pieces. Lately there is talk of a possible nuclear war, as though it were a card game: they are playing cards. That is my biggest concern. I am worried about the economic inequalities in the world: the fact that a small group of humans has over 80% of the world’s wealth, with all its implications for the liquid economy, which at its center has money as a god, instead of men and women. Hence the throwaway culture.

For the most traditionalist sectors, any change, even if it is only a change in language, amounts to treachery. At the other end of the spectrum, even for those who will never embrace the Catholic faith, no change is ever enough. You yourself have said that everything has already been written in the essence of Christianity. Are we then talking about a revolution of normalcy?

I always try —I don’t know if I always succeed— to do what the Gospel

says. That is what I try. I am a sinner and not always successful, but that is what I try. The history of the Church has not been driven by theologians, or priests, or nuns, or bishops... Maybe in part, but the true heroes of the Church are the saints. That is, those men and women who devoted their lives to making the Gospel a reality. The saints are the ones who saved us. We sometimes think that a saint is a nun that looks up to the heavens and rolls her eyes. The saints are the specific examples of the Gospel in daily life! And the theology that you learn from a saint’s life is immense. There is no doubt that the theologians and the pastors are necessary. They are part of the Church. But we must come back to the Gospel. And who are the best messengers of the Gospel? The saints. You used the word “revolution”. That is a revolution! I am not a saint. I am not making any revolution. I am just trying to push the Gospel forward. In an imperfect way, because I make my blunders from time to time.

Don’t you think that many Catholics may feel something like the syndrome of the prodigal son’s sibling, and may think that you are more focused on those who left than on those who remained and obeyed the Church’s commandments? I remember that in one of your trips, a German journalist asked you why you never talk about the middle class, about those who pay their taxes...

There are two questions in there. The syndrome of the eldest son: I know that those who feel comfortable within a Church structure that doesn’t ask too much of them, or who have attitudes that protect them from too much outside contact, are going to feel uneasy with any change, with any proposal coming from the Gospel. I like to think about the owner of the hotel where the Samaritan took the man who was beaten and robbed by thieves along the way. The owner knew the story, the Samaritan had told him: a priest had passed by, he looked at the time, saw that he was late for temple and left the

man there, he didn’t want to get blood-stained because that would prevent him from celebrating liturgy according to the law. A lawyer passed by, he looked and said: “I better not get involved, it will make me late, tomorrow in court I will have to testify and... No, it’s better not to get involved.” As if he had been born in Buenos Aires, he turned his back using that city’s slogan: “Better not get involved”. And then along came a man who was not Jewish, he was a pagan, he was a sinner, he was deemed the scum of the earth, yet he was moved by the hurt man’s plight and he helped him get up. The astonishment of the inn’s owner must have been tremendous, because it was so unusual.

The novelty of the Gospel is astonishing because it is essentially scandalous. St Paul tells us about the scandal of the cross, the scandal of the Son of God becoming man. So the eldest son syndrome is the syndrome of anyone who is too settled within the Church, the one who has clear ideas about everything, who knows what must be done and doesn’t want to listen to sermons that sound new and strange. That is the explanation for our martyrs: they gave their lives for preaching something that was upsetting.

That is your first question. As for the second one about the middle classes, I didn’t want to answer the German journalist right away, but I told him: I am going to think about it, you may be somewhat right... I am always talking about the middle class, even without mentioning it. I use a term coined by the French novelist Malègue, who talks about “the middle class of sanctity.” I am always talking about parents, grandparents, nurses, the people who live to serve others, who raise their kids, who go to work... Those people are tremendously saintly! And they are also the ones who carry the Church forward: the ones who earn their living with dignity, who raise their children, who bury their dead, who care for their elders instead of putting them into an old people’s home: that is our saintly middle class.

From an economic point of view, these days the middle class increasingly tends to vanish, and there is the risk that we will take shelter in our ideological caves. But this “middle class of sanctity”: the father, the mother who celebrate and cherish their family, with their sins and their virtues, the grandfather, the grandmother, with the family at the center, that is “the middle class of sanctity”. That was a great insight on the part of Malègue, who writes a sentence that is really impressive. In one of his novels, *Augustine*, an atheist asks him: “But do you believe that Jesus Christ is God? Do you think that the Nazarene is God?” “For me, it is not a problem”, is the protagonist’s answer, “the problem would have been if God hadn’t become the Christ”. That is “the middle class of sanctity”.

Your Holiness, you have mentioned the ideological caves. What do you mean by that? What are your concerns in this regard?

It is not a concern. I am stating the facts. One is always more at ease in the ideological system that he has built for himself, because it is abstract. You may always take refuge in that. They are shelters that prevent you from connecting with reality.

Holy Father, over the course of these years, during your trips, we have seen you get moved by others and in turn you have moved many who listened to you... There are three very special occasions: once in Lampedusa, when you asked whether we had cried with the women who lost their children to the sea; in Sardinia, when you spoke about unemployment and the victims of the global financial system; in the Philippines, over the tragedy of the exploited children. What can the Church do about it, what is being done, and what are governments doing?

The symbol I proposed for the new Migrations office in the new structure is an orange life jacket. I have taken over the department of Migrations and

Refugees, with two secretaries. During a general audience, there was a group of people working to rescue refugees in the Mediterranean. I was passing through, greeting people, and a man had one of those things in his hands and he started to cry on my shoulder, and he sobbed: “I wasn’t able to do it, I didn’t get to her in time, I wasn’t able to do it!” And when he calmed down a little he told me: “She

room, they welcomed an immigrant family... The answer is that we have done more than you know, because we haven’t advertised it. The Vatican has two parishes and each parish has an immigrant family. An apartment at the Vatican for one family, another for the other one. The response has been constant. Not a 100% response, I don’t know the proportion, I think maybe 50%.



The history of the Church has not been driven by theologians, or priests, or nuns, or bishops... Maybe in part, but the true heroes of the Church are the saints.

wasn’t more than four years old. And she drowned. I am giving this to you.” He gave me a life jacket, which is a symbol of the tragedy that we are living.

Do you feel that the way you reach out to the margins, to those who suffer and are lost, is a welcome attitude, considering it is accompanied by a machine that is perhaps used to a very different pace? Do you feel that you and the Church go at a different pace? Do you feel supported?

I think that, fortunately, the responses are generally good, very good. When I asked the parishes and the schools in Rome to take in immigrants, many said that they didn’t. It is not true! It was not a failure at all! A high percentage of Rome’s parishes didn’t have a big house, or what they had was a very small place. So what they did was they had their parishioners rent an apartment for an immigrant family. In convent schools, whenever there was

Then there is the problem of integration. Each immigrant comes with very serious problems. They are fleeing their country, because of hunger or because of the war. They are exploited. Take Africa: Africa is the symbol of exploitation. Even when given their independence, in some countries, they are the owners of their land on the surface, but not underground. So they are always used and abused...

The migrant reception policy has several phases. There is an emergency phase: you have to welcome them, because otherwise they will drown. Italy and Greece have led by example. Even now, Italy, with all the problems caused by the earthquake, still provides care. They come to Italy because it is the nearest shore, of course. I think they also get to Spain through Ceuta. But rather than staying in Spain, most of them tend to go north in search of better opportunities. ■

Courtesy: <http://elpais.com>

A small, kind gesture

BY ARBIND EKKA, SJ

Rahul was from a well-to-do family. Always very kind and gentle, he was willing to help anyone at any time. One day, when he was in high school, he saw a boy named Raja, who looked very tired and sad all the time. Raja was carrying a heavy load on his back. It appeared as if he was carrying all his books in a bundle. Rahul said to himself, 'Why would anyone bring home all his books on a Friday? Do his parents compel him to do this? He must be really tired.' He wanted to do something to help the exhausted boy. But his weekend plan would not allow him to do so.

As he was walking, he saw a bunch of kids running towards Raja. They ran up to him, snatched his bundle and threw all his books on the road. They knocked him down in the dirt. His glasses went flying in the air and Rahul saw them landing on the field about ten feet away from him.

Raja looked up with his helpless eyes and Rahul saw an unspeakable sadness in his eyes, which pierced his heart. So he ran towards him to give him a helping hand. Raja was crawling around and looking for his glasses. Tears were rolling down from his cheeks. As Rahul picked up his glasses and handed them to him, he said, "Those guys are really rude. They should care for others." As soon as Raja heard

these consoling words, he looked at Rahul and said, "Thanks a lot." His sadness turned into joy. There was a big smile on his face that showed how grateful he was.

Rahul helped him to pick up his books, and asked him where he lived. He was surprised to know that Raja lived near his house. He was curious to know more about Raja. So he asked him why they had never met before. Raja said that he had been attending a private school earlier. It seemed to Rahul that he was not happy with his school. He wanted to know more about Raja but he did not know why he was so keen. Rahul and Raja walked all the way home together and Rahul helped him to carry his heavy bundle of books.

In spite of his burdensome life, Raja appeared to be a very cool kid. Rahul asked Raja if he wanted to play football on Saturdays with him and with his friends. He accepted the proposal willingly. They began to spend the weekends together. Rahul got to know Raja more. The more he interacted with him the more he liked him. His friends too thought the same of Raja.

One Monday morning Raja came to Rahul with his huge bundle of books. Rahul stopped him and said, "Boy, you are building strong muscles, carrying this pile of books every day." Raja just laughed and handed him half of the books. Their friendship became stronger and they began to like each other's company. Over the next four years Raja and

Rahul became best friends. These four years passed like four days. They enjoyed each other's company and gathered lots of joyful memories in their lives.

When they grew up they began to think about their college studies. Raja decided to go abroad for his further studies and Rahul preferred to do his further studies in India itself. They knew that they would always be friends and that the distance would never be a problem. Raja would become a scientist and Rahul would become a doctor. Raja was an excellent student. Rahul and all his friends called him "Walking Encyclopedia." He was selected as the Valedictorian on Graduation Day. Rahul was so glad to know this.

On the Graduation Day Rahul felt proud of Raja on account of his achievement. Rahul could see that Raja was nervous about his speech. So he encouraged him and said, "Hey, Raja, don't worry. I know you will do well." Raja looked at him with gratitude and smiled. "Thanks," he said.

Raja began his speech after clearing his throat. "Graduation Day is the time to thank all those who helped you to make it through these tough years - your parents, your teachers and your siblings who have played a significant role in your life. However, of all people your friends will be special. They have been the greatest support in your life here. Let me tell you that being a friend to someone is the best you can ever give him.

“Let me narrate my own experience. It may sound like a fictional story, but it is my own experience. It was supposed to be the last day of my life. I had decided to commit suicide. I was so worried and fed up with my life.

“He saved my life. His consoling presence in my life transformed it. It started with a kind gesture of picking up my glasses and books, when I lay down, knocked down by a group of uncaring boys. From then when everyone snubbed me as

Raja. Rahul saw Raja’s Mom and Dad looking at him and smiling the same grateful smile.

Raja said, “ May I invite Rahul to conclude this valedictory address.” Rahul never expected this, but he saw everyone looking at him and



“Being a friend to someone is the best you can ever give him”

I faced immense pressure from the school and my Parents to become a successful person. I do not say it was wrong but no one understood me. I too needed some time to play, some time to laugh and some time to sing a song of joy with my friends.

“I was forced to live a structured life from which I thought I will never be able to get out. I was fully convinced of my decision to end my life. Then all of a sudden my life changed. Flowers began to bloom in my life. I began to live once again. I began to laugh, play and sing the songs of joy. All this happened when I met my friend, Rahul.

a loser, he motivated me to reach my destination. Yes, it was my friend who made me strong and made me a winner. He accompanied me when everyone left me with my bundle of books, which was unbearable for me. Thank you, my friend, for giving me life. Thank you for your helping hand which you gave me when we met the first time”.

Rahul looked at his friend in disbelief as he recounted the story of their first encounter. Raja had planned to kill himself, but his friendship with Rahul changed his life. Raja looked at Rahul and gave him a big smile. “Thankfully, I was saved. My friend saved my life,” said

waiting for him to go up to the stage. Rahul went up and said, “Never underestimate the power of your action. With one small kind gesture you can change a person’s life. For some reason God places us in each other’s lives to make an impact on the life of the other. When you help someone who needs your kindness and help, it is God himself reaching out to the other. Thank you.”

Raja reached out and hugged Rahul. The entire school, students and teachers, stood up, cheering and applauding. ■

(This is the story that won the First Prize in an Assistency level short story competition conducted by the ADF, Fr Raj Irudaya, SJ.)

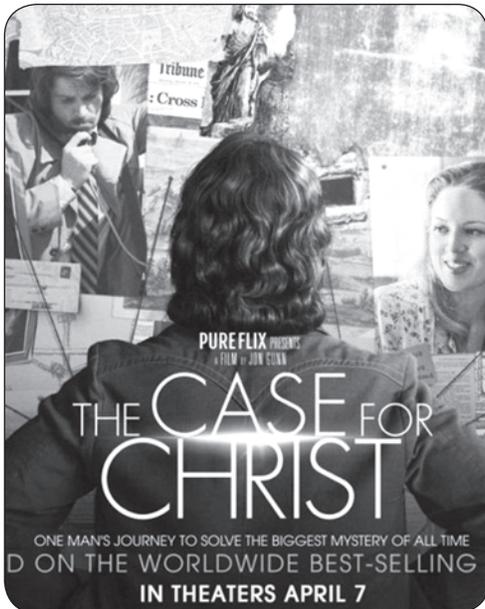


The Case for Christ

The Case for Christ

A film by Jon Gunn

Starring Mike Vogel, Erika Christensen, Faye Dunaway...



A hard-driving journalist, Lee Strobel was on top. His award-winning investigative reporting recently earned him a promotion at the *Chicago Tribune*. But things weren't going as well at home where his wife Leslie's newfound faith in Christ went against everything Lee believed - or didn't believe - as an avowed atheist. Utilizing his journalistic and legal training, Lee begins a quest to debunk the claims of Christianity in order to save his crumbling marriage. Chasing down the biggest story of his career, Lee comes face-to-face with unexpected results that could change everything he knows to be true. Based on Lee Strobel's award-winning, bestselling book and starring Mike Vogel, Erika Christensen, and Faye Dunaway, *The Case for Christ*, is an ideal Easter-season movie for anyone who has ever pondered the existence of God ... and what role He could play in their lives.

Low cost and low smoke stoves



Started by Moroccan entrepreneur and engineer Moushine Serrar, Prakti Design designs, manufactures and distributes energy-efficient, low-cost and low-smoke cook stoves in rural India. Moushine's enterprise is based in Chennai. Keeping in mind the nerve of rural India, these stoves are priced at a reasonable cost and even that cost is further subsidised by collaborating with local NGOs and self help groups.

After earning his PhD in mechanical engineering, and working for multinationals for over a decade, Moushine he came across the industry of designing clean-burning, fuel-efficient cook stoves for developing countries. He studied wood burning stoves at a research centre in the U.S. and worked on different projects in Africa before arriving in India. In 2007, he set up Prakti. In the past seven years, Prakti has won the hearts of people in India, Nepal, and Haiti with its clean-burning, fuel-efficient cookstoves. Many women have complimented Prakti on its wood-burning stove.

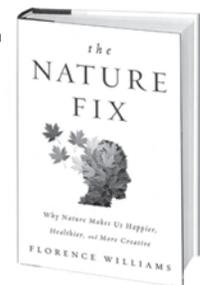
The cook stove is priced at Rs 1,499, which is sold for a cost as low as Rs 999, when subsidised by local NGOs or for bulk orders. Even by 2009-10, around 76% of rural India had been using mud stoves to cook and biomass as fuel. Prakti is currently working across Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Pondicherry and Karnataka and has sold over 18,000 stoves so far.

Courtesy: www.thebetterindia.com

Connection to Nature

For centuries, poets and philosophers extolled the benefits of a walk in the woods: Beethoven drew inspiration from rocks and trees; Wordsworth composed while tromping over the heath. Intrigued by our storied renewal in the natural world, Florence Williams set out to uncover the science behind nature's positive effects on the brain.

In this informative and entertaining account, Williams investigates cutting-edge research and demonstrates that our connection to nature is really important to our cognition and that even small amounts of exposure to the living world can improve our creativity and enhance our mood. shows how time in nature is not a luxury but is in fact essential to our humanity.



***The Nature Fix:
Why Nature Makes
Us Happier, Healthier,
and More Creative***

By Florence Williams

Published by W.W. Norton & Company

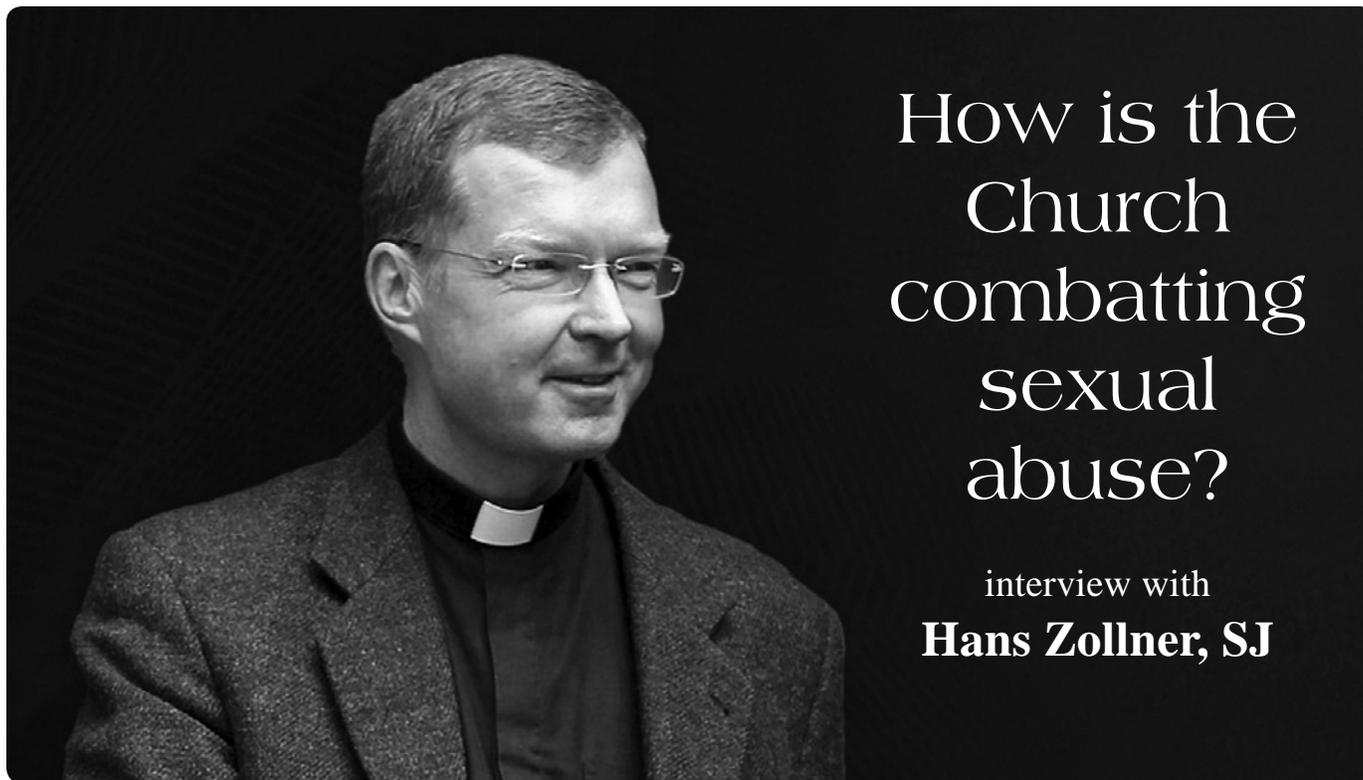
Price: Rs.1167/- Pages: 304

“The impression that Pope Francis is not hard enough on perpetrators is wrong. The general line of judgment and sentence has not changed,” **Hans Zollner, SJ**, President of the Centre for Child Protection at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome, told America in this interview in which he explains what the Pope

the motu proprio “Like a Loving Mother” (04 June ‘16) has an effect, because it clarifies and strengthens procedures that were already there.

Moreover, I know that since then allegations against bishops regarding accountability have come from various parts of the world, though this is not publicly known. First, because we don’t

abused a minor or of protecting an abuser, if your name is then put out there (in public), that means the end of your career even before there is any judicial sentence and irrespective of whether or not you are guilty. Apart from that, one of the guiding principles of canon law is that you protect the good names of all involved.



How is the Church combatting sexual abuse?

interview with
Hans Zollner, SJ

and the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors (PCPM) are doing to combat child abuse and ensure the protection of children in church institutions worldwide:

Some have alleged that Pope Francis talks a lot about combatting child abuse in the Church but is soft on perpetrators. What do you say to such charges?

First of all, the impression that he is not hard enough on perpetrators is wrong. The general line of judgment and sentence has not changed. He has introduced some measures so that even in cases of appeal the decision is reached faster; survivor-victims and the accused know earlier what the final decision is. Contrary to public opinion,

have here a board where it is written that this allegation has come in and, also, because the Anglophone Western world is interested basically in their own countries, and they don’t look beyond that to Latin America, Asia or Africa, where we have had bishops and provincials having had to resign.

Why doesn’t the Vatican make this known?

I think this is because the understanding here is still that you do not talk about cases with names and circumstances in order, first-of-all, to allow for due process and, secondly, following the general principles of guaranteeing the rights of the person. You must realize that when an allegation comes in, either of having

I am not a canon lawyer, but I think that we need to look at the procedures and processes. We need to look into how letters from survivors-victims or allegations are received and acknowledged. I believe this is being considered and, I think, change is on the way. The motu proprio is not what the commission had recommended to the Pope but it was erroneously communicated to the press as the creation of a new tribunal.

But the Vatican, the Pope said this.

He spoke about it, but whether he used the term for the first time or whether other people had spoken to him about a tribunal, I don’t know. In any case the Congregation for the Doctrine

of the Faith has the capacities to be such a tribunal. So, what was needed was guidelines about what the process should be, how it is put in place, and how it is to be followed through. This is the intention of the *motu proprio*, "Like a Loving Mother," that gives the four congregations involved - for Bishops, for the Evangelization of Peoples, for Religious, for the Oriental Churches - the task to flesh out how they are to deal with allegations that come in from their area of competence.

Many people don't know that the Church is not a monolithic bloc; they think the Vatican has only one ministry that deals with ordinaries, that is with bishops and provincials. We have, in fact, three congregations that deal with bishops, and one that deals with religious. These four congregations have to flesh out their own procedures and then if there is an allegation against a bishop (or provincial), the appropriate congregation must carry out an investigation of the allegation and if, as a result of this, it decides that the bishop should be removed it must send this recommendation to the Pope who, according to the *motu proprio*, then consults "a college of legal experts" before taking the final decision.

Besides pushing for the accountability of bishops, what else has the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors achieved?

Another recommendation from the commission, approved by the Pope, is the Day of Prayer for the victims of abuse. On 03 March there was a Day of Prayer in Ireland and in Poland, traditionally among the most Catholic countries in Europe. Prayer is vital in our faith, and that's why it is central to let the reality of deeply wounded people - wounded by representatives of the Church - and all that relates to this, such as suffering, passion, rage, depression and death, enter into prayer. Once this is acknowledged in our dialogue with God it leads to changes at the spiritual and theological

level, regarding the spiritual trauma and the theological questions behind that. Unfortunately, the Church does not often recognize that it is necessary to reach this depth.

There's another positive achievement that's worth highlighting: the commission has been invited by Vatican dicasteries to teach and inform all their members, from the cardinal to the "minutante" (person responsible for drafting the minutes), regarding child protection. This has already happened in three dicasteries, and we are scheduled to work with another two later this year. Then, last September, we were invited for the first time to participate in the annual Vatican course for new bishops; altogether some 250 bishops from all over the world attended.

Furthermore, we PCPM members are being invited to bishops' conferences across the globe, and many of them are seriously committed to doing something about this issue. I have personally visited more than 40 countries on five continents in order to build awareness and promote safeguarding measures. Other PCPM members have been invited to many more countries.

On 23 March, the commission's work group on schools will hold a study day at the Gregorian University to look at Latin America, where the Catholic Church has thousands of schools, all of which must take responsibility for the protection of minors. The Congregation for Catholic Education is much interested in this project and will be present.

The Congregation for Clergy has also taken a big interest in this whole question. I was invited to the consultation process for preparing the new program for seminary formation. In number 202 of the new guidelines for formation in the seminaries (*Ratio Fundamentalis*), it is stated that in all seminaries of the Latin Rite seminarians and young priests need to be formed and trained in safeguarding the minors.

Is the same true for those in religious life?

This text refers to diocesan seminaries, but, of course, it will impact on the formation of religious too. Thus, for example, the formation programs of the Benedictines, the Dominicans and the Salesians need to be revised as a follow up to this new document.

What more do you think the Pope can do in this field?

I think he can't do much more in pointing out the gravity of the crime and the sin that is implied in this. He has used the strongest words you can use in Catholic theology.

Like comparing the abuse of a child by a priest to a black Mass?

Yes, and he has likened the abuse of the body of a child by sexual abuse to the abuse of the eucharist - a sacrilege. He has also used very strong words in the preface to the recent book by Daniel Pittet, a Frenchman who was abused as a child by a Capuchin priest. These are not only words; he knows the depth of suffering and loneliness.

What more could he do? He could give more staff to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and help to revise the procedures so that as much transparency and speediness is guaranteed in the process. The American bishops, for example, send every case to the CDF, even if in the States the civil cases can't go on because of the statute of limitation in the civil legislation.

I understand there are perhaps as many as 2,000 cases of alleged abuse of minors by priests yet to be dealt with or concluded in a definitive way - either at the CDF or diocesan level. Is there enough staff at the CDF to deal with these cases?

No. I think the CDF now has twelve persons who deal with 400-500 allegations per year, and they must read each case, get clarification where necessary and then write on it,

making a recommendation. This lack of personnel is not due to the bad will of the CDF or of the Pope. One reason for the limited number of personnel is the fact that there are very few trained penal canon lawyers. Recently more are being trained in this area, but the CDF doesn't yet have enough trained personnel to deal with all the cases. We see this lack of trained personnel in other places too. In the Philippine Bishops Conference, for example, there are very few persons with a doctorate or licentiate in canon law. There are bishops, who are responsible for hundreds of islands, who don't have even one canon lawyer.

There is good reason then for Marie Collins's frustration.

I understand Marie. I understand that she could not stand the slow pace and the resistance, as she perceived it. From my point of view, compared to the normal pace of change in the Church, we have made progress in a relatively short time, but compared to some expectations it is not enough. People expect Francis to go faster, and many can't stand it anymore when they hear over and over again that there are still bishops who don't act swiftly and consistently, or where there are still horrible cases of abuse that come to light. Yet, as I see in my encounters in many countries around the globe, much has completely changed for the better compared to five years ago when we had the first symposium here at the Gregorian. You can talk about this subject publicly now in places like Malaysia, Malawi, Mexico or Slovakia and Poland.

I fully agree that we should invest much more in intervention and prevention of abuse; we should have much more resources, more personnel, although we need to realize that there will never be complete safety: to expect that would be a dangerous illusion. No matter what happens there will always be isolated cases of abuse and leaders who do not deal with it correctly. What we must do is ensure that these cases are few and far between, and when

they happen then they are dealt with, swiftly and justly.

People also need to realize, as Marie said in one interview, that the Pope is not the CEO of a global enterprise called the Catholic Church. He cannot simply implement what he wants. And even if he decides on things, this does not mean that bishops or provincials follow immediately and wholeheartedly. What we are about, and what I understand the commission is about, is a change of culture, from bottom up. I see this happening in many places. I see it happening here in the Gregorian University, where this semester we have 24 students from 18 countries in the diploma course on safeguarding. These are excellent people, who were sent by their bishops or by their congregations. The U.S. bishops' conference has sent one lay person for his formation. This is the second year we have the diploma course, and from next year on we will have a multi-disciplinary master's degree in safeguarding. We see the need to have real experts. We have 8 doctoral students now. You may say that's few, but they are the first of their kind who will go back to Western countries, to India, to African and Latin American countries. We need to go on with this. Change is taking place, but we won't see it as rapid and as thorough as all of us would like to see it.

You've spoken to the Pope; are you convinced, as Marie says, that "he gets it"?

Yes, he gets it. He gets the depth of the pain, the suffering, the anger, the loneliness and so on. One example: Federico Lombardi, SJ and I met the Pope on 16 Dec '16, and we spoke about the congress that we are going to have here in the Gregorian next October on 'Child's dignity in the digital world.' We just introduced a few things about sex abuse on the internet and how governments don't know where to go with this. The Pope was immediately moved and concerned about all this, and he said straightaway, "Of course I will support you!" And, I can tell you

too that all the dicasteries actively support us in this project.

Last question: What were your feelings when you learned of Marie's resignation?

I was very sad. I was really shocked also because I thought that we have come a long way together over five years. It was more than five years since we invited Marie for the symposium at the Gregorian, attended by bishops from all over the world. Then, we were founding members of the commission set up by the Pope in 2014, and since then we had gone through many discussions, many frustrations and made some progress. I tried to ask her calmly what we can do so that we can still complete the three-year term of membership of the PCPM, but she expressed clearly that she could not go on anymore.

At the same time, a few weeks ago, she allowed us to do the video for the Centre for Child Protection on her own experience. It's a wonderful video which will serve as the introduction to our e-learning program for all our e-learning students in 25 countries who learn about safeguarding. This will be the start of that program because we believe it should follow a "victims first" approach. She also agreed that, even after her resignation, she would continue to work in training sessions that we have scheduled with dicasteries of the Roman Curia.

So, I fully respect her. I think I can understand her point of view. I regret it deeply, and yet I believe it could become a blessing in disguise because it brought a lot of shock not only to many who put their trust in the commission because of her presence on it, but also to the curia itself. It may help speed up developments that are on the way, it may sharpen sensitivity, and it might tighten the grip on certain issues that we have been dealing with, such as transparency and what we mean by "zero tolerance," and all that Pope Francis has spelt out in his letter to bishops on 28 Dec '16. ■

Courtesy: www.americamagazine.org

A Jesuit student at the Jawaharlal Nehru University



BY VINCENT EKKA, SJ

Ido not claim to be the only Jesuit studying in the Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi. Many Jesuits from different Provinces have joined JNU and completed their studies. But life at JNU at the present moment gives a Jesuit like me a rare opportunity to understand what is happening in and to our country, simply by observing what goes on here.

'What happens at JNU is a reflection of what happens in the country' is a popular saying. Recently a Judge of the Delhi High Court made an observation: "Protests at JNU indicate something is wrong somewhere."

In the news: Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi has been in the news a lot recently. The students of JNU have been at the forefront of various important movements in the recent past. After the 'Nirbhaya' rape on 16 Dec 2012 the student movement here stirred a national upheaval, which led the government to form Justice Verma Committee to amend the law regarding abuse of women. The suicide of Rohit Vemula, a research scholar in Hyderabad Central University on 17 Jan '16, under the strong leadership of JNU students, raised the question of 'institutional murder' and thereby pressurizing the government to pass the Rohit Vemula Act.

Demonizing students who speak up: The recent suicide committed by a JNU research scholar, Muthukrishnan on 14 March '17, pointing to the 'casteist mindset' and 'institutional murder' strengthened the demand for the Rohit Vemula Act. The 'Azadi sloganning' on 09 Feb '16 created a heated debate on 'nationalism' and 'patriotism' from streets to the Parliament. Some demonized the student leaders like Kanhaiya Kumar, Umar Khalid, Anirbaan, Shehla Rashid, Rama Naga and others. An eye-opening response to the entire debate on 'nationalism' was given by JNU professors, who organized a month-long lecture series on 'Nationalism' and 'Azaadi' under the title, "What the Nation Really Needs to Know." After a few months when the JNU teachers came under the administrative assault they again organized a lecture series under the title, "Democratizing Social Justice." Such are the 'constructive resistances' that have been taken up against the assaults on knowledge-generating centers like JNU.

From all regions and sections: It is a unique university with a great reputation. With its unique multiculturalism it is a 'mini India.' By quartile division of districts for deprivation points, and an inclusive admission policy students from every rank and file make it to JNU.

So there are students here from elite families as well as from the deprived sections. There are students from metros, as well as remotest

villages and even foreign countries. Students from various cultures, castes, classes and nationalities live together in the same hostels. They share the same type of food, and study with the same type of academic rigour. There are presently about 8,000 students in the University among whom 7,000 students live on the campus. No doubt, the diversity, with its socio-political vibrancy, enriches the campus. From its inception, the University's students, teachers and co-workers have cherished the climate of freedom of speech, democratic dissent, and ideological differences in the classrooms and on the campus.

Disintegrating: The highly valued composite culture of JNU seems to be sadly disintegrating under the present political regime. The student community, strongly supported by their teachers, have been spokespersons for various happenings across India and around the world. In six years of my stay on JNU campus I have witnessed how the students and teachers engage themselves in various national issues. They discuss these in classes during the day and in the evenings many groups can be seen in and around different '*dhabas*,' seriously engaging in group discussions and quite often continuing with post-dinner talks and lectures organized by different student organizations. The issues discussed and debated cover various spectra of life. These issues range from Marxism, socialism to capitalism, corporatization and

saffronization of education, politics and economy; naxalism, terrorism, separatism; the struggles of farmers, adivasis, Dalits, and women, the issues of gender justice, social justice and constitutional justice, various governments and their failures to deliver on their promises fall under the critical scrutiny of JNU students and teachers.

Affordable: JNU is one of the best and affordable public-funded educational institutions. Where else in the country can one get an excellent education with a progressive sensibility for mere Rs 180 and Rs 120 per semester for Ph. D. and M. Phil. studies? Money spent on JNU comes to about Rs. 325 crores per year. Here 48 Centers operate in 13 Schools with 459 teachers and 7,304 students and a few hundred co-workers and non-teaching staff. But we should see from where the criticism of 'waste of taxpayer's money' comes. The expense is much less in comparison with what a defector like Vijay Mallya, who flees from the country with the knowledge of Ministers, owes the government banks: Rs. 9,000 crores.

Contribution: JNU, on an average, produces 600 Ph. D. scholars per year and has contributed to nation building by providing numerous IAS, IFS and IPS officers and many administrators and politicians. In 2017 JNU was given the Visitors Award for the Best Central University. It has been ranked as the Second Best University in the HRD Ministry's National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF).

Change of demography: Reservations for Dalit, OBC and Schedule Tribes students have changed the demography and texture of university campuses in India quite dramatically over the past decade. These changes are pushing universities towards evolving a new pedagogy and more democratic and

egalitarian academic practices. The diversity of the background of the students also leads to the diversity of researches, adding to the pool of new knowledge. This is what alarms communal, extreme right wing organisations. This is why the government has tried to intervene in universities like JNU and their 'campus cultures' and 'autonomy of educational institutions.'

Threat to saffron agenda: The saffron elements see this autonomy and freedom of expression as threats to their efforts. This what makes them brand JNU as a 'den of anti-nationals', 'seditious' and 'dangerous for the country.' They think such universities hinder their strategies to polarize people on the basis of religion and caste.

Closing the door: The implementation of recent UGC gazette of 05 May 2016, in the name of 'proportioning the student-teacher ratio for a quality research,' with 86% seat-cut in various Schools and Centers have serious implications on the future of JNU. It is like killing many birds with one bullet. With massive seat-cut and lifting of deprivation points for admissions the present government has almost closed the door of JNU for students coming from rural areas and deprived sections of society.

Values I learnt: JNU so far has had a tradition of honouring and imparting just, liberal and democratic values. What have I learnt in JNU as a research scholar and a Jesuit?

Democratic values in practice:- Democracy is a process and its values like justice, equality, freedom and fraternity are practiced in JNU campus. Here from the lowest rung-worker to the senior most professors and the vice-chancellor, all are treated as members of one big family. The Student Union's Election takes place in a fair atmosphere and with desired

dignity and respect. The opposing views are debated and discussed in a respectful manner without engaging in any malpractice or violence. It is a campus where both men and women students can express their opinions freely and fearlessly. The University offers quality education to the students of all sections of society, because of its respect for diversity and inclusive policies.

Gender Justice and Gender Equity: Women students are seen as human persons equal to men. They are treated with dignity and respect. In a campus of about 1100 acres of land, with lots of trees and bushes and forlorn places, women can walk without fear of being molested, harassed or stared at any moment of the day or night. Besides mutual respect, the 'University Grievance Cell,' and 'Gender Sensitization Committee Against Sexual Harassment' (GSCASH) are in place to ensure that gender justice is delivered.

Respect for Dissenting Voices: At JNU students subscribe to diverse political and social ideologies. Some belong to the hard core right wing groups, while others support Marxists. Anyone is free to organize programs and invite experts for debates and discussions.

Cordial Relationships: The teachers may not always agree with their students' opinions and vice-versa but decent and cordial human relations between teachers and students continue. People can argue, challenge and shout, but finally the bond of being a JNUite prevails.

So what is really sad is that the government of the day is trying to destroy all these. It is a concern for all, like us Jesuits, who want to build a more just and humane society. ■

Fr Vincent Ekka, SJ (MAP) is a Ph.D. research scholar in Social Sciences in the Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi.



12 Years in Rome

Lead Me On

Michael Amaladoss, SJ

Blink Foundation

Loyola College

Chennai - 600 034

Pages: 144; Price: Rs 100

(An extract from *Lead Me On*, Fr Michael Amaladoss, SJ's autobiography)

In June 1983 I was appointed academic Rector of Jnanadeepa Vidyapeeth, Pune – a centre that had two colleges of philosophy and theology with about 600 students. I was supposed to continue as Vice-Provincial for Formation (for the entire Assistancy). At the end of August I went to Rome to participate in the 33rd General Congregation of the Society of Jesus as a delegate of the Madurai province. The Society had had some tensions with Pope St. John Paul II. A new Superior General, Fr Peter Hans Kolvenbach, was elected. Then it was the turn of four general counsellors to be elected. They tend to represent the different geographical regions of the world. Looking for someone from Asia, after some search, the focus was on India and different names came up. My name too was mentioned. Some others and myself were not very keen. We thought that my services were needed in India. I had just become rector of De Nobili in Pune. It was again Tony D'Mello, who convinced first me and then the others that I could be considered for the position. His argument that convinced us was that if someone had to represent Asia in Rome, it is not enough that he is an administrator, but someone who can speak for the culture and thinking of Asia. Anyway I was elected. I can honestly say that during the twelve years that I was in Rome (1983- 95) I did become a spokesperson for Asia, so to speak, not only in Rome, but also elsewhere in the world. I was so recognized by most of the religious congregations and even by the Vatican, indirectly, though it was not always happy with my assertion of Asian views.

My time in Rome was a time of growth as a theologian. My job was being a counsellor to the Superior General for all his important decisions. The files were well prepared by other officials

and only important decisions came to our level. All that we had to do is to read the files and give our opinion. The group met for about half-an-hour every day and longer on Tuesdays. On the whole it was not a full time job. Besides I was also supposed to have oversight regarding the work of the Society in the area of the dialogue between the Good News of Jesus and the various cultures and religions. I used to represent the Society in various meetings. I was also supposed to be at the service of the Vatican. I was consultant to the Pope's Councils for dialogue with other religions and culture. I was also part of the Vatican group of 7 in the Council for World Mission and Evangelization of the World Council of Churches. But I was eased out of all these positions after the first five years because the Vatican felt that I was not representing its position on issues. I was speaking more as an Indian theologian. It also brought me into conflict with the Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. I have adopted a way of dialogue rather than conflict with them and it has been continuing for the last 25 or more years.

But being in Rome in an important office in the Society opened the world for me. I could travel to many parts of the world for the work of the Society. Others too could easily invite me because of my being in Rome, my position in the Society being an additional reason. Since I was reflecting on current issues that affect the Third World my views were sought after and appreciated by many groups. I should mention particularly three of them. I was a part of a group called *Sedos*, which helped the various congregations involved in the work of witnessing to the life and teachings of Jesus across the world. For 8 years I helped them plan their seminars, etc. I was also on the editorial board of *Spiritus*, a French quarterly review, published from Paris, devoted to the same theme. I was helping for nearly 15 years, as a member of their editorial

board, contributing to their reflection. I was also associated with a group called the *Ways of the East*, based in Bruxelles, which was interested in exploring Asian spiritualities (Buddhism and Hinduism). What was special about my contribution was that I was not just repeating what was being traditionally said, but reflecting on the various challenges of the modern context from an Asian point of view, sometimes disagreeing with the traditional positions. A certain newness and creativity in the area of inter-religious relationships was also appreciated. I was also active in the International Association for Mission Studies for eight years, first as Vice-President and then as President. This allowed me to interact creatively with Christian scholars from other Churches and organize and participate in international conferences. Fr. General could have given me extra work, like being also Regional Assistant for India. But he respected my theological work and let me continue. I heard that when he resigned as General and left Rome he told one of the Indians there to tell me to continue my work of reflection and writing.

One of my last acts in Rome was to help prepare for the 34th General Congregation of the Society in 1995. Being in charge of the mission desk, I had prepared a paper looking at mission as a three-fold dialogue of the Gospel with the poor, the cultures and the religions, inspired by Asian theology. This broadened the vision of mission from a faith-justice focus coming from the 32nd General Congregation. It was discussed and accepted by the 34th General Congregation, resulting in 4 decrees on mission. Something of Asian theology thus entered the awareness of the wider Society. This contribution was recognized by the award of an honorary doctorate in theology by Regis College, Toronto, in Nov. 1996. It was here that I had refused to go for my basic theological studies. ■

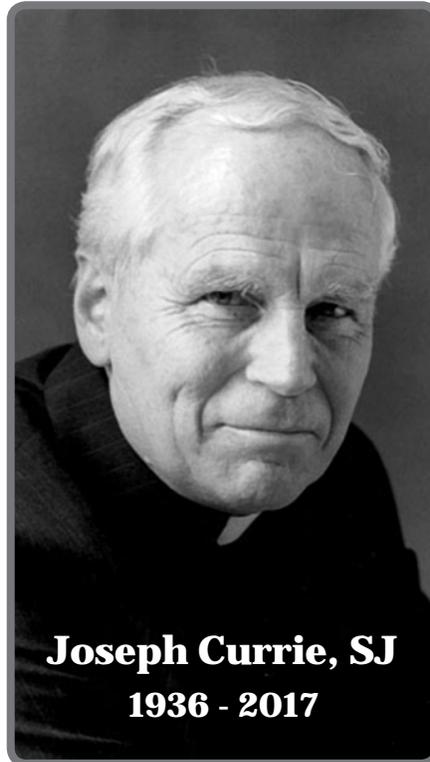
A Jesuit who was much-loved both in India and the U.S. - Fr Joe Currie, SJ - died unexpectedly on 03 March '17.

Fr Joseph A. Currie, SJ, was born in Philadelphia, Pa. U.S. on 20 Aug 1936. He graduated from St. Joseph's Prep High School and entered the Society of Jesus at the Novitiate of St Isaac Jogues in Wernersville, Pa. in 1955. After completing studies in Philosophy at Loyola Seminary in Shrub Oak, NY, he received his degree in History from Fordham University. Volunteering to serve in India in 1963, he taught English at the Loyola School in Jamshedpur, India. He spent four years studying Theology at St. Mary's College in Kurseong and was ordained a priest on March 19, 1968 in Jamshedpur.

Fr Currie spent the first 15 years of his priesthood working in India, first as director of the social welfare center at St Joseph Church in Jamshedpur, then as both professor of pastoral theology and director of pastoral education at Vidyajyoti College of Theology in Delhi, and finally as director of pastoral education at De Nobili College in Pune. He was also tertian director for two years at Sacred Heart College in Shembaganur, Tamil Nadu.

In 1985, Fr. Currie returned to the States and served for two years as campus minister at Georgetown University. He then served three years as the director of Manresa-on-Severn retreat house in Annapolis. In 1991, he moved to New Orleans and became director of campus ministry at Loyola University for six years. He then began a 13-year tenure at his alma mater, Fordham University, also as director of campus ministry. At both Loyola and Fordham, he worked with students on important issues of social justice. He was a very popular retreat director, spiritual director and celebrant of hundreds of weddings. Needless to say, he was much loved and highly respected. He was known

A much-loved Jesuit



for his tireless and generous work to help others, for being a good listener and for having a great sense of humor.

In 2010, Fr Currie was appointed rector for the Jesuit community in Wernersville, Pa. where he remained for five years. He then served for a year as associate pastor for St. Alphonsus Rodriguez Church in Woodstock, Md. He was currently serving at Chestnut Hill College in Chestnut Hill, Pa., when he died suddenly on March 3, 2017 at the age of 80. According to his family, Fr Currie died while walking from work at Chestnut Hill College, where he was assistant to the Office of Mission and Ministry.

"Father Currie was a priest's priest," said Joseph M. McShane, SJ, president of Fordham. "He was the man to whom other priests brought their burdens, and if Joe had burdens

of his own, those he kept to himself. He was a friend, a mentor, and trusted colleague, in addition to being a pillar of the University community and a spiritual guide to many, many students over his long career. I will miss him terribly."

Fr "Papa Joe" Currie served at Fordham from 1997 to 2010. As the football team's chaplain, he stood by the Victory Bell each time the football team won and rode the long bus rides home with the team when they lost. Those who knew him said he made students laugh and guided them through difficult times. He performed marriage ceremonies for alumni and baptized their children. He fought for the marginalized and taught students how to pray.

"He represented so well the Jesuit ideals of being someone interested in helping others, committed to justice, a great example of combining a lot of action with a lot of spiritual depth," said his brother Charles Currie, SJ. Fr Currie is also survived by another brother, Robert Currie, SJ, as well as their extended family.

Daniel Cosacchi, Ph.D, recalled Fr Currie as a great role model. Cosacchi had worked with him at Campus Ministry. "He was just such a person of integrity - what you see is what you get, no airs, so genuine," said Cosacchi. "You never felt he was judging, even though he was probably the holiest person I knew. Whoever was most in need was the priority for Fr Currie." "He was not caught up in titles, he functioned as a human being," said Sr Anne Walsh, RHSM, associate academic adviser for the football team. She said that Fr Currie's self-effacing style helped him gain the trust of the football players - though he wasn't beyond calling them to the carpet when need be. He dealt with issues head on, but he always left the individual standing tall," she said. "He always addressed the cause of their problems; always the issues, never the individual." ■

ANTHONY GATT, SJ (DUM) 1939 - 2017



Fr Gatt, called Ninu by many, was born on the 20 Jan 1939 in the village of Zebbug, Malta. He studied at St Albert's College at Valletta and, after his studies, he worked for three years in the government's Housing Department. On 10 Oct 1960, Fr Ninu heard the Lord's call and entered the Society of Jesus at the Jesuit Novitiate, Loyola House, Naxxar, Malta. Full of zeal, he wrote to Fr Provincial in Malta asking to be sent as a missionary. His dream was fulfilled and he reached India on 27 July 1963 along with Fr Cecil Azzopardi. Having completed his formation, he was ordained a priest in Malta, on his first home visit, along with Fr Cecil on 19 March 1972. Fr Gatt's first appointment was at Rajibpur mission in West Bengal as Assistant Pastor from 1972 to 1977. In 1977 he was made the Rector and Principal at St Xavier's, Sahibganj. Two years later he returned to St Xavier's as Hostel-in-Charge from 1985 to 1990. In 1992 Fr Ninu was appointed Superior of the Jesuit Community and Parish Priest of Majlisipur mission in North Dinajpur, West Bengal. Ten years later he was shifted to Nichamari mission. In 2012 he was appointed Superior of the Jesuit community at St. Xavier's, Raiganj.

On the occasion of his Golden Jubilee as a Jesuit in 2010, Fr General Adolfo Nicholas, said, "He saw the will of God in every appointment. He proved to be a good leader, a good Pastor and a good Educationist. During his tenure as Principal of St. Xavier's, Sahibganj, he was instrumental in getting St. Mother Teresa of Kolkata to inaugurate the Silver Jubilee Celebration of St. Xavier's on 28 Feb 1982. His warm personality and readiness to work with his companions and others and his balanced judgment made him an integrating factor of his community.

Like St. Francis of Assisi, Fr. Ninu loved nature. His practical knowledge in agriculture, animal husbandry and technical aptitude enabled him to run efficiently a mission comprising hostels for children and a farm to sustain them. He had a "green finger", as they say. Whatever he planted, whether vegetables, trees or flowers, flourished and bore fruit. His farming was an example and encouragement to the mainly poor farmers of his mission. Fr Gatt was proficient in languages and mastered Hindi, Bengali and Santali. He was a lovable person. When he was sick and taking treatment in Kolkata his former students visited him regularly and he enjoyed their company. Fr. Cecil Azzopardi, Spiritual Director of Jesuit Scholastics at the Gesu in Rome, on receiving the news of Fr. Ninu's death wrote to his friends: "Ninu and I joined the Novitiate together, went to India together, studied Philosophy and Theology together and were ordained priests together. We celebrated together in Dumka 50 years of our Jesuit life. He was an extraordinary man, being able to handle different responsibilities with a certain peaceful ease. But his most outstanding quality was his zest for life. Nothing, absolutely nothing would dampen his inner spirit, and this was seen very tangibly as he went through his last sickness. May his soul rest in peace!

- **Jos. M. Gauci Sacco, SJ**

JOSEPH KOTTUKAPALLY, SJ (KER) 1934 - 2017



Fr Joseph Kottukapally passed away suddenly on 21 March '17. He was in the chapel of Christ Hall till 11.30.a.m. He felt uneasy and went to his room to rest. His absence was noticed at lunch. He was found lying dead in his bed.

He had joined the erstwhile Calicut Mission in 1954 and became a member of Kerala Province in 1960. During his Juniorate at Shembaganur he was called a Latin Scholar, and a Philosopher during his philosophy.

Husserl's phenomenology was his favourite subject. In the history of Shembag, Kottu was the only Malayalee to be made Choir Master. He did his theology at Innsbruck where he endeared himself to everyone by his spirit of service. After a short period at Christ hall as teacher in the Juniorate, he became Chaplain of AICUF students in Kerala. He was able to relate very personally to the university Students. He guided them in the critical period of agitations by politically affiliated student unions. A good number of his AICUF students remained very close to him till his death.

Kottu served the Chirakkal mission for many years, at Mattul, Mariapuram, Bekkalam, and Pariyaram. As parish priest he succeeded in identifying himself with the people and took up all their struggles. Their welfare was his primary concern, and he initiated many developmental works such as house-building, girl's education, and employment of youth. He could collect funds for his work from different sources, both Indian and foreign.

Kottu was a writer and good researcher. During his stay at Lumen Institute and at St. Xavier's, Trivandrum he devoted himself to writing. He contributed learned articles to Indian and foreign journals. He was a controversial writer. He was never afraid of crossing swords with anyone either through letters to the editor or through articles. He thought passionately and reacted passionately.

Kottu's last years were spent at St. Joseph's Jesuit Community, Kozhikode. He did thorough studies on the early Jesuit mission in Kerala, prior to the suppression of the Society of Jesus. He played an important role in highlighting the martyrdom of Bl Devasahayam Pillai. His book on him helped in the cause of his beatification. He was a passionate and tireless researcher. Kottu remained active till his death. A day before his death he came to St Joseph's community to look for the papers of his doctoral thesis.

His happy death was the end of an active life. Bishop Alex Vadakumthala of Kannur diocese was the main celebrant at the funeral Mass on 23 March. The letter of Kottu (as he was fondly called) regarding his funeral was read by Fr Provincial, and maximum care was taken to accommodate his wishes. Fr Provincial, in his introductory remarks, said that Kottu was unique in his life and death. The presence of a large number of people including priests and sisters was an eloquent testimony of his place in their hearts. May God reward his faithful servant!

- **Xavier Veliyakam, SJ**

Dedicated service

Thank you very much for your dedicated services to the Assistancy, being the Editor of *Jivan* for so many years. You have done a marvellous job. Thank you, Joe!

- George Pattery, SJ
POSA

Left your stamp

Congratulations, Joe, on receiving the Lifetime Award from Signis. You've really left your stamp on Catholic journalism in the country.

- Myron Pereira, SJ
Mumbai - 400 001

Always a joy

The news of your handing over the editorship of *Jivan* to your successor fills me both with a sense of regret and of gratitude. Regret because I have been accustomed to read your insightful comments right at the beginning of every issue for so many years, and gratitude for the wonderful job you have done during the past 17 years, facing so many challenges.

By the way, I was amused by your desire to continue for another three years. In this postmodern world when everything is perceived to be transient, temporary, when marriages collapse like rootless trees and people change jobs as they change clothes, your statement, Joe, is refreshing, significant and exemplary. Given the person that you are, we know, Joe, it is not certainly the attachment to people, place or work but *MAGIS* or a desire to give your best to *Jivan* to the Assistancy has prompted this statement. It can come only from a good Jesuit like you.

Because of your masterly editorial workmanship *Jivan* became a household name in our own Assistancy and a magazine Jesuits and others eagerly looked forward to in other Assistancies as well. Your style, Joe, is impressive. It is not of the analytical mold. You are basically a poet. Through a narrative style you list facts, nay, metaphors and then make the reader draw a lesson or two. Many have drawn lessons from your exciting editorials. This stance is also visible in your choice of authors and articles. One of the new columns you introduced was the articulation of those Jesuits who work or study abroad. It is unlike the ordinary hyper-critical or anti-colonial stance, an effort towards interculturality, learning from the other people, lands and the cultures. I think it has yielded its fruit.

As for me, Joe, it was always a joy to browse through its pages, and once I began I never closed the magazine until I finished the last page. It was always instructive, inspiring, insightful, enlightening, entertaining and enriching to go through the articles in *Jivan*. Now that you are fading into the background, letting the limelight shine on your successor, I wish to express, on behalf of Karnataka Province and on my

own behalf deep appreciation, immense gratitude and warm good wishes.

- J. Stanislaus D'Souza, SJ
Provincial, KAR
Bengaluru - 560 001

Creativity and commitment

Reading *Jivan* during these years when you edited it was really a different experience. I asked myself what really the difference was. The first and foremost difference was its readability. The magazine kind of invited you to read it. Once you read the different pages, especially the editorial, you found it difficult to put it down, till it was finished. A second factor which made it different was the variety of themes/topics covered. They covered a whole range of human issues. The spiritual and the secular merged in a unique kind of integration. Third, the focus on the visual and the poetic catered to the inner sensibilities of the reader.

There was always a poem, some reflective material with striking visuals. Fourth, the focus on the Ignatian spirituality. Something in almost every issue was on one aspect or the other of the Ignatian spirituality, which made it entirely different from other magazines and served the purpose of a Jesuit magazine. I can go on and on.

What is most significant, however, is this: *Jivan*, under your editorship, was faithful to the original vision of the Society of Jesus and it had always something different to communicate. Something which inspired, challenged, provoked and made us read. Something which took us closer to Jesus and the Divine. Thank you, Joe, for your creativity and commitment to the Jesuit ideal of 'magis.' Let me wish the new Editor all the best."

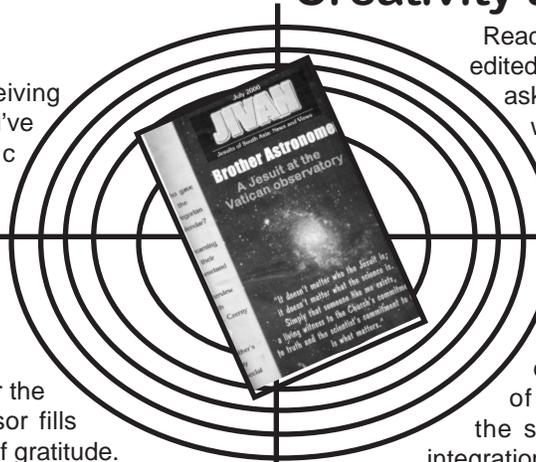
- M.K. George, SJ
Provincial, KER
Calicut - 673 009

Incredible

Your editorial drew forth from me a spontaneous "Wow". It's incredible that you have been at this job for 17 years. And leaving aside the 'sentimental calculations', it sounds just as awesome as 20 years might have sounded!

It's even more incredible that the major part of these years were spent in also discharging other serious responsibilities (*the New Leader* and *Socius*). You mention that there were just two staff on this job. Did I read it right or are my eyes playing tricks with me? Simply unbelievable. Hats off to both of them.

Joe, the good Lord has blessed you with many talents, and you have used them magnificently in His service. As you lay down your pen, you can do so with your head held high. *Jivan* is well known and appreciated, not just in the Assistancy



but all over the world.

God bless you, Joe, and may the years ahead be just as fruitful and enjoyable.

- **Luke Rodrigues, SJ**
Mumbai - 400 001

Remarkable

Jivan has been a Jesuit lamp to both Jesuits and non-Jesuits. I wonder how you were able to manage this with all your other works and jobs. Your language in the editorials and also I suppose your editing show remarkable literary gifts. I looked forward to your editorials.

You have covered all the various Jesuit concerns: the Church, especially under Pope Francis; the many aspects of the General Congregation ecology, inter-religious dialogue, some international Jesuit concerns and interviews. Each issue had some inspiring spiritual questions.

You have focused these days much on ecology and women's liberation. You also gave much space for our Pope, maybe I feel a bit over much! You have given good articles on our institutions; however I feel they were not very critical.

I would say that *Jivan* in your time has become a crystal with many beautiful facets reflecting the many faces of our Jesuit life and concerns. Your front cover is usually on current subjects. Your back cover is beautiful with an inspiring message. Thanks for the many beautiful pictures.

Many thanks, Joe, for your great work. God bless you.

- **Ama Samy, SJ**
Perumal Malai, Kodaikanal - 624 104

Loving service

As I was reading your 'farewell editorial' in the April issue, my eyes were filled with tears of joy as well as gratitude: joy because I have been enriched with your 17 years of "Jesuit loving service". Your writings and the different articles that you published have contributed to my enormous growth as a Jesuit: in my knowledge and understanding of the Society as well as in the deepening of my love for our Mother Society. I used to look forward to your editorial: it was inspirational, provocative, informative, and above all covering the current problems of the society at large and also inviting us all to love the Society with a discerning love: 'caritas discreta'. You have helped me come to know the different Jesuits of our South Asian Assistancy through the 'Profiles' and interviews you published.

The Lord has done a lot through you to our Assistancy and to the world at large during these 17 years. In particular I would like to thank the Lord for your conscious efforts in making our present Brother Jesuit Pope Francis known to us: Jesuits as well as non-Jesuits. You have helped me and many others fall in love with this great Jesuit, the Pope of Mercy. You have also encouraged the young Jesuits to give expression to their hidden talents of writing, etc. The column

'Spirit Matters' has been an immense help for my spiritual life. Let me raise my heart along with you in singing the Magnificat: "The Almighty has done great things for us through you; holy is his name". May the good Lord continue to guide you in this important field of writing and communication in the years to come!

- **Michael Alosanaya, SJ**
Delhi - 110 054

Focussed, creative...

Just been reading your "goodbye" editorial in the latest issue of *Jivan*; I feel that I must respond to your "What do you think?" request!

I feel sad Joe that you will no longer be the Editor of *Jivan*; but there comes a time for all of us to move on.

Looking back at the 17 years of your stewardship, I would like to highlight certain aspects, which made me value *Jivan* very much:

FOCUSSED: a magazine, which is about Jesuits of South Asia, needs to be precisely that; you regularly carried articles that covered the broad range of our Jesuit ministries.

UNIVERSAL: from the authors to the articles, *Jivan* spoke to the world of the Universal Mission of the Society of Jesus

CREATIVE: with your 'forte' in the print media, *Jivan* never stopped being innovative: new columns, more ideas; every issue a breath of freshness

FAITH and JUSTICE: over these years *Jivan* has not stopped taking a stand on critical issues of our time on matters related to the Church, to South Asia or to the world at large

DIVERSE OPINIONS: a good magazine is never afraid to allow a variety of opinions; including dissenting voices; *Jivan* welcomed all opinions and created the space for them.

And Joe, month after month, all these many years, I have looked forward to receiving *Jivan* and when I do so, I do not put it down until I have read every single article in it; I have relished them and very often the contents have provided me insights for my own growth and work; this I believe, is the greatest tribute one can pay to an Editor!

You have taken *Jivan* to new heights; as an Editor, you have been outstanding! I will miss M.A.J.A. the Editor of *Jivan*. Thanks Joe! God Bless!

- **Cedric Prakash, SJ**
Beirut, Lebanon

Enriched me

My sincere thanks to you for editing *Jivan* for 17 years. Congratulations for so efficiently bringing out each issue of *Jivan*. It is one of the magazines I look forward to. It enriched me in many ways, especially enabling me to reflect on certain issues. I am sure many others felt the same about *Jivan*.

- **John Joseph, SJ**
Secunderabad - 500 017



You brought joy

At the end of your editorial column we find your initials. Remove the dots or periods in them and they read 'MAJA' which sounds exactly as the Gujarati word for joy. That you were the editor of *The New Leader* for 20 years, of *Jivan* for these past 17 years, besides taking on the job of the MDU Socius, can only mean that God has blessed you with great intelligence and management skills, but also enviable sources of contentment which you must be sharing with your staff, and, by extension, with your many readers and writers.

I say this because of personal experience. I feel surprised that I have been a "correspondent" of *Jivan* for eight long years. I may have some special knowledge and skills in electronics and information technology, but I was barely proficient in the English language and in writing. Though I had the urge to communicate, I dared to write, only because, I was sure that you would edit and polish whatever I wrote.

Already as a student at De Britto, where you were the Regent, I could see you were highly talented, very broad-minded, and student-oriented. Thereafter there was no contact with you, but you had achieved fame for reviving the nearly defunct *New Leader*. So you can imagine my joy when, after I had joined the Society, you came to the Juniorate in Ahmedabad to give us a week's course on Journalism. I very much profited from your insistence on "correct English and grammar," on the basics of style, and on the necessity of reading everything with a very critical mind. I felt particularly grateful for pointing out what I had completely neglected before: the editorials and "letters to the editor" in newspapers and magazines.

Being a novice in journalism, scarcely having the required skills but making up for it through enthusiasm, I improved by reading my guru's editorials. I still can't believe that I did personal interviews with Jon Sorbrino, James Martin, Peter Milward, Greg Boyle, John O'Malley, Cardinal Oswald Gracius and a few others for *Jivan*. I did these with your guidance and corrections.

The issues of *Jivan* that you edited had a wide range, an aesthetic lay-out, variety of themes, and even opposing opinions, excellent interviews, national and international issues of concern. For the Jesuits in the United States, *Jivan* seemed to be the only source of information about the East, and for so many religious and priests in India it seems to be the only popular Christian magazine that consistently deals with issues in depth and with accuracy.

When you first took up *Jivan*, you had to fit into the large, elegant and cartoonistic shoes of Myron Pereira. With time you did it easily and even comfortably but, in the bargain, the shoes have become much bigger and broader and so your successor will have a lot to fill up and fit into. If I have to summarize your contribution as an editor and a writer, it just has to be 'Joe brings joy'.

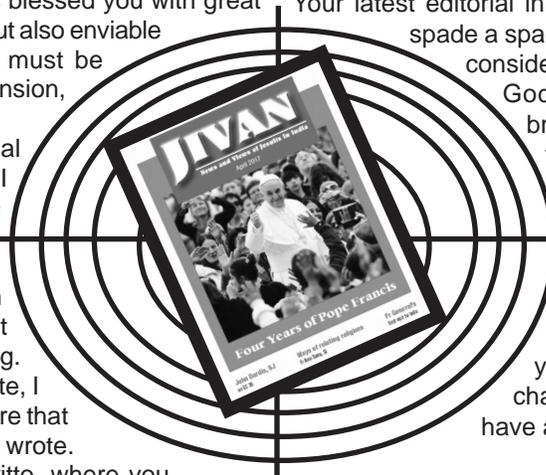
- John Rose, SJ
Mumbai - 400 016

Great job

In a way, I am sad that you are going away from *Jivan*. You have done a great job of it for many years, and at *The New Leader* earlier. The magazines you edited covered very diverse aspects of Jesuit and Church life – all of them interesting and inspiring. I always enjoyed reading them. Your latest editorial in *Jivan* was a great piece. 'Calling a spade a spade' in the Church circles is not always considered 'our way of proceeding!' Thank God for our brother Pope Francis for bringing truth, love and compassion to the heart of our religion.

On the other hand, I am happy that you can now move on to something else. For one thing, as the Socius of a Province like Madurai your hands must be really full, if not overflowing! I am sure you will continue writing interesting, challenging and inspiring pieces, as you have always done.

- Rappai Poothokaren, SJ
Vadodara - 391 101



More power to your pen

I have been an avid reader of *Jivan* since 1987, when I worked at the Jesuit Media Centre in Bangalore. At that time Fr Myron Pereira was Editor, and he took the magazine to great heights with his coverage of Jesuit news and views. I especially enjoyed his 'The Last Word.'

I continued to be enriched by *Jivan* after you took over the editorship, and am happy to see that you have raised the bar even further, with your enlightened coverage of many major church issues and events, and powerful interviews.

Needless to say I find your editorials always stimulating and heartwarming. Issues concerning women were very encouraging.

More power to your pen Fr Joe, and wish you many more fruitful years of service to Catholic journalism!

- Avis Deans
Bangalore - 560 001

Readable and informative

Your editorial in the April '17 issue of *Jivan*, brought the surprising announcement that you will be leaving your editor's office after the next issue. You have been generously serving the SA Assistency by getting *Jivan* ready with very readable and informative contents month after month for the past many years. The past four issues of the magazine from the November-December issue on, gave us substantial information about the preparation for and the outcome of the GC 36. Thank you, Fr. Joe!

- Mani Nedumattam, SJ
Jaipur - 302 001

Lessons for Life

I've learned from Rome...

BY MELWIN PINTO, SJ

Perceive God's presence: I recall the day I landed in Rome on 07 Feb 2012. The snow-covered city was a delightful sight... It has not snowed in the city ever since that winter season! But I began to discover more of God's beautiful world, as well as the Christian legacy and a glorious history of the Catholic Church in and around Rome. Everywhere I see, I perceive the presence of a God who labours, in partnership with humans.

Be available: Jesuit availability as a supreme virtue is what I learnt at the outset of my sojourn in Rome. Coming from the field of Secondary Education and shifting gears in order to work in a new field - communication - was not easy. But it has been a deeply rewarding and fulfilling experience, ever since I realized the fact that I am but an instrument in His hands.

Realize the universal mission: I knew that we Jesuits belong to a Society that is universal. But I felt the concrete sense of it when I began working for the Church, in the mission entrusted to the Society by the Holy Father. I saw I belonged to a worldwide mission along with many other Jesuits.

Transcend frontiers: It is quite a fad to dub a community or nationality, as for instance, 'Italians are such and such people.' But when you meet individuals you realize people are good and they can never match stereotypes. Moving with people of several nationalities, I experienced concern, brotherhood, affection... basic humanity which transcends all frontiers.

Remain rooted: Initially I found myself rather ill at ease with the new environment: the culture, the language, the climate, the life style, the food habits.. While inevitably adapting myself, especially to the new life style and culture I realized the importance of remaining rooted in my spirituality, my value system and my world-view.



Fr Melwin Pinto, SJ, (KAR) worked at the Vatican Radio, Rome, for the English Section for Asia, and as Coordinator for Indian Languages from February 2012 to March 2017.



Cultivate wings: No culture can claim to be superior to others. Everyone surely cherishes his own. But while remaining entrenched in one's traditional cultural values, appreciating and learning from other cultures and critically evaluating my own in that light, has indeed helped me integrate them, thereby cultivating wings in order to be a world citizen.

Build your self-esteem as a child of God: I worked with thorough professionals, whose calibre I thought I can never match. But when you cash in on your strengths and work on your limitations, you discover a world of opportunities that are at your doorstep which help you make a significant contribution. A self-esteem that springs from the fact that I am 'chosen' and 'sent' brought the best out of me as a 'child of God'.

Find strength in silence: From a very active and dynamic work atmosphere in a secondary school, I settled down in Rome, to a quiet environment of an office, working alone most of the time. For someone of a loquacious nature like mine, silence is perhaps the greatest penance. But when the environment forced it on me, I slowly discovered my true source of strength in the stillness.

Respect every person: From a greeting for a new day to multiple courtesies uttered at every move seemed superfluous to me at first. But I have begun to see a deeper value of respecting each person and wishing one well. More importantly employing the 'magical words' as Pope Francis calls them: 'sorry', 'please' and 'thank you', show the importance of a human relationship, however small the occasion may be.

Be grateful: I ended up working at the Vatican Radio under strange circumstances. One of the 'Ignatian' shrines I visited first, was 'the Chapel of La Storta', and what struck me were the words Christ told St Ignatius in the vision: 'I will be propitious to you in Rome'. It revived my drooping spirit and He has indeed been favorable to me. A grateful heart can find fulfillment in the worst of situations. ■

GREEN COVER

Brother Sun energizes Mother Earth!

Brother sun sheds his radiation on mother earth 24 hours of every day. It is the largest source of energy we have. Everything on earth needs the sun to survive. Human beings have used sun's radiation from time immemorial. Electricity, much of it produced from fossil fuel, made with solar energy lakhs of years ago, now dominate the energy scene on earth. But solar energy is the most abundant energy available to all, free.

Creative ways of capturing, transforming, storing and using solar energy for all our needs exist today. Imagination, creativity and commitment can energize our world, without using and exhausting non-renewable-fuels to generate energy. Over use of fossil fuel is causing serious and irreversible damage to Mother Earth.

Gujarat Jesuit Ecology Mission (GJEM) organizes solar exhibitions in schools, urban and rural, across Gujarat. It is a delight to see the thrill, joy and the sense-of-wonder on children's faces when they stand in front of a solar panel casting their shadow on it, and the solar fan, fountain, toy car,...! Our hope and dream is that that sense of awe and wonder of many a child would lead to revolutionary inventions to tame solar energy for our use in a myriad of ways.

Our solar exhibitions show small models to use solar energy for heating water, drying vegetables/fruits, for cooking,electricity production through solar steam turbines, direct conversion of solar energy with Photo-Voltaic panels into electricity for lighting, pumping water, running vehicles, etc... Students also make some simple devices for use of solar energy, like making solar cookers with card-board and silver paper, and actually cooking different items.

Children get fascinated and enjoy the whole experience; their curiosity, imagination and creativity are aroused. Some of them could become, I am sure, solar 'dreamers' who will harness Brother Sun's energy to make life on Mother Earth healthier and happier!

We have been organizing Solar Exhibitions for over 3 years now. Last month we had solar exhibitions in four of our Adivasi schools of south Gujarat, with over ten neighbouring schools and villages visiting them. Some thousands, mostly children, were exposed to the miracle of Brother Sun!

- Rappai Poothokaren, SJ



MOMENTS



"A star falls from the sky and into your hands. Then it seeps through your veins and swims inside your blood and becomes every part of you. And then you have to put it back into the sky. And it's the most painful thing you'll ever have to do and that you've ever done. But what's yours is yours. Whether it's up in the sky or here in your hands."

- C. JoyBell C.