



# RANCHI JESUITS



**Showing**  
the Way to God



**Walking**  
with the Excluded



**Journeying**  
with the Youth



**Caring**  
for our Common Home

**YEAR BOOK | 2023**  
Jesuit Mission And Ministries



**"After you have made a decision that is pleasing to God,  
the Devil may try to make you have second thoughts.  
Intensify your prayer time, meditation, and good deeds."**

**St Ignatius of Loyola**

# RANCHI JESUITS

## YEAR BOOK | 2023

UNIVERSAL  
APOSTOLIC  
PREFERENCES



# AMDG

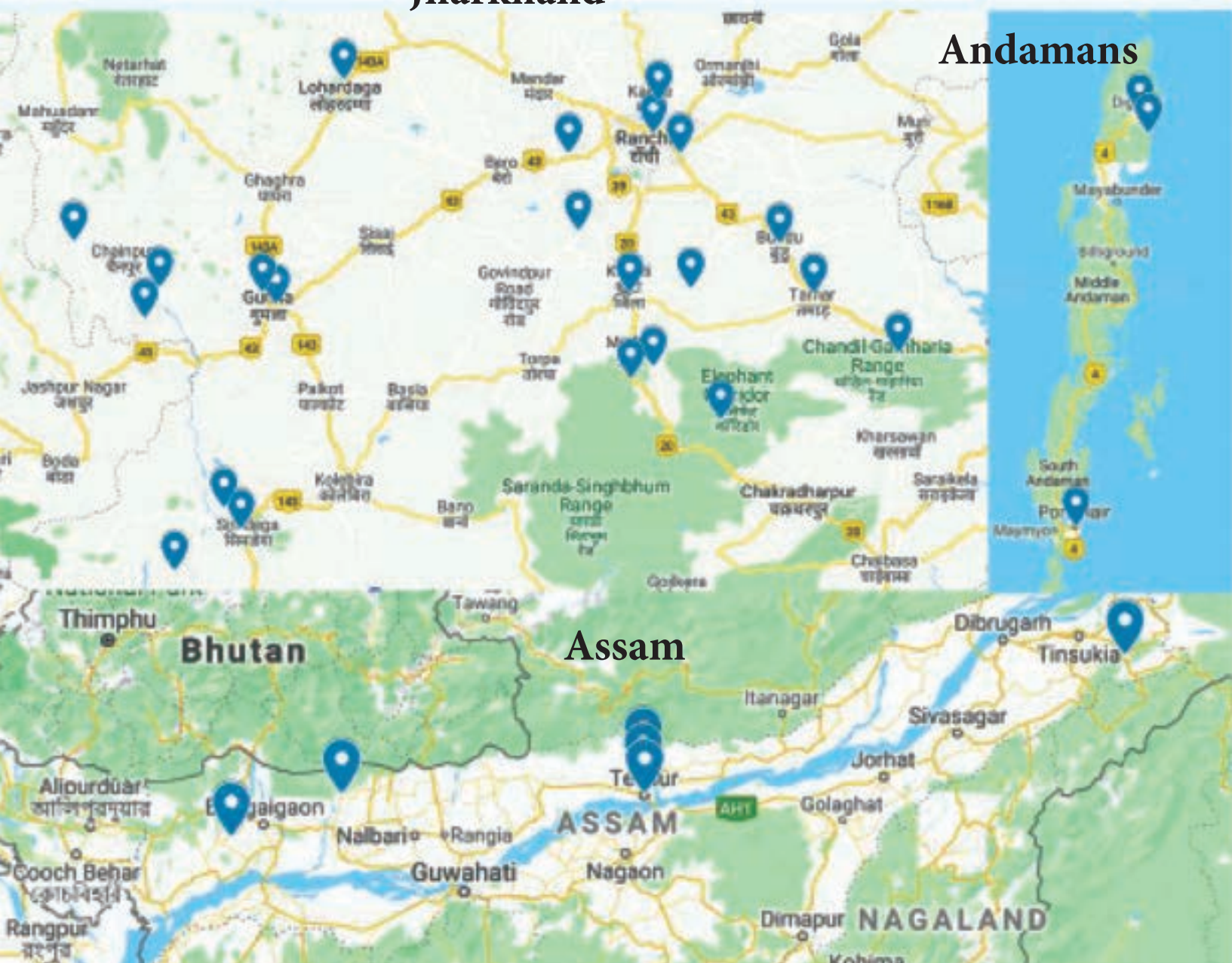
For the Greater Glory of God



# RANCHI PROVINCE

## Jharkhand

## Andamans



## Imprimi Potest

**Fr. Ajit Kumar Xess, SJ**

Provincial Superior

Ranchi Jesuit Society

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# Table of Contents

| Sl. No.                                          | Table of Contents                                                                      | Author(s)                                           | Page. No. |
|--------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|-----------|
|                                                  | Editorial Team                                                                         |                                                     | v         |
|                                                  | Foreword                                                                               | Fr. Ajit Kumar Xess, SJ                             | vi        |
|                                                  | From the Editor's Desk...                                                              | Fr. Sanjay Kerketta, SJ                             | vii       |
| <b>SECTION A: FRUIT GATHERING</b>                |                                                                                        |                                                     |           |
| 1                                                | Being Rooted and Grounded in Ignatian Spirituality                                     | Fr. Deepak Toppo, SJ                                | 2         |
| 2                                                | Fruits of the Ignatian Year from the perspective of the implementation of UAP and RPAP | Fr. Sylverius Chermako, SJ                          | 4         |
| 3                                                | Following Poor and Humble Christ in Ranchi Province                                    | Fr. Pingal Kujur, SJ                                | 6         |
| 4                                                | Synodality – A New Way of Being A Church                                               | Fr. Ashok Sandil, SJ                                | 9         |
| <b>SECTION B: UAP &amp; RPAP IN THE PROVINCE</b> |                                                                                        |                                                     |           |
| 5                                                | Nursery of Vocation                                                                    | Fr. Ajit Saras, SJ & Fr. Johnny Kujur, SJ           | 16        |
| 6                                                | Schola Affectus: The School of The Heart                                               | Fr. Ravi Bhushan Xess, SJ                           | 19        |
| 7                                                | Feed My Lamb (Pastoral Mission)                                                        | Fr. Ignatius Minz, SJ                               | 21        |
| 8                                                | Read The Past To Write The Future                                                      | Fr. Anup Chand Kiran Minz, SJ                       | 23        |
| 9                                                | MAG+Stic Moments (Accompanying the Youth)                                              | Fr. James Balmuchu, SJ                              | 25        |
| 10                                               | Schooling the Young Minds (Secondary & Higher Secondary Education)                     | Fr. Fuldeo Soreng, SJ                               | 29        |
| 11                                               | Green Auditing: An Essential Part of Higher Education                                  | Fr. Prabhat Kennedy Soreng, SJ                      | 33        |
| 12                                               | You are Precious (Brothers' Commission, Ranchi)                                        | Bro. Telesphopre Horo, SJ                           | 36        |
| 13                                               | Ranchi Province Infirmary: A Welcoming Home                                            | Fr. Raymond Kerketta, SJ & Bro. Telesphore Horo, SJ | 38        |
| 14                                               | Speaking the Truth with Love                                                           | Fr. Justin Tirkey, SJ & Fr. Alex Tirkey, SJ         | 40        |
| 15                                               | From the Frontiers (Assam Mission)                                                     | Fr. Thomas Barla, SJ                                | 43        |
| 16                                               | Jesuit Mission in Andaman and Car Nicobar Islands                                      | Fr. Alexius Dungdung, SJ                            | 45        |

| <b>SECTION C: UAP &amp; RPAP IN DIASPORA</b>        |                                                                                                                                         |                                                   |     |
|-----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 17                                                  | Search for Peace & Justice (Japan Mission)                                                                                              | Sch. Priyatam Lakra, SJ                           | 48  |
| 18                                                  | Our Life and Mission in Guyana                                                                                                          | Fr. Elias Surin, SJ and Fr. Anugrah Amar Bage, SJ | 51  |
| 19                                                  | International Migration... Refugees (Jordan)                                                                                            | Fr. Bimal Kerketta, SJ                            | 53  |
| 20                                                  | Pontiff's Call to Universities & Institutions (Rome)                                                                                    | Fr. Kulwant Minj, SJ                              | 54  |
| <b>SECTION D: STALWARTS TO FOLLOW</b>               |                                                                                                                                         |                                                   |     |
| 21                                                  | Fr. Ignatius Tete, SJ: A Shepherd to Feed His Lambs                                                                                     | Fr. Francis David Kullu, SJ                       | 58  |
| 22                                                  | Fr. Sudhir Kujur, SJ: AGE QUOD AGIS                                                                                                     | Sch. Ajay Paulus Minz, SJ                         | 64  |
| 23                                                  | Fr. Emmanuel Horo, SJ: An All Rounder                                                                                                   | Fr. Michael Kerketta, SJ                          | 66  |
| 24                                                  | Fr. Benedict Kiro, SJ: An Untold Story                                                                                                  | Fr. Rohit Kujur, SJ                               | 68  |
| 25                                                  | Br. Isidore Ekka, SJ: Humblest to the Core                                                                                              | Fr. Ajay A. Minj, SJ                              | 70  |
| <b>SECTION E: SPECIAL MOMENTS OF GOD'S GRACE...</b> |                                                                                                                                         |                                                   |     |
| 26                                                  | Responding to God's Call Through First Vows                                                                                             | Fr. Ashok Sandil, SJ                              | 74  |
| <b>Final Vows</b>                                   |                                                                                                                                         |                                                   |     |
| 27                                                  | Fr. Vijay Kumar Minj, SJ                                                                                                                | Fr. Ashok Sandil, SJ                              | 76  |
| 28                                                  | Fr. Ajay Arun Minj, SJ                                                                                                                  | Fr. Ashok Sandil, SJ                              | 77  |
| <b>Ordination</b>                                   |                                                                                                                                         |                                                   |     |
| 29                                                  | Fr. Anil Kullu, SJ                                                                                                                      | Fr. Ashok Sandil, SJ                              | 79  |
| 30                                                  | Fr. Lazarus Basumatary, SJ                                                                                                              | Fr. Ashok Sandil, SJ                              | 81  |
| 31                                                  | Fr. Marius Baghwar, SJ                                                                                                                  | Fr. Ashok Sandil, SJ                              | 83  |
| 32                                                  | Fr. Pramod Bara, SJ                                                                                                                     | Fr. Ashok Sandil, SJ                              | 85  |
| 33                                                  | Fr. Valentine Sinduria, SJ                                                                                                              | Fr. Ashok Sandil, SJ                              | 87  |
| 34                                                  | Solemn Eucharistic Celebration and Veneration On the Eve of the 129th Death Anniversary of the Servant of God, Fr. Constant Lievens, SJ | Fr. Alex Ekka, SJ                                 | 89  |
| <b>SECTION F: OBITUARY</b>                          |                                                                                                                                         |                                                   |     |
| 35                                                  | Fr. Benjamin Lakra, SJ (1944 - 2022): A Jesuit Agricultural Scientist with No Guile                                                     | Fr. Henry Barla, SJ                               | 96  |
| 36                                                  | Fr. Patrick Tete, SJ (1925 - 2022): A Pastor Par Excellence                                                                             | Fr. Xavier Soreng, SJ                             | 99  |
| 37                                                  | Fr. Vinod Kumar Bilung, SJ (1957 - 2023): A True Mathematician                                                                          | Fr. Nicholas Tete, SJ                             | 101 |
| 38                                                  | Fr. Britius Ekka, SJ (1950 - 2023): I Have Fought A Good Fight                                                                          | Fr. Fuldeo Soreng, SJ                             | 103 |





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## Foreword

It is a gratifying experience for me to write the foreword for the Ranchi Jesuits: Yearbook 2023. This book details the memories captured from the events that ensued in our life and mission so as to reminisce again.

The spiritual celebration of the Ignatian Year – the 500th Anniversary of the Conversion of St. Ignatius of Loyola – was a redefining moment for the Ranchi Jesuits. During my visits to different communities and institutions – formal and informal – across the Province and diverse Mission lands, wherever our men are, manifested inner joy and

transformation they deeply experienced facilitated by the programs of the Ignatian Year.

The fruits of the Ignatian Year could also be felt definitely across different commissions and new apostolic ventures inspired by the Universal Apostolic Preferences (UAPs) and Ranchi Province Apostolic Preferences (RPAPs). I was overwhelmed to experience as to how our men strove relentlessly to implement the planning of UAPs and RPAPs. The degree of success was immaterial to us; it will be designed by God, but the genuine efforts need to be counted which were made ‘without counting the cost’.

Fr. General’s invitation to rediscover our roots of the Vow of Poverty also bore much fruit, as it was a felt need in today’s consumeristic culture and context. The province men deeply reflected on this invitation and immersed themselves into this process of rediscovering Jesus, the poor and humble.

The efforts for the implementations of UAPs and RPAPs are on and we wish that this continues with a similar measure of magnanimity. It is a process, which demands creativity, commitment, fidelity, and unflinching determination to do the will of the Father after the fashion of Jesus, the poor and humble. Such efforts necessarily ask of us ‘Communion with the Father’ that can be exemplified in the union of our minds and hearts in Jesus Christ.

All these sentiments are engraved in this Yearbook 2023. It is a mirror of our life and mission and at the same time a pointer to what we ought to be in the days to come. I congratulate the Editorial Board headed by Fr. Sanjay Kerketta, SJ for bringing out Ranchi Jesuits: Yearbook 2023. I also thank all the authors for sharing their life and works from different places. This will surely generate a sense of belonging among us and inspire and motivate us to ever remain united in spirit.

May God bless us all!  
Yours in Christ,

Fr. Ajit Kumar Xess, SJ  
Provincial





## *From the Editor's Desk...*

**B**enjamin Franklin once said, “Nobody plans to fail except those who fail to plan”. Without short and long-term plan, no establishment can achieve its goals and targets. But for a Jesuit why does one need to plan if we firmly believe that God has a plan for us? This is a simple but staggering question that each Jesuit is invited to ask himself. Ignatius himself learnt it a hard way. After his normal childhood he had dreamt and planned to be valiant and valorous knight in the service of the Spanish Crown and achieving a high-profile rank of Spanish Nobility. God deigned differently according to his plan and everything unfolded in the course of time as he learnt to listen to God and discern. In the course of his convalescence he would have listened and experienced as Jeremiah says, “For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you future with hope” (Jer. 29:11). He learnt to listen to God and ponder over them and make choices. Thus, as he gained spiritual maturity gradually, he devised the tools for discernment. Listening to God and discerning His will is, thus, one of the greatest legacies that St. Ignatius gave to the world. It is this legacy that has been cherished and lived in the history of the Society in different epochs to time.

In today’s context, when the world is smaller but more complex, this legacy is more desired in Jesuit apostolic ventures. Thanks to the Superior General Fr. Arturo Sosa who initiated the process of Universal Apostolic Preferences following the legacy of listening and discerning and which was meticulously followed by the Six Conferences. We have concrete plans that are to be executed.

In tune with this Ranchi Province has with it Ranchi Province Apostolic Plan which are the guiding lights which have given us a new and right direction in our apostolic adventures in the midst of propelling evil winds. Since the implementation of UAP and RPAP, there is sea change visibly noticed in our apostolic works. This Yearbook 2023 is a mirror to the implementation of UAP and RPAP. All the commissions in the province and different institutions in the province, its mission lands and diaspora in different ways have made efficacious efforts in implementing them and the results have been observable. This Yearbook gives us a glimpse of how these are being implemented and how each Jesuit has been overwhelmed by these. It will just take some time to have a cursory look and we should be proud to have these being implemented. After all it was a tall task to frame through the lengthy process of discernment. It is still a taller task to implement them. But as God worked in the life of St. Ignatius, it will work in our lives too provided we keep listening to him.

To conclude, I would like to thank Fr. Provincial, all the editorial board members, those who have contributed to the cause of this Yearbook either directly or indirectly. Wish that it is a happy and meaningful reading.

Fr. Sanjay Kerketta, SJ







## **RANCHI PROVINCE DAYS 2023**

**21 May Sunday - 24 May Wednesday**  
**Manresa House Ranchi**

# SECTION A

## FRUIT GATHERING







# 1

## Being Rooted and Grounded in Ignatian Spirituality

Fr. Deepak Toppo, SJ

The Spiritual Exercises (SE), on which the very foundation of Ignatian Spirituality lies helps a Jesuit to get rid of the inordinate attachments enabling him to live a life as God wishes him to live (SE 1). Through the Contemplation to Obtain Love (SE 230), a Jesuit obtains the grace of total communion and identification with Jesus and becomes “persona Christi”.

Like St. Paul, he is ready to say “I live now not with my own life but with the life of Christ who lives in me (Gal. 2:20)” and is ready for God’s mission: a mission of love and service.

The mission of a Jesuit is to live like Jesus and to love as Jesus loved; it is doing the will of God. But what is the will of God for us today? Some years ago, the Society of Jesus entered into the process of discernment to discern its mission at the universal level to better love and serve God and His people. The outcome of this process was the Universal Apostolic Preferences (UAP) that spelt out the mission of the Society as - 1. Showing the way to God through the SE and the practice of discernment; 2. Walking with the poor, the outcasts of the world, and those whose dignity has been violated, in the mission of reconciliation and justice; 3. Walking together with young people, to build a hope-filled future; 4. Working together to care for the earth, our common home. In truth, all these preferences are closely connected to each other, leading toward the one Mission as mentioned above.

Through the process of spiritual conversation, the Ranchi Province owned UAP and personalized it as RPAP (Ranchi Province Apostolic Preferences), integrating these preferences into the life and mission of the province. Various Commissions of the Province discerned concrete action plans to actualize RPAP. Many of the action plans have already been carried out with great vigour and spirit,

some are being carried out while some others would be soon implemented.

Here I would like to describe briefly some of the works done by the Ignatian Spirituality Commission. The objective of the Commission concerning RPAP is – “Being Rooted and Grounded in Ignatian Spirituality”. To attain this objective, the commission carried out many initiatives some of which are the following:

1. Classes for the pre-novices and novices on Ignatian Spirituality.
2. Ignatian retreats for educators, pastors and scholastics.
3. Recollections and faith sharing for young priests awaiting tertianship.
4. Ignatian pilgrimage to historical places (Bendora, Sarwada, Regarih, Kochang) at the community and zonal level.
5. Recollections at the community level on various Ignatian themes.
6. Ignatian retreats for school children.

The Commission made a team of resource persons (both within and outside the Province) and took the team’s help in the implementation of the above action plan. The classes for pre-novices and novices were organized and conducted regularly by Jesuits well-versed in Ignatian Spirituality. They were designed with a view of providing a basic understanding of the principles of Ignatian Spirituality and to foster a keen interest in Ignatian Spirituality, leading them to fall in love with it.

The Ignatian retreats for educators, pastors, and scholastics turned out to be a welcome opportunity to take a break from routine work and enabled these persons to engage themselves in a period of spiritual renewal. It was meant to help them deepen their relationship with God and to renew their commitment to the mission. The grace prayed for was that they be rooted and grounded in Ignatian Spirituality.





The recollections and faith sharing for young priests helped the priests to share moments of companionship and feel a sense of oneness concerning their life and mission as Jesuits. The sharing of personal experiences and insights made one feel accepted, appreciated and supported in the spiritual journey of one's life. The pilgrimages to Ignatian places, namely, the places where the early missionaries of the Province lived, worked, and prayed, provided Jesuits with an opportunity to understand Ignatian Spirituality in its depth. These pilgrimages helped the Jesuits to imbibe the spirit of the early missionaries and to reconnect with the Jesuit tradition of the Province by renewing one's commitment to the mission.

Community recollections on various Ignatian themes were conducted to reflect and to pray together. The consolations of the recollections were experienced in terms of building the community, fostering spiritual growth, encouraging accountability and strengthening the mission. Ignatian Retreats for school children were conducted over 2-5 days. Through retreats, the children were introduced to basic principles of Ignatian Spirituality in an interesting and a simple manner. In this way, Jesuits strove to form young students under their care through nurturing their spiritual growth, fostering their moral development and teaching them ways to live out their Christian faith with authenticity and purpose.

In the implementation of the action plans of the Commission, Jharna, a centre for Ignatian Spirituality and located at Namkum, played a vital role. Through various programmes of the centre, the Commission worked to attain its objective. The performance of the Ignatian Spirituality Commission has been commendable concerning RPAP. As a matter of fact, all the Commissions of the Province have shown great commitment to RPAP.

The primary condition that ensures fruitfulness in the mission of God is our personal relationship with Him, the very core of our being rooted and grounded in Ignatian Spirituality. The more one is intimate with Jesus, the more fruitful one becomes in His mission, even when one is considered a failure in the eyes of the world. If a farmer goes out to sow his seed and has no seed, it is evident he cannot plant anything and cannot expect any harvest. The same is true of the RPAP. If a Jesuit uses his head, hands, feet, tongue and all his energies to actualize RPAP but is lacking in divine love, he is lacking in the very heart of the mission. The effective action that bears fruit flows from the heart that is united with God. Are we united with God? St. Ignatius was so united with God that he could find God every time, any hour that he wished (Autobiography 99). May we too develop a personal relationship with Him and become effective in our mission, working on RPAP.



## 2

# Fruits of the Ignatian Year from the perspective of the implementation of UAP and RPAP

Fr. Sylverius Chermako, SJ

*“It is my desire that at the heart of this Ignatian year, we would hear the Lord calling us, and we would allow him to work our conversion inspired by the personal experience of Ignatius.”*



From May 20, 2021 until July 31, 2022, the Society of Jesus worldwide celebrated the Ignatian Year to mark the 500th anniversary of St.

Ignatius' conversion. This Ignatian Year offered us an opportunity not only to recall, re-live, relate that privileged moment, the conversion of St. Ignatius and his pilgrim way but also to review, refresh and renew our life and mission. This celebration was not merely an event but an on-going process of conversion for all of us. Our Fr. General through his letter, addressed to the whole Society on the 27th of September, 2019, as he announced the Ignatian Year, invited to go through the personal, communitarian and institutional conversion stating – “it is my desire that at the heart of the Ignatian Year we would hear the Lord calling us and we would allow Him to work our conversion inspired by the personal experience of Ignatius”. Hence, this celebration was a call for

us to allow the Lord to work on our conversion. It was a call to discover a new apostolic enthusiasm within ourselves, a new life, and new ways to follow the Lord and thereby to see all things new in Christ. The whole year was guided by the Universal Apostolic Preferences (UAP) and the Ranchi Province Apostolic Preferences (RPAP), which as we know were announced in 2019 and continue until 2029. Assimilating the UAP and RPAP means conversion of each one of us, of our communities, our institutions and our apostolic works.

The Ignatian year was a moment of KAIROS for the entire Ranchi Province. We have received various graces. The Gospel of St. John 8:32, “The truth will make you free” underlines the core graces we have received. At the outset the Ignatian Year has opened our eyes to the truth about ourselves. We have realized deeply, we as human beings, though unworthy, yet are graced beings, precious and beloved in the sight of God. It has also opened our eyes to our human frailties, weaknesses and shortcomings. We have received the grace of recognizing who we are and the Cannonball moments of our life have reconnected us to our own personal vocation.







We have also come to know the truth of our own context. The Ignatian Year has opened our eyes to the context that we live in, specifically the context of covid-19 and the context of the life of Fr. Stan Swamy. We faced the challenges of glaring inequalities and injustices at the local and universal level. We were impelled to reflect "what must I do for Christ"? Whether I shall remain in the castle or serve the people in the streets? The present context has revealed to us, the solidarity and support with which people have approached to each other. The various programs of the whole year-monthly thematic personal reading on Ignatian resources, community recollections, spiritual conversation and



pilgrimage have enriched all of us very deeply and made us aware about the richness of our Ignatian resources and heritage. It has generated a new taste and interest in us for the Ignatian resources. They have also helped us to re-connect to the context that we live in.

We are social beings. Hence, we are interconnected beings. The Ignatian Year has opened our eyes to understand this interconnectedness. Whole of the Ignatian family, be the Jesuits, religious or laity have realized that we are collaborators in the mission of building up the kingdom of God. We experienced that we are strengthened in our union of hearts and minds. It has also strengthened our bond of mutual love and companionship, mutual trust and understanding amongst Jesuits and our collaborators and all of us have experienced a deep-rooted spiritual contentment in our hearts.

The closing of the Ignatian Year was a new beginning. The graces that we have received during this Ignatian Year in the form of a sapling will become a big tree and bear much fruit in carrying forward our UAP and RPAP.







# 3

## Following Poor and Humble Christ in Ranchi Province

Fr. Pingal Kujur, SJ

Being poor sounds inane, if not crazy, in an era that values and venerates wealth. Drawing on from the founder Father St Ignatius, Fr General Arturo Sosa, SJ has written to all Jesuits to embrace poverty as their mother. In fact, Jesuit Poverty derives its meaning from Jesus' Poverty. St. Paul says, "You know well the generosity of Christ Jesus our Lord. Although he was rich,

he made himself poor to make you rich through his poverty" (2 Cor 8: 9). The Cannon Ball experience was a learning, purifying and turning point for St. Ignatius. He turned from his worldliness to greater intimacy with God. He gave away his sword and knightly robe keeping them in front of the altar of the statue of our Lady at Montserrat and put on sackcloth. This he did for the Greater Glory of God and for the service of humanity. This became the part of Ignatian Spirituality.

In the Sixties-Seventies the Liberation Theologians of Latin America initiated struggles against the existing society's unjust Power Structures. They adopted a motto 'option for the poor'. Besides other issues, Vat. II and the last five General Congregations paved the way for justice issues, cultural revivalism, promotion of faith and love, option for the poor, our way of life and Vow of Poverty. Fr. Pedro Aruppe stressed Preferential Option for the Poor. Pope Francis' Encyclical 'Laudato Si' and his call for a Synodal Church continue to challenge us.

### Universal Apostolic Preferences

Former Superior General of the Society of Jesus, Fr. Adolfo Nicholas also felt the need to look and re-look into our lives. For that he called upon Jesuits for individual, institutional and provincial restructuring. The Jesuits all over the world feel that it is our prime duty to think and work for the global as well as local churches and respond to the challenges. Along with it, Fr. General Arturo Sosa has urged the

Society to examine about how we live our vow of Poverty. Fr. General Arturo Sosa says, "The Jesuit becomes poor to get closer to the life style of Jesus." He wrote to all the Jesuit companions and invited them to a personal, community and Province wise journey about this vow of poverty at the predate of Ignatian year. He states, "The vow of Poverty by its



nature must be apostolic. The Jesuit life style must be poor and apostolic". St. Ignatius said, "The Jesuit should have a life style like that of Jesus and the Apostles." It is an evangelical poverty or apostolic poverty and not the sociological poverty. According to Fr. General, Social poverty is the fruit of injustice and that is not God's will. Evangelical poverty, on the other hand, enriches because it gives life; it offers inner freedom and it enables detachment from possession. Pope Francis affirmed the statement of St. Ignatius to the members of the 36th General Congregation "Religious Poverty is a mother and a bulwark. Poverty nurtures, mothers, generates spiritual life, a life of holiness, apostolic life and it is a wall, it defends."





Fr. Arturo Sosa, the Jesuit Superior General on Feb. 19, 2019 announced the four Universal Apostolic Preferences, which invite us to a process of conversation in which the examen of the way we live 'The Vow of Poverty' is included. Among the four Apostolic Preferences, the 2nd clearly takes the side of the poor. It says, "To walk with the poor, the outcasts of the world, those whose dignity has been violated, in a mission of reconciliation and justice.

"The UAP invites us to a process of conversation in which the examen of the way we live the vow of poverty has a place. These are clear connections between each of the UAPs and the examen that we are beginning our living out of the vow of poverty necessarily affects the way we show the pathway to God, the way we walk with the impoverished on a path of reconciliation and justice, the way we want to accompany young people and our way of caring for our Common home."

### **Ranchi Province Apostolic Preferences**

The Ranchi Province Mission Vision Statement is very much in conformity with Jesus' Mission Vision Statement (LK 4: 18-19). We are called by Jesus to share his mission of love and service by participating in the struggle of the people, particularly the marginalized and the oppressed in Jharkhand. It is through collaboration the people of good will in our mission of justice, peace, harmony and Promotion of Culture.

The entire Ranchi Province men came together and chalked out six Ranchi Province Apostolic Preferences for the Province. They are:

- (1) Being rooted and grounded in Ignatian Spirituality and sharing the same with others.
- (2) Walking with the poor, the oppressed, the marginalized, particularly the tribals for peace, justice, reconciliation and harmony.
- (3) Understanding and accompanying youth for a meaningful life and a hope filled future.
- (4) Caring for and preserving our common home and promoting ecological justice and biodiversity.
- (5) Being men of Competence, Commitment, Conscience and Compassion to ensure quality and value-based education in accordance with the Jesuit Tradition and Heritage.

- (6) Promoting vocations and ensuring quality formation with good formation policy, programme, structure and implementation.

We are aware of the fact that we live among the poor, live for them and work for them. In the second Preference it is stated that we walk with the poor, the oppressed, marginalized, the tribals. Each Commission of the Province is aware of the situation and purposefully with specific plans and activities is moving ahead with the set goals within the time frame (long term, mid-term and short term). For each Preference there are some objectives to be achieved.

### **Life of Poverty in our Mission**

Let us ponder over our mission and ministries. Now we are working not only in Jharkhand, the main land but also in Assam, Andaman Islands, Cambodia, Guyana, Rome, Near East Province and Japan engaged in different apostolates.

### **Pastoral ministries**

Being in the Parishes, there are greater opportunities to be with God's people in their joys and sorrows and in their life struggles. We need to discover ever newer ways and means to reach them out, especially the poor.

### **Social Apostolates and Law Associates**

Through our Social Institutes and Organizations like AROUSE, Gana Chetna Samaj, Bagaicha ... we are rendering our service to many people, victims of injustice and poor, so also through the Hoffmann Law Associates and Legal Cell and Human Right. We are working for their rights by concientizing them



through motivation camps, awareness programmes, conducting workshops, giving seminars and training, Child and Woman development programme, working





for migrants, availing them for legal help, peoples' movements by Self Help Groups and Gram Sabha etc. We have our Tribal Museum and Seasonal *Raag* as our cultural heritage. Our aim is to nurture it more and preserve it. The poor and marginalized are our target group.

### Education Apostolate

We are running many schools and a few colleges. We have Institutes like XISS and XIPT. Our aim is to achieve the Jesuit Excellence. The high standard is to be maintained but not at the cost of poor. We have to see that poor are not left out in this regard. Preferences should be given to them. We are aware of this, therefore Programmes like 'Outreach Programme; the very idea of XIPT is the result of this. In Schools and Colleges so many programmes, curricular as well as extracurricular



activities take place like School fest, College fest, Dance Competitions and other Competitions, Annual Sports, Games etc. take place. The Ignatian Spirituality is also fostered by programmes like IPP, LEAP, Ignatian Retreats and Quiz.

### Research Centre

Dr. Camil Bulcke Research Centre is opened so that many Research Students especially the tribals benefit from it. Similarly, research departments at St Xavier's College also offers umpteen opportunities for researchers on Ādivāsi issues and problems.

### Youth Apostolate

Different levels of youth are taken care of by various organizations like AICUF ( for the College Students), C.L.C ( High School), Youth (Diocese, Vicariate, Parish), Jeevan Pravesh, Kishor Nagar, Loyola Training Centre etc. These strive to inculcate the Christian values and Ignatian values in them. Loyola Training Centre is preparing our people for different Competitive Exams and thereby to help them to go for different jobs.

### Formation

Different formation houses help the Jesuits particularly those in formation (Novices, Scholastics, Deacons) and Priests to inculcate in their life the value of poverty so that through their life they may become counter-cultural in our consumerist world. Proper use of resources and money for better apostolic effectiveness is the need of the hour. However, professional training for managing finance and other resources is required so that Jesuits as a body can be living witness to Jesus the poor.

### Media and Press

Media centres like Satya Bharati, Xavier Publication and the Catholic Press do render yeoman's service to God's people. However, with the emergence of social media and the reticence of the mainstream media on issues of injustice, communalism and unholy alliance of politics and religion at the cost of the vast majority of the poor, the media centres require newer approach and ever creative commitment in their service to the poor and the marginalized.

### Different Training Centres

While agriculture seems to have moved from being a livelihood providing work to an industry and thus the farmers live at the mercy of the industrialists. As a consequence, poor landholders suffer continuous loss of their livelihood. In this context the relevance and innovativeness of our Agriculture Training Centre becomes crucial for livelihood. Catechist Training Centre (CTC) can be a good medium to innovatively teach faith and also promote lay collaboration. Such a move will help fulfill the dream of Pope Francis – the dream of a Synodal Church.

Our missionaries, Fr. Constant Lievens, Fr. Herman Rasschaert, Fr. J.B. Hoffmann and others rendered their valuable service and transformed lives for the poor, the tribals of Chotanāggpur. They saved the people from landlords, money lenders and oppressors. They fought for the oppressed and secured their land from these oppressors. They restored their language, culture and peace. Fr. Stan Swamy's sacrifice for the poor and vulnerable will not be forgotten. They have set us examples following the guidelines of the UAP and RPAP. We can go ahead to serve the humanity especially the poor and marginalized, by following the guidelines of UAP and RPAP.



# 4

## Synodality – A New Way of Being A Church

Fr. Ashok Sandil, SJ

Pope Francis has a knack for giving fitting and timely responses to the emerging problems and complexities of the world and the Church. He is aware that the growing individualism and deteriorating human community and communitarianism values have crept into human society that they pose a threat to the Kingdom of God as envisaged by the Church. In this context,



he has given a clarion call to be a new way of being the Church – synodality – by convoking the world Synod of Bishops with the theme: “For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation and Mission.” “Synodality” literally means “walking together.” The Greek meaning of ecclesia too is “assembly of people” – people called out together for a special purpose, the Church as a pilgrim “people of God.” Thus, by convoking the synod on the theme of Synodality, Pope Francis has placed the Church right into its core identity. The essential idea in the Pope’s teaching is that the grace of baptism makes one part of the body of the Church and, therefore, responsible for its life and mission. In a hierarchical church, that shared responsibility calls for regular, serious, and structural forums for listening to all members of the Church. At the same time, as the Pope has said, it does not mean putting decisions to a vote as if a synod were a parliament. Synodality, which has been present in Christianity since its inception, is not simply about involving people in decision-making but involving all the baptized in listening to the Holy Spirit and discerning God’s will. The goal always is to find the best ways for every baptized person to fulfill the Church’s mission of proclaiming God’s love and salvation in Jesus Christ to the world.

Vatican II has outlined the ideal of the Church as a *communio* – a Church of the one ‘people of God’ in fundamental equality; the idea of a ‘new society’, as it has evolved from the beginning, which overcomes the distinction between a ‘teaching’ Church (the

clergy) and a ‘listening’ Church (the laity). We are, therefore, called in our ‘being and becoming’ a listening Church along with the teaching Church, living and proclaiming the message.

Therefore, the chosen people of God are one: ‘one Lord, one faith, one baptism’ (Eph. 4:5); sharing a common dignity and as members from their regeneration in Christ, having the same filial grace and the same vocation to perfection [...] and one undivided charity. There is, therefore, in Christ [...] no inequality on the basis of race or nationality, social condition or sex, because ‘there is neither Jew nor Greek: there is neither bond nor free: there is neither male nor female. For you are all ‘one’ in Christ Jesus’ (Gal 3:28; cf. Col 3:11) [...] all are called to sanctity [...] And if by the will of Christ, some are made [...] pastors [...] on behalf of others, yet all share a true equality with regard to the dignity and to the activity common to all the faithful for the building up of the Body of Christ” (LG 32). This proclamation made by the Council is yet to gain more ground in the Church and in the reality of pastoral care. Had it been realized in its true sense of the word; we would have witnessed a drastic change in the atmosphere and ambiance of the Church.

Our shared hope gives us ‘confidence and pride’ (Heb. 3:6), a sign of this new society. It unites us all, ordained or not, as equals in our Lord. We join hands with Pope Francis in cherishing the gift of synodality – to be rooted in our identity as the Church “journeying together”, as the pilgrim Church listening to the Holy Spirit in and through every baptized person, discerning God’s will and thus fulfill *Missio Dei* – Mission of God – according to one’s calling.

### 2. Our Mission in the Church

A synodal Church is where there is unity in faith and where all participate actively in the prophetic mission – a mission of evangelization and proclaiming the Good News of salvation and liberation, of





announcing the gospel of life, justice, and peace. Synodality is lived out in the Church in the service of the mission. The whole People of God is an agent of the proclamation of the Gospel. Every baptized person is called to be a protagonist of the mission since we are all missionary disciples. The Church is called, in synodal synergy, to activate the ministries and charisms present in her life and to listen to the voice of the Spirit, in order to discern the ways of evangelization.

Our mission in the Church could be broadly categorized into the following though this may not be an exhaustive list:

**2.1 Pastoral Ministry:** To renew and strengthen the faith of the people by teaching and preaching the word of God, through retreats, recollections, faith formation, and revitalizing the sacramental life of the people aiming at building a humane society based on the Kingdom values. This also includes communion distribution, catechism, visiting the sick, catechetical work, house visits, BCC Prayer, village retreat, novena, counselling, animation program (*Mahila Sangh/Catholic Sabha/Youth/Krusvir*), etc.

**2.2 Health Care Service:** To give an apt and timely response in attending to those who fall sick and become indisposed needing our help or special care and attention in any way so as to grow in sensitivity and solidarity, especially toward all those who are sick and aged, and in suffering from any kind, appreciating in them the value and dignity of life itself. This can be carried out through village awareness programs, herbal medicine practices, village health camps, leper care, terminal illness care, etc. This will create a vibrant, healthy, compassionate society sharing truly the pain, fear, and anxiety of suffering people in their loneliness due to age, sickness, and recuperation through our frequent visits to them; and when they approach the hour of death, to comfort and support them with our visits, nearness, presence, and prayers.

**2.3 Education:** To form young men and women for others, who will distinguish themselves by their academic excellence, sound character, spirit of selfless service, and leadership qualities and who will commit themselves to the task of ushering in the much-needed radical transformation of present-

day social conditions, and thus, contribute toward building a just and eco-friendly humane society, where genuine freedom, equality of opportunities and respect for religious, moral and social values found in the Gospel and enshrined in the Constitution of India will prevail. This function could be discharged in colleges, schools, and hostels, through remedial classes, moral classes, and religion classes and through some vocational courses such as community colleges, computer courses, spoken English classes, dance and music classes, tailoring and embroidery, nursing and beautician courses, etc. Special education is the need of the time for differently abled, orphans, and physically challenged children.

**2.4 Legal Aid, Social Action, and Human Rights:** To commit ourselves toward the empowerment of the downtrodden and the marginalized communities for justice, peace, liberty, communal harmony, and human dignity and toward the growth and all-round development of the poor and exploited in rural and urban society. The following strategies could be adopted – awareness building on laws and acts, strengthening *gram sabhas* and facilitating community leadership in villages, fostering mutual understanding, respect, and collaboration between the Christian and *Sarna Adivasis*, networking and collaboration with different movements and like-minded groups for stopping migration and enhancing the life situation of migrants in their destination states, forming self-help groups, adopting families and sponsoring children for education, and envisioning programs for women empowerment, especially widows.

**2.5 Communication Media and Dialogue:** To create awareness among all classes of people of the urgent need for a common understanding and acceptance of one another's inherent rich ethnic, socio-cultural, and religious heritages, leading to a harmonious co-existence by making a concerted effort to reach out to all classes of people without prejudice, transcending all boundaries of caste, creed, race and socio-cultural background. To this end, we could commit to attending inter-religious meetings, helping and encouraging one another in the common search, visiting families irrespective of race, caste, creed, culture, and socio-economic background, faith sharing with the followers of all religions, etc.



### 3. Recommendations

In the context cited above, a few activities are being proposed below for us to engage ourselves in the life and mission of the Church. Each individual could choose and pick up to execute at the personal level so as to become synodal in the Church with a vision of a new way of being a Church in the present context.

#### 3.1 Pastoral Ministry

- ♦ I will visit families and listen to the people attentively with a compassionate heart.
- ♦ I will prepare the persons to accept the situation before giving Holy Communion.
- ♦ I will explain the importance of the sacraments to the people.
- ♦ I will listen to the laity with greater openness and value their opinions.
- ♦ I will involve the laity in liturgical practices such as giving opportunities for Mass reading, altar service, singing, etc.
- ♦ I will motivate children to come for prayer services.
- ♦ I will learn the Word of God (Bible) and use them in my prayers.
- ♦ I will promote vocations for the Church by accompanying the youth.
- ♦ I will prepare myself for meaningful participation in the Holy Eucharist.
- ♦ I will encourage the laity to the pilgrimages to the holy places.
- ♦ I will prepare myself for the adorations and prayer services.
- ♦ I will explain the importance and impact of the Word of God and Holy Communion to the laity.
- ♦ I will explain the importance and impact of family prayer and encourage them.
- ♦ I will give reading practice for Sunday Masses.
- ♦ I will encourage the laity to share their ideas and opinions during meetings.
- ♦ I will ensure better participation of the youth in the meetings.
- ♦ I will not make discrimination between the rich and the poor.

- ♦ I will suggest the Church authorities to involve people in decision-making.
- ♦ I will participate in the decision-making processes in the Parish.
- ♦ I will be courageous enough to inform the Church authorities not to discriminate between the rich and the poor.
- ♦ I will support the Church leaders through my prayers.
- ♦ I will encourage Catholic Sabha, Mahila Sangh, Youth, and Krusvir to participate in the meetings actively.
- ♦ I will insist on BCC prayer in the villages.
- ♦ I will take catechism and moral science classes for parish children.
- ♦ I will teach the Word of God to the *Krusvir* children and take care of them.

#### 3.2 Health Care Service

- ♦ I will take care of the elderly members during meals in the community.
- ♦ I will attend to the medical needs of the sick and infirm in the community.
- ♦ I will administer Holy Communion to the sick and elderly in the locality.
- ♦ I will visit the inmates in the infirmary and old-age homes in the Province.
- ♦ I will visit the sick and recuperating members and attend to them in the hospitals.

#### 3.3 Education Apostolate

- ♦ I will pay more attention to the weaker students in the class.
- ♦ I will teach moral science classes to the students in the school.
- ♦ I will give more time to hostel children especially those who are weak in studies.
- ♦ I will take remedial classes in the school for the weaker students.
- ♦ I will take spoken English classes for street children.
- ♦ I will show more love and compassion to the differently abled students.
- ♦ I will motivate the unemployed youth to join the vocational courses.





### 3.4 Legal Aid, Social Action, and Human Rights

- ♦ I will assist the potential leaders to become competent in assuming major decisions and making roles in society.
- ♦ I will sensitize the youth about the evils of alcoholism and drug addiction.
- ♦ I will organize programs for communal harmony and fostering social bonding.
- ♦ I will reach out to the village leaders periodically.
- ♦ I will participate in social practices and rituals with a compassionate heart.
- ♦ I will visit the families of widows and abandoned.

### 3.5 Communication Media and Dialogue

- ♦ I will not hesitate to relate with people of other faiths.
- ♦ I will take part in interreligious prayer services.
- ♦ I will make an effort to relate to the people of other denominations.
- ♦ I will respect the people of other religions.
- ♦ I will respect the teachers and workers of other denominations and faiths.
- ♦ I will share my life experiences with students of other denominations and faiths.
- ♦ I will learn the language, respect the culture and participate in programs of the people of the place.
- ♦ I will visit not only Christian families but other families too.

Let us follow the footsteps of the Lord, listen to His Word along with the words of others, and discover with amazement that the Holy Spirit always surprises us to suggest fresh paths and new ways of being Church today.

## 4. Strengths for this Journey

This is a holistic group journey. The vision and mission of the journey are clear and undisputed. This journey is clearly made under the guidance of the Holy Spirit infused with the values of the Lord Jesus Christ in which all are responsible and accountable.

There is a unity that is commonly found and witnessed in a number of ways. Most of the celebrations have the flavor of community celebrations; people have time to visit their sick neighbours; contribute generously to the Church, etc. We come to know one another deeply which creates a better understanding and feeling of oneness. Thus, the caring and sharing attitude increases, and forgiveness and reconciliation become easy.

Our strengths could also be noted in terms of networking, cooperation, collaboration, contribution, good vocations, hospitality, vibrancy, culturally rootedness, good infrastructure, service through education, health, and social works, etc. The strength of the church is its faithfulness to the church guidelines, local leaders, and the local ordinary. The faithful abide by the leadership of the hierarchy. They cooperate with the Church leaders, contribute towards the running of the Church and they live out the Gospel values.

The strength of walking together is that we wait for each other and help each other to understand God's plan. We carry each other's burden. Whenever the church is attacked in any way, all come together to defend it. We promote oneness and togetherness.

The beauty of the Catholic Church is that it has a well-structured system of functioning. The seven sacraments are taken seriously. The faithful respect the Church leaders. They concertedly act upon genuine causes. Opinions are aired and substantial suggestions are given by the faithful on various platforms.

Faith life is valued; liturgical celebrations are faithfully participated; many Christians lead exemplary life; the laity, in general, is cooperative, open, and supportive; the clergy is accorded respect; the youth is energetic and with lots of potentials; there is a hunger among the faithful for spiritual nourishment. This sums up the strength of this journey.

## 5. Defects in this Journey

We must admit that the Church has a number of defects also in this journey. It has been noticed that social status becomes predominant. The members find fault in others; they are guided by jealousy and



selfishness. There exists an unwanted competitive spirit to put others down.

The Church hierarchy is often inclined to centralize things for its own convenience and comfort. There is a lack of concern, accompaniment, and support in times of hardship. Transparency, communication, and interest in common issues of life seem to be reducing. People are becoming ritualistic and individualistic. There is a gap between the rich and the poor. Groupism, power hunger, indifference, back-biting, individualism, self-centeredness, and wanton whims and fancies of the so-called powerful mark our processes.

When our people are not admitted to our schools and colleges, they feel that they are not part of the Church. Often, it is noticed that the initiatives, decisions, and implementations are taken by the authorities without taking into consideration the opinions of the common people. There is a lack of active participation of the faithful in the Church. Teenagers and adults have very little interest in church activities. They neglect the sacraments, especially the confession and prayers.

Listening is difficult for quite a few leaders including the Church leaders. One can notice a shallow faith life in many of the church members. Liturgical celebrations are often merely fulfilling spiritual duties. There is a lack of active participation in the church activities. Many church leaders need to constantly update themselves through readings, seminars, and courses. There seem to be differences of interests, lack of union of mind and heart within the church, greed for power, selfishness, and corruption that are unattended.

It has been noticed that sometimes we fail to be bold enough to face the fundamentalistic forces that create division and communalism and those who work against the democratic and secular values of the country. Not only this, our efforts in accompanying the youth and helping the poor lack both enthusiasm and planning. There are many places and times when our dedication to the mission, especially in the Indian socio-political scenario, is inadequate.

Pastoral care is one of the best ways to make people know that God is still caring and loving

to the faithful. We, however, have failed to notice this face, and so we have failed to respond to this accordingly. Moreover, there is a tendency to remain institutionalized.

## 6. Future Paths

It is envisaged that we make the future paths clear for the church to tread towards the goal the Lord, our God has set for us. The path of constant prayer to rely on God's providence and working cohesively with the clergy and the laity for the Church's mission is one we are to take. Still further, the path of the 'bottom-up approach' is suggested which is more democratic. We must foster equality among the clergy and the laity regardless of sex, age, caste, class, colour, place of birth, etc. as unique members of the Body of Christ – which is the Church. Moreover, we have to uphold and strengthen the Church network. It is also necessary that in addition to spiritual activities, we have to help the people regarding their social, political, and economic well-being. We have to consolidate and integrate our missions, use the method of 'up scaling' and 're-skilling' for efficiency, and use and strengthen the media for effective communication. Modern communication and information technology and science have to find their due place in the church culture to walk with the demand of the time.

The Church must revisit its mission as per the demands of the time and context. The Church is a force to reckon with, but she must realize its potential. Unity of all members is a clarion call of the time. Family prayer also must be encouraged.

Parishes should be Jesus-centered and commissions should help the parish priest. The Church should open itself more and more to the marginalized and to those in the periphery. The Church should strive to devise innovative ways for addressing the contemporary burning issues as has been her practice.

The clergy should divest itself from excessively accumulated power and prestige so as to be decentralized; we may invite and assimilate the laity, marginalized and weaker sections, and other faiths in order to understand God and His plan. Let there be a proper and concrete plan in the Parish for various groups, young and old. Their voices need to





be heard. There is a need to have strategic planning and implementation of the road-maps in the concrete form at different levels – Diocese, Deanery, Parish, Unit, Village, and Family. Let there be responsible persons named for the implementation of the plans. Foresightedness and plans for the future are a must with regard to the training of the faithful as well as clergy; the same is required for strengthening and consolidation of the faith life of the individuals.

Our education system and institutions must contribute to imparting catechism classes which have weakened with time now. The method of catechism and faith formation needs to be revamped and make the foundations of the Catholic faith strong. Pastoral care is the need of the hour to educate the faithful according to Catholic teachings. Some kind of funds/scholarships should be created to educate the children of financially poor families.

## 7. Conclusion

St. Augustine's words are still surprisingly apt: "What I am for you terrifies me; what I am with you consoles me. For you, I am a bishop, but with you, I am a Christian. The former is a duty; the latter a grace. The former is a danger; the latter, salvation." Our common ground offers grace and salvation.

Synodality calls upon every Christian, people of God in our context to be credible. Credibility requires humility and openness to the Spirit that calls for conversion to continue the work of the Kingdom (Mk 1:14-15). Just like the disciples at Pentecost saw new visions and dreams (Acts 2:17), the Church today needs to dream for a new humanity. The vision and dream of Pope Francis are genuine and timely, and beckon all brothers and sisters to a new humanity. Let the Old Ways be our New Ways – let us look back at the Early Church for inspiration and example for our participation in the Church and our trust in the Lord.



# SECTION B

## UAP & RPAP IN THE PROVINCE







## 5

# Nursery of Vocation (Initial Formation)

Fr. Ajit Saras, SJ & Fr. Johny Kujur, SJ

Formation commission aims to give a holistic formation to our young men in formation right from the early stages of their formation. The Apostolic School is a vocation centre. We get vocations mostly



from the Apostolic Schools. There are two Apostolic Schools in Ranchi Province namely St. Berchmans' Apostolic School Samtoli, Simdega and St. Aloysius' Apostolic School, Gumla. The Apostolic School Samtoli was established in 1969 by Fr. Paul Frans Terrens S.J and the Apostolic School Gumla was started in 1955 by Fr. Nabore Lakra. In Apostolic School, the boys are admitted in 7th class after an interview and a written test. After completing standard 10 the aspiring candidates join



St. Aloysius' Minor Seminary, Ranchi and continue their intermediate, a place known for candidacy. At present there are 150 apostolic boys in Samtoli and 170 in Gumla. In both the places the number of students is 320 approximately.

Ranchi Jesuit Society has been running Apostolic School since last 68 years. It is the formation centre for Priesthood and Brotherhood at an initial stage. The boys who aspire to be religious Priests and Brothers stay here for four years until they complete their matriculation. The boys are encouraged and motivated to join for religious life either as Priests or Brothers. It is to nurture vocation. The boys are trained in the life style and ministry of the religious. The Apostolic School is meant for the discernment of vocation. It serves and trains the boys to become the men for others. It follows the motto "Many Sparks One Fire". It has been putting the fire in life of boys in different dimensions. It has been putting the fire of education in the life of boys through special English class, tuitions, organizing the seminars, summer camps and education oriented competitions such as essay writing, poem writing, recitation,

mathematics, quiz, one-act plays, debates, science exhibitions etc. This has been also putting the fire of spirituality through daily Eucharist, meditations, daily prayers, monthly recollection and confessions, retreats, rosaries, novena etc. This also creates some opportunities for sports by organizing football, basketball, volleyball and hockey matches, annual sports etc. according to the living house groups. This also trains for future prominent leaders by giving some responsibilities. This also provides opportunities for seminars on ecology, workshop on emotional maturity, personality development, and orientation on life management, seminar on tribal culture, dance and music.

Apart from this, the main concerns of the formators are close accompaniment and guidance of the boys to become better persons. They resolve with greater hope and confidence to form the boys who would be committed, compassionate, competent, and the persons of conscience.

## St. Aloysius' Minor Seminary, Ranchi

St. Aloysius' Minor Seminary, Ranchi has played a great role in building the Chhotanagpur Church in India. It is a Jesuit Seminary (now called Apostolic School College Section) located in Ranchi, the capital of Jharkhand. It was founded in 1903.

## Brief History

St. Aloysius' Minor Seminary, Ranchi must surely rank among the most successful missionary enterprises of the Catholic Church in modern times. It will be interesting to know the history, how God has played a great role in forming the clergy for the Chhotanagpur region and all over the country to build his Kingdom.

The Superior General Fr. Luis Martin and Fr. Grosjean the Rector of Manresa House, Ranchi met in Rome in 1902 and the plan to establish Apostolic School in Ranchi began in Rome. Immediately the matter was proposed to the Pope, he agreed. Fr. Grosjean's dreams to establish a formation center to train and prepare young people for priesthood



looked difficult. Many fathers had the opinion that it was not yet opportune time to start. On the other hand the economic problem prevailed. But Fr. Grosjean went ahead with his plan in spite of these problems. Fr. August Petie then the Provincial of Belgium promised to give financial help. Rt. Rev. Bishop Meulman and Fr. Valkans also came forward to support him financially. Grosjean was delighted and went ahead with his plan. Apostolic School was started in 1903 in St. John's School campus. The month April 1903 witnessed the formal inauguration of Apostolic School. Fr. Scharlacken was appointed the first director; the number of students was only 22. In 1905 new building was constructed which was known as red-roofed bungalow. In January Fr. Van Hooke shouldered the responsibility as the director and completed the work of new building construction. In 1906, the Anglo-Indian boys were brought to Apostolic School from Calcutta. This change raised the standard of the Apostolic School. In 1907, Fr. Pieron took office as the director and the same year it was declared English Medium School. Fr. Pieron continued till 1914. In 1915, Fr. Kwant became the director, during his time first tribal Bishop Lt. Nicholas Kujur S.J. joined Apostolic School. Fr. Kwant was replaced by Fr. Bernard and Fr. Gillet. From 1920 to 1921 Fr. Gillet and Fr. Waterksyn, in 1921, Fr. Peel and Fr. Muijens till 1925 shouldered the responsibility of the Director. In 1925, Fr. Max Dufour, in 1926, Van Den Berg and then 1929 Fr. Lettens (a couple of months only) became directors. In 1929, Fr. Turkenberg shouldered the responsibility

as director. He studied the problems of the place and introduced some policy to enhance the vocation and training of the tribal students. In 1933, Fr. Jans became the director and implemented the policy of Fr. Turkenberg. Consequently the number of the students rose up to 65. In 1943, Fr. Gerald Rondeaux was the director and remained in the office till 1946. During this time St. Xavier's College Ranchi (1944) came into existence, all the apostolic boys after their matric were sent to St. Xavier's college for studies, and the number increased drastically from 65 to 114. Fr. Gerald Rondo played vital role to construct new bed room cum hall. Fr. Alphonse Dreesen was the director from 1947 to 1953. During his period on 8th & 9th April 1953, Apostolic School celebrated its Golden Jubilee. From 1953 to 1956 Fr. J. Van Bogaert, from 1956 to 1964 Fr. William Messiaen were the directors. During William Missiaen's time new two-storied building was constructed which is now the main building of Minor Seminary. There were many directors from 1965 to 2013; from 1965 to 1970 Fr. William Delypute, 1970 to 1973 Fr. Xavier D'Souza, 1973 to 1975 Fr. Bernard Toppo, 1973 to 1981 Emile Kerketta, 1981 to 1983 Fr. Xavier Lakra (constructed new Kitchen, rice store room), 1983 to 1985 Fr. Fredinand Kullu, 1985 Fr. Nicholas Tete, June 1985 to 1990 Fr. Britius Ekka, 1990 to 1996 Fr. Anthony Gerry Kindo, 1996 to 2000 Fr. Theodore Baa, 2000 to 2001 Fr. Benedict Lakra, August 2001 to 2004 Fr. Anthony Minj (during his time St. Aloysius' Minor Seminary celebrated its Centenary in 2003), June 2004 to 2006 Fr. John Tirkey, June 2006 to 2013 Fr. James Vikrant Dungdung, June 2013 to





2015 Fr. Fredrick Kujur, 2016 Fr. Justin Tirkey (he was for a few months before becoming the Rector of Manresa House), June 2017-2020 Fr. Binod Toppo, June 2021 the present Director Fr. Ajit Saras. There were many fathers who have served this Minor Seminary as counselors and spiritual fathers namely – Fr. Crick till 1991, from 1991-1993 Fr. Mathias Dungdung, from 1993-1999 Fr. Athnas Kujur, from 2013 to 2015 Fr. Ferdinand Kullu and at present no one is there as a spiritual father in Minor Seminary college selection.

### **Achievements**

By the end of 20th century the Apostolic School had produced many Priests and Coadjutor Brothers of different mission works for the growth and leadership of the church such as first tribal Bishop Lt. Nicholas Kujur, SJ, Ranchi Arch Bishop his eminence Cardinal Telesphore P. Toppo, Ranchi Arch Diocese, Arch Bishop Michael Minj, SJ, Gumla Diocese, Lt. Bishop Charles Soreng, SJ, Hazaribagh Diocese, Arch Bishop Felix Toppo, SJ Ranchi Archdiocese, Bishop Joseph Minj, Simdega Diocese, Bishop Stephen Tiru, Khunti Diocese, Bishop Vincent Barwa, Simdega Diocese, Bishop James Toppo, SJ, Jalpaiguri Diocese, and we cannot count enormous numbers who became lay leaders of the Church.

### **Language Lab**

The Provincial of Ranchi Lt. Fr. Ranjit Pascal Toppo initiated the establishment of language lab in 2006 which served many candidates to different congregations to concentrate on the English language. Spoken language skills and basic guide to pronunciation were offered to them. It was declared closed in 2012 temporarily and now all the gadgets of the English language lab have become out dated.

### **Summer Course**

We conduct summer course programmes for the aspiring candidates about 150 and above for joining the Priestly and Religious life in various provinces and dioceses. It is run every year for a month in April to May. The candidates are given Apostolic Orientations so that it can be continued and intensified during the stage of formation. During the course of formation we try to increase the maturity of the candidates with marked personality and outstanding character, inculcate in them the intellectual and spiritual progress and emphasis on the life of prayer and the Eucharist participation. At the end of the Summer Course, we have cultural event by the participants, in which the participants play big role in acting out English and Hindi skit. This year trainers were given special training by Fr. Sanjay Kerketta, professor and exam controller of St. Xavier's College, Ranchi and Mrs. Patricia Ann Nag, coordinator of St. John's English Medium, Ranchi.

### **Aims & Objectives**

The aim and the objective is to continue one's own vocation and spiritual life in deeper union with the Lord as one is grounded and rooted in love of Jesus. The spiritual formation is intensive so that they may bear witness to modern times.

We try to prepare and select candidates for joining the Society of Jesus, Ranchi Province for the service of people at large. They are expected to be mature men, to realize the needs of souls, the great need of the Church and to be learned Priests. This formation will prepare them to profit in spiritual and intellectual pursuit, to train and inspire the candidates for mission work as well as to strengthen their vocation. Talks on personality traits and mode on learning English language equip them for their growth.

### **Strength of the Staff & Students**

The present batch consists of 56 in 2nd year and 45 in 1st year candidates. They study in St. John's Inter College Ranchi and 4 of them are going to St. John's English medium as well. There are two staff members namely Fr. Ajit Saras, the Director and Sch. Sumit Soreng, the Assistant Director.



## 6

# Schola Affectus: The School of The Heart

Fr. Ravi Bhushan Xess, SJ

“They will find it helpful during the period of the last probation to apply themselves in the school of the heart, by exercising themselves in spiritual and corporal pursuits which can engender in them greater humility, abnegation of all sensual love and will and judgment of their own, and also greater knowledge and love of God our Lord; that when they themselves have made progress they can better help others to progress for glory to God our Lord” (Const. 516).



Tertianship therefore is the school of the heart where a Jesuit revisits the foundational documents and history of the Society of Jesus. This specific time is set apart to examine and determine one's suitability for the final incorporation into the Society of Jesus. The Constitutions and the Examen Generale call this

as the last year of probation. Besides its formative purpose it has also a pedagogic purpose to identify one's weak areas of life and to work on it. Therefore a Jesuit formation is an ongoing formation and it does not stop after priestly ordination.

The early companions of St. Ignatius who mention the last probation, place its origin in the religious experience which they all had together during the time which elapsed between their departure from Paris on December 15, 1536, and their final arrival in Rome in 1538.

In reference to this aforementioned historical segment the foundation stone of Tertianship was laid. I completed my tertianship from Sacred Heart College, Shembaganur (15 June – 1 December, 2022, Tamil Nadu) under the guidance of Fr. Arul Sivan, S.J. (MAD) and Fr. Jose Jacob, S.J. (KER). We were twenty from eleven provinces and two regions. Initially it took time for us to get along







with one another and to acclimatize ourselves with the tranquility of the place after active ministry. The six months schedule was meticulously planned out with formal classes, group presentations, personal reading and sharing, guest lectures, etc. Besides we also had pilgrimages to Oriyur (Tamil Nadu) i.e. the place where a Portuguese Jesuit missionary named St. John de Britto was martyred on 4 February 1693; and the coastal areas of Tamil Nadu where St. Francis Xavier pitched his tent and carried out his mission during 1542-1545.

These visits infused in us the missionary zeal and to recall and realize the challenges of that time. These experiences sunk in us along with the knowledge we could treasure from the Jesuit documents i.e. Spiritual Exercises, Constitutions, Autobiography, Letters etc. in the classroom.

There had been two unforgettable grace moments for me during my Tertianship - the first was the Long Retreat and the second was the Ignatian Experiment. It was the second time for me to make a long retreat after my Novitiate. This retreat in the Ignatian tradition is a process of prayer and reflection that follows the rhythm of revelation from creation, sinfulness and reconciliation to the life of Jesus; his passion and death; and his resurrection. My prime focus was to once again encounter God closely in order to attain the climax experiences as St. Ignatius himself had. The four weeks of the Spiritual Exercises were self-awareness, self-giving, self-sacrifice and self-understanding. As they were thematically arranged

in progression it had churned me from within. I had ample time to introspect into my deepest echelon and come out with firm resolutions for my life. It was the journey of psycho-spiritual wavelengths of consolations and desolations. At the end of the retreat I was able

to reaffirm my vocation.

Immediately after this we had Ignatian Experiment for one month. I had gone to Shanti Daan- “home for the homeless”, which is run by the Missionaries of Charity Brothers in Borivelli West, Mumbai. This is a huge centre where young and old orphans and mentally and physically challenged male inmates were kept and taken care. Initially it was not that easy for me to handle them so I learnt by observing the male nurses who were feeding and cleaning them. After sometime I was able to involve myself. I could experience a great sense of satisfaction and joy. Being there with them for a month was a great lesson on selfless service, humility and love. I had a strong affirmation to ever remain grateful to God for everything I have and possess. I deeply realized the value of my life. I also could reconcile with myself when in the past I had questioned and complained God for silly things.

The entire duration of six months was a moment of grace which has affected me to integrate my union of mind and heart and to become an ever committed Jesuit with a difference.



## 7

## Feed My Lamb (Pastoral Mission)

Fr. Ignatius Minj, SJ

On 28th 2023 at 5.00 PM, I called Fr. Kamal Chandra Bage, SJ in Kathalgudi, Assam expecting that he would give me some information about his priestly activities in his parish and I



could write in Ranchi Jesuits Yearbook 2023. He was at burial service at a graveyard. Followed by he went to the house of the bereaved family. He was there to console the shattered and broken family. He had to pass the message that Risen Lord

is with them, with His Might and Victory. Is it not paradoxical? How difficult it is to proclaim when someone is broken and then to say that victorious Risen Lord is with you with His might and splendor. The affected family and persons are no way at peace and reconciled! Yet, a Priest has to say so with his heart, belief and honesty and gain over the pain and brokenness of the broken and shocked ones. On the same night at about 9.30 PM I called Fr Laurence Kiro, SJ in Manasbari. He was already very tired having worked with his students in school and attending to the needs of the faithful of his parish. He said I am fine and showed his enthusiasm. In Diglipur Fr. Jerome Dungdung, SJ. was with elderly parishioners while Fr. Rajesh Kullu, SJ with youth of the Parish in Prothrapur. Fr. Elvius Kerketta, S.J. was busy with settling a relationship of a couple in love, gripped with complication of culture, faith, ethnicity and other multiple difficult issues. Connectivity was another issue. I could not get Fr. Suman Baxla, SJ in Ramnagar of Andaman Islands. I called Priests in Munda belt, Barway and Biru regions and found them on their toes. Although late, Fr. Anthres Minj, SJ was very busy to give the last touch to Annual Budget of his School and Parish. With little oophs .. he said “Rengarih ! A huge Parish with two priests is too much while school and other shepherding work are tagged.”

They were on Mission ! They are at work with deep sense of belonging to the part of the legacy of Society of Jesus which had Missionary Mandate : “Go to the whole world...” Mt.28:18ff, 10:1, 7-8 ,

Mt.18:18, Mk 16:15ff and they carry the Manifesto of Jesus relying on the Divine Providence that “the Spirit of the Lord is upon me ....” LK 4:18-19

Fr. Vital Ekka, SJ, a great Parish Priest and missionary of our time, dared to preach Good News to the people of Arunachal to Bodos of Masalpur in Assam, Nicobar Island Kachal used to say Mass for the children playing in the ground of their villages who were absent for the Sunday Mass while others also joined those Eucharist Celebrations otherwise they were in the village for one or other pretext. Consequently in Rengarih, in later days Rengari-Church was flooded with people, overflowed the premises to attend Mass, said “I cannot but do my Annual Retreat following the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola”. He was very happy to find other Priests with him doing the Annual Retreat and recapturing the Spirit of the Lord and Charism of the Society of Jesus and in turn going to share the same with the Parishioners : young and old, men and women, youth and children in different forums, *Mahila Sangh, Catholic Sabha, Yuva Snagh, Kurusveer* on the occasion of the Feast of St. Ignatius Of Loyola or other suitable and the best time.

‘Catch young, teach and orient them’ to be a good catholic and citizen. I remember Mr Ratan Tirkey with Mr Prabhakar Tirkey came to Catholic Church Kanke and in the conversation said that Sunday Class, Kurusveer etc. have given orientation to find God in everything with a mission to make this world a better place to live in. Most of us are aware that Mr Ratan Tirkey is a social worker, thinker and activists. It was a delightful moment to recount that presently we are along with Tarunoday Scholastics are busy with Sunday class and Kurusveer with nearby CRI communities. Mr Prabhakar Tirkey spoke about the strength of Youth. The Founding member of AJSU Mr. Prabhakar Tirkey took pride in the active participation of youth of Kanke and appreciated the activities of Jiwan Jyoti Youth of Catholic Church Kanke. He recounted again the contribution of Tarunoday and also challenged to be productive and fruitful.





Young Advocate Jesuit Fr. Anup Kiran Minj is actively busy to awaken our parishioners particularly in Munda Zone and even travelling to Assam region and beyond. Our Parish Priests are full of enthusiasm to participate along with their faithful in such awareness program, legal aid. This has made people courageous and empowered. They become aware of their rights and duties and ready to face police and other govt. machineries in their daily lives.

One of our priests said it is most cherished moment when I administer the sacrament thereby God's saving work is complete and at the same time at work. A child crying on baptism could give angelic smile after the baptism and witnessing such a blissful moment is imperishable with eternal impact. On the other hand, being with the death bed of a person is very rewarding. Such person although may be broken into pieces, after meeting a priest he/she is calm, at peace and composed. Priest has come and for him a priest is not an ordinary person but Jesus the Saviour. To whom he/she pours one's hearts' burden, joys and sad moment. He/she is administered the Sacrament of the Sick and ready for any eventuality with total surrender to God because the priest has spoken to him/her word of kindness, forgiveness, faith and about Word of promise of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Late Fr. Vincent Toppo, SJ in every Province Days used to intervene with a message that the needs of Catholic Families and Married couples

must be looked into very seriously. They require moral, spiritual, psychological guidance intensely. It is needed more than before because of material prosperity and technological advancement and evil effect of social media. Or else we will find no good catholic families and in turn no good vocation as well. Parish priests are aware of the fact and with the assistance of Fr. Provincial, Fr. Samir Dungdung, SJ, Coordinator of Parish Apostolate is actively working in this mission. Thanks to late Fr. Joachim Dungdung, SJ who had taken up the marriage and family related mission after the demise of Fr. Vincent Toppo, SJ. May both of them find themselves close to Jesus and in return this Apostolate may flourish through Parishes.

Catechists are backbone of parish – life. They are torchbearers of faith. They are bridge between Parish Priests and faithful, parishioners. They are clerk and administrator too. Fr Philemon Ekka ,SJ PP of Tongo has taken up the challenge to catechize the Catechists and arm them with burning love for Jesus , brimming with faith and magnanimity of zeal for becoming a help in saving and winning the souls for the merciful God the Father, or else they [souls] were destined to eternal death.

When we look at the Spread – sheet of Our Priests we require to watch them, 'The Salute' they receive as they pass through streets, gali, muhala of a town or the bazaar or at the road side of villages. The sling bag is full with Vegetables and other valued articles when a Priest is returning home after visiting families. If children or youth members accompany him in his visits to families then the priest is hundred percent acceptable and loved by other faithful as well. If a few elderly or similar age of the priest is seen accompanying time again there is minus count on the score board for the priest. Visit to the same family is still worse. Siesta and time table at the core of the Parish Priest fetch less blessing for him. He is No More a "father" for he is unable to attend to his ailing son or a daughter. Priests in Parishes are real "father" to everyone. He is "hero" to would be priest and model teacher to "young and youth" while "superb mediator" for supernatural power for the matured and aging ones. Thus he is a priest being in the shoes of Jesus, living and sharing the life of the Eternal Priest with others.



## 8

## Read The Past To Write The Future (Legal)

Fr. Anup Chand Kiran Minz, SJ

“If you don’t know the family (Province) history, you don’t know anything. You are a leaf that doesn’t know it is a part of the tree.” This thought of Michael Crichton is truly mind-blowing. Should



any Ranchi Jesuit or faithful of Chotanagpur forget Fr. Augustus Stockmann, the first Jesuit missionary and from whose start Catholicism spread far and wide in the then Chotanagpur? It needs no answer. Nevertheless, his dilapidated grave in Khunti

is still desperately waiting for some renovation, preservation and respect. He briefly visited Chaibasa on November 24, 1868 to explore the possibility of missionary work among the Adivasis. Subsequently, he came here to stay in and work as a missionary on July 10, 1869. For him, people were new. Language was alien. Culture was unheard of. The whole geographical terrain was malaria prone. But the pioneer was equally undaunted. He had indomitable missionary enthusiasm and zeal. Unfortunately, contrary to his expectation, no one embraced Christianity at all for three-four years. His works were almost fruitless for the next ten years. But Stockmann had never learnt to give up what he began.

However, the whole scenario changed diametrically with the arrival of Constant Lievens, J.B. Hoffmann and many others. The socio-economic and legal help rendered to people by these Jesuit forefathers accelerated the missionary work to reach Barway and even beyond in no time. Fr. Hoffmann’s meticulous drafting of the Chotanagpur Tenancy Act, popularly known as CNT Act, has safeguarded the Adivasi land for decades till date. The legal work of Fr. Constant Lievens and its impact on people and the Church are unparalleled even after more than a century today.

Of late, not only the Adivasi land, language or identity alone but the Adivasis and Adivasiness in totality are fast moving towards their extinction. This might seem to be too pessimistic. The socio economic and legal contribution of early missionaries to Chotanagpur still poses a big challenge to all Ranchi Jesuits. For these areas are being grossly neglected in general.

How serious we are is really a matter of reflection, discernment, discussion and decision. No doubt, the Ranchi Province is fully aware of the relevance of legal ministry in the province. Hence it has lately given an opportunity of doing B.A. LL.B. to two young Scholastics (Stanislaus Tirkey and Shashi Dhanwar) to equip them and eventually plunge







into the mission in due time. It's noteworthy that the Province has also timely taken a lead in giving its space and other allied assets for the Jesuit Central Zone Provinces of India as Hoffmann Law Associates (HLA) in the Manresa House, Ranchi and as Bagaicha in the Agriculture Training Centre (ATC) premise in Namkum. In his own capacity, Fr. Mahendra Peter Tigga, SJ, the HLA Director, has been trying his best to galvanise the Jesuit legal personnel and other like-minded lay individuals and organizations. The two experienced Jesuit lawyers, Frs. Xavier Soreng and Ignatius Minj, are helping Fr. Tigga to help the Province in any major legal decision-making process.

In this regard, the seriousness of the Province is also observed in its extending all possible support to Hoffmann Legal Cell (HLC), a Province legal sub-office, since its establishment in Khunti in July

2021. Fr. Anupchand Minj, SJ, the office in-charge, is making use of the facilities available to legally empower people of all walks of life in the Khunti Diocese and elsewhere too. He has empowered hundreds of people within a short span of time.

From the legal point of view several events took place in the Province. An archive was set up in the Ranchi Manresa House building. It contains some very valuable moveable and immoveable asset-related documents of different institutions of the Province. A similar archive was re-set up in Province Curia. Another historical event of the year was the annual meet of National

Lawyers Forum of Religious and Priests. It was held from 24th - 27th November, 2022 in Ranchi. The Jharkhand Lawyers Forum of Religious and Priests was the host. Be it finance, accommodation, transport, etc., Rev. Fr. Ajit Kumar Xess, SJ, the Provincial, supported the maiden meet in Ranchi in all possible ways. More than a hundred Fathers, Brothers and Sisters from all over the country participated in it. The Ranchi Archbishop, Rev. Felix Toppo and two other Bishops Theodore Mascarenhas and Vincent Barwa, and several Provincials and Major Superiors of different Religious Congregations witnessed it.

Admittedly, the Province has got a lot of things to do. But it lacks experienced and expert persons of its own. So, it has a long way to go to write its future as Frs. Constant Lievens, J.B. Hoffmann and many other Jesuit forefathers did it in the past.





## 9

## MAG+Stic Moments (Accompanying the Youth)

Fr. James Balmuchu, SJ

Ever since Fr. Superior General Arturo Sosa, SJ, promulgated a set of “Universal Apostolic Preferences to guide and focus the work of the Society of Jesus, Jesuits all over the world have shown a magnificent effort to unite themselves with the mission. This set of “UAP” has inculcated in us the spirit of MAGIS and has made us more efficient in our mission and work areas.



Ranchi Province has a wide range to deal with young people and accompany them in their life journey. The Youth Commission of the province

has been able to implement some basic steps through Magis Movements, youth gatherings, and individual counselling. At the institutional level, through **Jeevan Pravesh**, and **AICUF** there had been many occasions to interact with the students and guide them with a proper life orientation. The Youth Commission on the other hand conducted Youth gatherings at the zonal level that included many parishes. With these three platforms we, as the Youth Commission have been able to deal with life orientation programs, spiritual empowerment, and inputs on current social issues.

### MAG+S MOVEMENT (An understanding)

MAGIS or “more” is something that appeals to all of us. Ignatius also wanted more- to be a saint, even better than those he read about while recovering at Loyola. In order to be a saint, he thought about fasting more, praying more, doing more penance ...until he came to realise that it wasn't what God wanted. Later on in his life, Ignatius understood MAGIS as choosing to do the “greater glory of God”. In other words, MAGIS for Ignatius meant, doing God's greater service and the more universal good.

Living MAGIS today entails, first and foremost, believing that God is still present at the crossroads of history and in the hearts of men and women of our day. Living MAGIS means, discovering the love of God in our lives; making Him our light, our way, and the source of our peace and trust. Living MAGIS means accepting that God invites us to labour with Him to reconstruct a more just and fraternal world.

A saying says, “Go alone if you want to arrive soon, but go with others if you want to get far.” Just as Jesus looked for companions before launching into his mission, we too embrace the mission of living







our MAGIS through our companionship with the youth hailing from different backgrounds, tribes and places. We share our faith- experiences with them and also listen to their faith stories in order to discover how uniquely God works in the lives of each one of us. Finally, living MAGIS in a multi-cultural and multi-religious context entails, that we move beyond our own narrow horizons and enter into different forms of dialogue with others.

### MAG+S MOVEMENT (Roots & universality)

MAGIS is a gathering organized by the Society of Jesus in which young adults (18-35 years old) from the Ignatian Family come together worldwide. This major meeting happens every time a World Youth Day is announced, in the ten days leading up to World Youth Day. These days are full of experiences that help to celebrate faith and service in a space of sharing and prayer. There is a huge impact on each individual as they come across diversity in its totality. They find themselves in an atmosphere in which there are ample opportunities to assimilate NEW THINGS for their effective ministry as Magis Leaders.

This year, Magis Programme will start from 21 July to 31 July in Lisbon, Portugal followed by World Youth Day from 1st August to 6 August 2023. From Ranchi Province two youths namely, **Abhishek Sunny Tigga** from Gumla and **Manisha Surin** from Khunti along with **Fr. Bipin Tirkey**, the youth coordinator of the Province will participate in the Magis Programme and the World Youth Day in Lisbon.

## IMPLEMENTATION OF UAPS AND RPAPS

Magis Movements, with the dynamics of its five pillars (Meditation, Mass, Examine, Magis circle, and activities) form leaders who could continue the same dynamics in their respective units and Parishes. These dynamics of five pillars make this youth gathering different than any other youth gatherings. The Ranchi Youth Commission conducted two Magis gatherings of this kind that included 11 Parishes from Khunti and Gumla Zones.

| Dates                             | Zone   | Parishes | Total Participants |
|-----------------------------------|--------|----------|--------------------|
| 9th July to 10th July 2022        | Khunti | 6        | 300                |
| 29th October to 31st October 2022 | Gumla  | 5        | 350                |

As far as RPAPS is concerned, much importance is given to the understanding and accompanying youth for a meaningful life and a hope-filled future. In today's context it is becoming more and more challenging to accompany them for they have new issues, new problems, and they want a quick solution.

**Challenges:** It is said, "Youths are not the problem, but they have problems." To know and understand these problems we need to get into their shoes. Some basic and common mind-sets which we discover being with them are as follows: -

- Glamorous and easy living lifestyle
- Attraction towards electronic gadgets in the youth.
- Diversity of ideas, opinions and ideologies.
- Loss of interest in intellectual and physical hard work.
- Threats of external criminal forces (like MCC-Maoist communist centre) (a pro-communist and anti-government in India)

**Dream:** In the days to come we, look forward to work on these four areas.

Career councils like start-ups and orientations could be organised for youth.



To form them with the ideas and values of Jesuit Leadership.

Promoting Ignatius's spirituality.

Social analysis programmes to help them know and understand the society better.

## Jeevan Pravesh

Jeevan Pravesh focuses on life orientation for teenagers, mainly studying in 10th and 12 classes. The whole module is based on Ignatian Spirituality which concentrates on (i) God's love (ii) God's love and our response (iii) Two standards and (iv) Finding God in all things. The seminar gives an opportunity to the participants to reflect on their personal life which includes: (i) Self-discovery (ii) Self-realization (iii) Self-acceptance (iv) Self-renewal. There is also an effort to deal with some challenges like achieving real freedom, faith in God and self-confidence, discovering one's talents and developing them, Social awareness, healthy growth in one's emotions and healthy attitude towards sex and a clear aim in life. Reflecting on these aspects they grow in maturity and find help to reflect on their search for meaning in life.

So far **Jeevan Pravesh** has conducted the following programmes and activities.

### Programmes conducted during the period April-November, 2022

| S.N.  | Date          | Place/Institutions                | Number |       | Total |
|-------|---------------|-----------------------------------|--------|-------|-------|
|       |               |                                   | Boys   | Girls |       |
| 01    | April 27-30   | Apostolic School Samtoli          | 28     | -     | 28    |
| 02    | April 13-16   | St. Charles Borromeo H.S. Kuru    | 52     | 48    | 100   |
| 03    | July 23, 2022 | Noatoli Vicariate, C.L.C. Ralley  | -      | -     | 500   |
| 04    | August 10-13  | St. John's School Balipara, Assam | 44     | 40    | 84    |
| 05    | Sept. 6, 2022 | Asha Kiran, Khunti                | -      | 131   | 131   |
| 06    | Sept. 21-24   | St. Robert's H.S. Keondtanr       | 64     | 93    | 157   |
| 07    | Sept. 26-27   | Ursuline H.S. Gumla, C.L.C.       | -      | 361   | 361   |
| 08    | Oct. 01-04    | Apostolic School, Gumla           | 35     | -     | 35    |
| 09    | Oct. 06-08    | St. Inigo H.S. Saporom            | 64     | 93    | 157   |
| 10    | Oct. 12-15    | Notre Dame School Cl.XI-XII       | 71     | 158   | 229   |
| 11    | Oct. 20-22    | Notre Dame School Cl.IX-X         | 120    | 177   | 297   |
| 12    | Nov. 04-06    | St. Xavier's H.S. Bundu           | 101    | 51    | 152   |
| 13    | Nov. 09-12    | St. Peter's H.S. Tongo            | 156    | 14    | 170   |
| 14    | Nov. 16-19    | Prabhat Tara School, Dhurwa       | 125    | 160   | 285   |
| Total |               |                                   | 860    | 1326  | 2686  |







## AICUF

Together with life orientation and inputs on deepening one's spirituality, the youths were also given an atmosphere to know and understand some current social issues related to tribal identity, human rights, culture, language, and women's rights in society. It provided a platform for them to discover themselves as socially oriented, spiritually inspired and intellectually alert leaders. Fr. Ajay Arun Minj, the state adviser and the province coordinator of AICUF, managed to organize several camps for the AICUF group. These camps and gatherings were addressed by well-known social activists and experts on different social issues.

## Activities

March 5, 2023 (evening) to March 9, 2023 (morning)  
Theme - आदिवासी युवाओं की सोच, गति, दिशा और चुनौतियाँ  
Participants 95 from three units namely St. Xavier's College, Ranchi, St. Xavier's College, Simdega and St. Xavier's College, Mahuadanr.

Date: 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2022 (evening) to 26<sup>th</sup> October

2022 (morning) The theme of the Camp was Social Analysis. Participants – 98 from St. Xavier's College, Ranchi, St. Xavier's College, Simdega and St. Xavier's College, Mahuadanr.

Date: 9<sup>th</sup> August 2022 Indigenous Day Celebration  
Theme: Tribal Language and Life. Participants St. Xavier's College, Ranchi.

Today we need young men and women with critical minds who can play an influential role in the reformation of our society. Through the dynamics of AICUF students are given this opportunity where they allow themselves to be open to the new realities and critically analyse things. This endeavour also incorporates them into our own mission vision where they prepare and form themselves to promote social justice and fight for human rights and dignity.

There is a sense of satisfaction to see how these works have been executed and the greater satisfaction lies in the benefits of these young boys and girls who by their own choice try to incorporate with us Jesuits to bring change in society.





# 10

## Schooling the Young Minds (Secondary & Higher Secondary Education)

Fr. Fuldeo Soreng, SJ

The focus of Universal Apostolic Preferences of the Society of Jesus is particularly to take for of oneself, others, and creation as it is explicitly mentioned:



a) To show the way to God through the Spiritual Exercises and discernment;

b) To walk with the poor, the outcasts of the world, those whose dignity has

been violated, in a mission of reconciliation and justice;

c) To accompany young people in the creation of a hope-filled future;

d) To collaborate in the care of our Common Home.

In order to implement all the above UAPs Ranchi Province came up with its own Ranchi Province Apostolic Preferences (RPAPS) with its short-term, mid-term and long-term goals.

- 1) Being rooted and grounded in Ignatian Spirituality and sharing the same with others.
- 2) Walking with the poor, the oppressed and the marginalized, particularly the Tribals, for peace, justice, reconciliation and harmony.
- 3) Understanding and accompanying youth for a meaningful life and a hope-filled future.
- 4) Caring for and preserving our common home and promoting ecological justice and biodiversity.
- 5) Being men of competence, commitment, conscience and compassion to ensure quality and value-based education in accordance with the Jesuit tradition and heritage.
- 6) Promoting vocations and ensuring quality formation with good formation policy, programme, structure and implementation.

Jesuit communities and institutions of the Ranchi Province adapted these preferences at their own level. Jesuit education emphasizes that each person is a unique creation of God. Therefore, each individual is important and needs special care and support. *Cura Personalis* which means 'care for the whole self' in Latin is a Jesuit concept that calls for caring for oneself, creation and each other in our institutions.

- i. To show the way to God through the Spiritual Exercises and discernment:

The schools of Ranchi Province organized Novena Prayer as the preparation of the feast day of St. Ignatius of Loyola on 31 July 2022 during the morning assembly or other times. Various programs for the students were also arranged to help them to know and reflect on the lives of early Jesuits. The prayer was conducted on the following Ignatian themes for nine days:

- ♦ Finding God in Everything,
- ♦ Finding God in all things,
- ♦ AMDG (Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam), All for the greater glory of God,
- ♦ Called to Serve and Love,
- ♦ Discernment of Spirits,
- ♦ Showing the way to God,
- ♦ Walking with the Poor,
- ♦ Journeying with the Youth,
- ♦ Contemplation to attain love of God (Sp. Exs),
- ♦ Discernment of Spirits
- ♦ Magis in my life,
- ♦ Generosity,

Likewise, on December 3, 2022; on occasion of the feast day of St. Francis Xavier, S.J., the several Jesuit themes were taken up to reflect on the lives of this great saint.





Such prayer sessions and programs were arranged in order to bring all the students and the teachers to reflect on different Ignatian themes and thereby bring them closer to God the creator and the source of our



life. The active participation of the students and teachers helped them to learn and live the teachings of St. Ignatius of Loyola. Along with prayer session



orientation programs were also arranged for the teachers with the purpose of letting them know Jesuit heritage and values.

There was a workshop on 'Ignatian Pedagogy' organized at St. Xavier's School Doranda for all the teachers working in English medium school of Ranchi Jesuit Province. The experienced teachers from established English Medium school conducted the sessions and shared their expertise on teaching and learning processes. It was wonderful teaching

learning experience for all the participants. This motivated them to give their best in their teaching profession. It made them feel proud of being associated with the Jesuit institution.

The Holy Eucharistic Celebrations and recollections were organized for the students, parents, teaching and non-teaching staff members of the school on various occasions to help them come closer to God.

- ii. To walk with the poor, the outcasts of the world, those whose dignity has been violated, in a mission of reconciliation and justice:

Jesuit educational institutions besides teaching learning experience in the class room, creates an opportunity for the students to engage with the reality out there in society. Students learn to appreciate human values, social and environmental justice, inter-religious harmony, and learn to take initiatives to serve others, especially the poor and socially marginalized. The Jesuits of Ranchi Province working in different places of Jharkhand, Assam, Andamans in India and beyond the sea take special care for the marginalized.

Under the banner of the Jesuits, initiative was taken to feed more than one thousand underprivileged and unfortunate people on the occasion of Christmas in Ranchi irrespective of their caste, colour, creed, gender, age etc. They were also provided with one



blanket each and food as gifts of Santa Claus on 'Bada Din'. There were waves of smiles on their faces.



Similarly, students of Outreach Programme at St. Xavier's School, Doranda were provided with a new set of school uniform, some stationery, a pair of shoes etc. for the new academic year. Thirty-two needy students of the same programme were identified and provided with a new bicycle to come to school. These initiatives have motivated the students for study. There was a vaccination camp for booster dose. Many people came and received the booster dose.



The students were inspired and came forward to donate some woollen clothes to the inmates of Cheshire Home Bariatu, Ranchi. This kind gesture towards those inmates were the gesture of love and care towards the uncared and abandoned. The school going students of Konbir Parish at Sukurda village were also provided with some stationery as a small help to them for their studies. These little initiatives have definitely been helpful to them.

iii. To accompany young people in the creation of a hope-filled future;

In order to accompany the young and energetic youth the Jesuit schools take special care for their all-round development of the youth. The schools try to take care of the needs of the students. In the same line some schools organized Life Orientation Programme, Jivan Pravesh Programme, Youth Camps, Self-Awareness Programme etc. at various occasions for the students.

### The following topics were covered

1. To become a good son or daughter,
2. To come closer to God and be thankful to Him for His blessings in life,
3. To see the image of God in all the persons,
4. To handle stress and difficult situations in life,
5. The purposes of my life,
6. To live my life meaningfully,

7. To be a leader for the Church and Society,
8. Self-awareness and self-discovery,
9. To respect oneself and others etc.

These programmes helped the students to understand themselves deeper and better. The students participated very actively in these programs. All these programmes help the students to identify their hidden talents and leadership qualities.

Besides the aforementioned programmes several career guidance workshops were organized for the students to clarify their doubts; to broaden their views on many available courses after their studies at Plus Two. These were some of the workshops conducted for the students at the school level;

- ♦ Career Guidance on the Agriculture Industry,
- ♦ Career Guidance on the Law industry,
- ♦ Career fair to explain liberal education (25 universities of the country came).
- ♦ Career Guidance on the Civil Service (Administration),

Moreover, traffic awareness programme was conducted on road safety. A group of students had opportunity to participate in one programme at Ranchi Doordarshan on digital awareness. Another group of students shared its anxieties, pressure, approaches to prepare for the Board Examinations etc. The students participated in various types of science exhibitions held at different schools and colleges conducted on different themes organized by different departments.







The students also went for the exposure programmes to NTPC Patratu, in Ranchi. Some students went for the international cultural exchange programme to Belgium and Germany. Many others were part of the educational tour to different places of our own country India at different times. All these initiatives



taken by the schools have enhanced the learning of the students for sure. They have grown in their confidence and have acquired experiences to face the world courageously and live the life to its fullest.

The students from some remote places came to Ranchi for their educational tour and the established institutions of Ranchi extended their helping hand for better arrangement for sightseeing and trip.

iv. To collaborate in the care of our Common Home.

Jesuit institutions are also known for making the students responsible citizens who are sensitive to the needs of our times. Ecological care is one such concern for which the whole world is trying its best to protect and care for the whole nature. The 'Mother Earth' or 'Common Home' is such a generous, lovely, compassionate mother who gives us everything.



The schools of our Province have participated in the awareness programme for protecting the environment. The essay competitions were conducted on the theme related to taking care of our Common Home. Some schools also participated in tree plantation programmes conducted by the district administration. In collaboration with the forest department some students were provided with the tree saplings to plant and take care of them with the purpose of protecting the mother earth.

In many different ways the schools have made efforts to form persons of competence, commitment, conscience and compassion to give impart the value-based education in accordance with the Jesuit tradition and heritage.

In the schools where the Jesuits are working, they have tried their best to inspire, support, encourage, motivate young boys to join the Society of Jesus to continue the ministries of the Society. As a result, young boys are the witnesses who have experienced the accompaniment of the Jesuits, their hard work and guidance. Therefore, they are willing to join the Society of Jesus in a big number. Praise be to God, who has blessed Ranchi Province with showers of blessings with Jesuit Vocation.

Thus, Jesuit schools have tried to impart the knowledge not only from the text books but also through various activities promoting human, social and ecological values. Significant efforts have also been made to spiritually awaken and to morally uplift the students as well as staff and thereby create an atmosphere for character building of the students.





# 11

## Green Auditing: An Essential Part of Higher Education

Fr. Prabhat Kennedy Soreng, SJ

In the past, human beings were least concerned with the protection and preservation of natural resources available on the earth. However, in recent times after facing with many natural disasters, there have been more concerns for the conservation of natural resources.



Care for the mother earth, green and clean campus with varieties of trees has been the tradition of Jesuit institutions including the

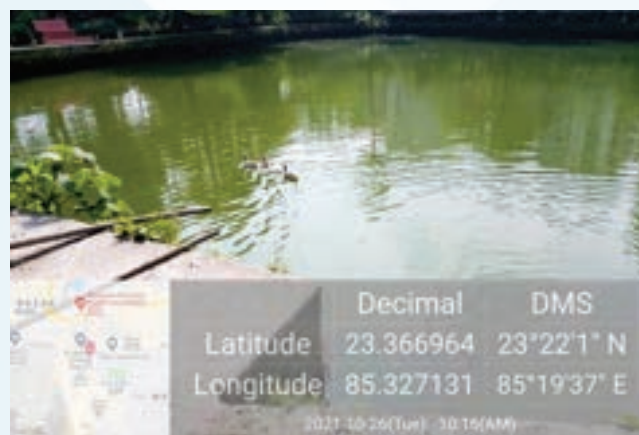
higher education. Once again, the same has been focus and explicitly mentioned in Ranchi Province Apostolic Preferences (RPAP). In recent years, environmental studies in the education system have become essential part of curricula. Before the CBCS system was adopted in the colleges, students had to study Environmental Studies. In the CBCS system it became the integral part of the syllabus. In NEP 2020 too it has important place. University Grant Commission (UGC) is emphasizing environmental studies. Now it is essential for any educational institution which is the center of learning to adopt the system of the Green Campus that students may know environmental issues and their harmful effects. For accreditation of any college green audit report is one of the criteria. For this an educational institution has to have well defined green policy. Execution of this policy by the institution and green auditing by a certified agency is very significant for better accreditation. These initiatives play a significant role in the protection and preservation of our mother earth from environmental disasters.

St. Xavier's College, Ranchi strongly believes that there is an urgent need to address these environmental problems and reverse the trend. Being a premier institution of higher learning, the college has adopted the 'Green Campus Clean Campus' system for environmental conservation and sustainability. The college aims to manage efficient use of energy, water, waste and to reduce CO2 level while creating

an atmosphere where students can learn to care our common home and be responsible citizens.

Let me highlight some of the green initiatives of St. Xavier's college Ranchi to implement RPAP and to fulfill the demand of higher education as well. The 'Green Campus' initiative has been active for last many years by different committees (Green campus committee, Eco Task Force, Geo Club, B. Ed Environment Club, Rotaract Club, NCC, NSS and Individual department, students and staff members) that actively promote the various activities and projects. The college administration works on the several facets of 'Green and Clean Campus' including Water Conservation, Tree Plantation, Waste Management, Paperless Work, Alternative Energy and Mapping of Biodiversity.

There are some more initiatives taken by the college like safety audit, safe disposal of toxic chemicals, and segregation of different types of waste, water recycle and talks on important environmental issues.



Pond to collect surface runoff water.



Biogas plant- an alternative source of energy





Solar panel, capacity of 100kv installed on the roof top of the main building, Solar street lights



Plantation at St. Xavier's College Simdega



Roof water harvesting system to maintain ground water level



Mushroom cultivation to recycle waste



Vermi composting of fallen leaves



Composter to recycle vegetable waste



Naming of the plants to map biodiversity





Preserve green area



Green House



Fr. Principal Planting trees on Van Mahotsav day



Tree plantation on world environment day



Plantation in the college campus



Plantation at Lapung Village





12

## You are Precious (Brothers' Commission, Ranchi)

Bro. Telesphore Horo, SJ

At present we are 13 Jesuit Brothers in Ranchi Province. Bro. Telesphore Horo SJ was selected as the delegate for Central Zone Brothers Coordinator for the International Meeting of Jesuit Brothers held in Rome from July 4 – July 10, 2022. It was a unique



and privileged opportunity for him to represent the Central Zone Jesuit Provinces. The presence of Jesuit brothers' delegates from all Assistancies strengthened the sense of belongingness to the entire 'JESUIT FAMILY' and the universality of our mission

today.



The 6 day intensive inputs on various themes not only connected us with the rich spiritual heritage of our Jesuit history and life but it also invited us to reflect and discern the challenges of religious life in the Society of Jesus as Jesuit Brothers. In his inaugural address Fr. General highlighted the prophetic dimension of our vocation which invited us to prophetic witnessing of the Gospel by walking courageously on the path shown to us by our founder St. Ignatius. We had the privileged occasion to listen to the eminent and experienced Jesuits on various topics which included;

1. Prophetic aspects of Jesuit Brothers by Fr. General.
2. Brother's History and their Identity by Br. Wenceslao Soto and Bro. Jeff Pioquinto.
3. The promotion of Jesuit Brother's Vocation by Bro. Matt Wooders and Jim Boyntom.
4. Formation by Fr. Mark Ravizza.



These sessions led us to a deep and open fraternal sharing of our life and mission, it was a consoling and strengthening experience to share the fruits of our apostolic activities. There was a common experience of 'being sent on mission' and sailing in the same boat to reach the same destination of 'showing the path of God to others through our life and spiritual exercises'. Series of group discussions and spiritual conversations opened the pathways to re-imagine creative and more diligent response to our prophetic call of proclaiming of the values of Jesus. All the Bro. delegates expressed gratitude to the Lord for a meaningful deliberation and were hopeful of reaping abundant fruits from their fraternal encounter.

On the last day of our meeting, on July 10, 2022 we were blessed by the surprise visit of our Holy Father, Pope Francis. Indeed, the personal, unofficial and informal visit and interaction with Pope was a heartwarming and gratifying experience to be cherished and relished lifelong; it truly made us feel that Pope has deep love and affection for the Brothers. We felt loved, acknowledged and appreciated for our valuable contribution in building up the body of Christ, the Church. He encouraged us to be ready for all clerical responsibilities in the Society and the Church. He added, "The vocation to the consecrated life is more important than the vocation to the priesthood". Pope Francis shared his fond memories of living with Jesuit Brothers as a Jesuit companion. He recalled a multi-tasking Brother at Collegio Maximo, who executed all kinds of works with great joy and love. He said, "When the



room key was lost or damaged, the Brother appeared with a large bunch of hundred keys in a wired chain and he tried them one by one until he found the right one”.

On 7th August 2022 Bro. Telesphore Horo, SJ shared his rich experiences of Brothers’ meeting held in Rome with all Ranchi Jesuit Brothers and the Sadvavana community members. The Brothers listened to his experiences with great enthusiasm and interest. It gave him an impression that they were able to grasp the sentiment and message of the meeting as communicated to them individually. He thanked the provincial and the province for giving him this unique exposure to represent the Central Zone Brothers. He concluded his sharing with a message, “Be an authentic and good Jesuit. Live in the Present. Joyfully do the mission assigned to you”, कर्म करते जाओ और फल की कामना मत करो। ईश्वर जो दयालु है वह हमें ईनाम देगा।



The South Asian Jesuit Brothers meet was held at Vinayalaya Andheri (E) Mumbai from Dec 3 - Dec 6, 2022. Bro. Siluvainathan, SJ, the Coordinator led us with a prayer. We were happy to be blessed with the presence of Fr. Stany (Posa) and Fr. Anil, the Provincial of Mumbai. In his welcome address, Fr. Anil invited us to be proud of our vocation as Brothers, he concluded quoting Fr. General’s words, “I want a happy Brother, I want an enthusiastic Brother.” Fr. Stany (Posa) addressed us and encouraged us to keep our focus on the following areas: - (1) Spiritual depth (2) Competence and credibility (3) Social skills (4) Professionalism (5) VAP, CAP, PAP and Raps. He invited and challenged us to find ways to know, love and integrate them in our ministry.

In the South Asian Jesuit Brothers meet, the six delegates from JCSA Bro. Siluvainathan, SJ (Coordinator) Bro. Alpesh Kumar Chauhan, SJ, Bro. Clarence Joseph, SJ, Bro. Bruno Edward, SJ, Bro. Arockiasamy and Bro. Telesphore Horo, SJ, presented the summary of Brothers meeting held in Rome. Bro. Telesphore SJ presented the summary of open space session.

We thank the Lord for vocations to brotherhood. In the year 2022 we got three candidates for Brotherhood. Among the three one is in candidate house and the two are in Pre – Novitiate. In the vocation promotion meeting, on 9th January 2022 two lay persons are included for Vocation Promotion and a decision was made to include an advertisement for Brotherhood Vocation in the monthly magazine, *Nishkalanka*.





13

## Ranchi Province Infirmary: A Welcoming Home

Fr. Raymond Kerketta, SJ & Bro. Telesphore Horo, SJ

Importance of health issues has escalated higher than yesterday. Thanks to the foresightedness of the Provincials that the Province Infirmary at Manresa House, Ranchi is constantly upgraded in order to provide better care and service to the sick and

the aged of the Province men. Keeping in mind the Vision of the Health Commission, i.e., “to ever grow in the awareness of health as a gift from God as much as life is and so we endeavour to promote good physical and mental health and well-being of the Province men as an integral aspect of wholeness of life,” the Province places it as one of its priorities.

### Objectives

The following are the objectives that we keep before our eyes: Apt and timely response in attending to those who are sick and need assistance or special care and attention. By doing so, we instill the spirit of solidarity especially towards those of ours who are aged and suffering from any ailments. Finally, we appreciate in them the value and dignity of life that we all need for effectively carrying out the Mission of the Society.

### Facilities and Inmates

The physical set-up of the Infirmary is complete in itself – spacious and self-contained rooms. As per the needs, there have been a few major additions in the recent past. A bigger generator for power supply has been installed. Minor renovations were done in some of the rooms in the ground floor. Under the leadership of Fr. Ranjit Horo, SJ, who was recuperating in the Infirmary, the small garden next to it was made very eco-friendly. Though the Rasschaert Auditorium in the 2nd floor of the building is often used for various meetings, there is sufficient privacy in the ground and 1st floor, where most of our inmates are accommodated. During the last dreadful Covid-19 pandemic situation, all our inmates were safe thanks to the Manresa House Administration and the Infirmary Team who succeeded to make it a safe zone.

Presently, there are ten Jesuits in the Infirmary. Br. Habil Kujur, Fr. Mathias Dungdung, Bro. Polycarp Lakra, Fr. Pratap Toppo, Fr. Robert Kindo, Fr. Clement Ekka, Emmanuel Horo, Fr. Domonic Topno, Fr. Cyprian Ekka, and Fr. Ernest Kujur. Most of them are having age-related ailments who need special care, while others are regaining their health. The Province Infirmary is also a means to bridge between the Provincial Curia and mission places by





serving scores of Jesuits from within the Province and the outside.

For smooth functioning, the Province has worked out a system. There is a health staff to manage the Province Infirmary. Sr. Lucy Soreng, D.S.A. and Sr. Suchita Kujur, D.S.A. are trained nurses. They are available in the infirmary round the clock to serve our sick and the aged Jesuits. Besides, there are two male and two female helpers. The male helpers do the night duties in turn. Br. Telesphore Horo, SJ, (Coordinator), a trained nurse himself and a multi-tasking man, avails himself in critical times to render his service to the sick Jesuits. Fr. Raymond Kerketta, SJ (Socius), also the Province Health In-charge, functions as a link between Rev. Fr. Provincial and the Health Team. Dr. Samir Kujur gives his service to the inmates once a week on a regular basis as the House Doctor. However, in emergency, he can be contacted at any time. Our Novice Master and Pre-Novice Director are very generous in availing novices and pre-novices in times of services needed.

### Opportunities and Challenges

Looking after the sick and the aged is a noble yet challenging task. One requires a lot of commitment, compassion, understanding, and patience. Sometimes we seem to fall short of in this regard. Now there are better care and monitoring of health issues of our

Province men. However, some of us take casually and try to by-pass the Province way of proceeding. Our sick and aged members in the Infirmary value the visit of their Jesuit brothers much. They are confined to limited space and a few friends. In spite of these realities of life, many of them are our inspiration. In their prayer ministry, they keep the Church and the Society close to their hearts. Let us make extra efforts to make them realize that we love and care for them.







14

## Speaking the Truth with Love (Media)

Fr. Justin Tirkey, SJ & Fr. Alex Tirkey, SJ

Renowned Philosopher Descartes once said “I think therefore I am” underlining the idea that human beings exist because they think. Today it won’t be an exaggeration if we say “I communicate, therefore I am.” The meaning of the maxim would be,



those who communicate exist. In other words, every human being who communicates exists or still other way, if we want to remain alive we are expected to communicate. Without communication, a person is considered dead.



Pope Francis in his message to the world on 57th World day of Social Communication emphasized communication through “Speaking:” Pope Francis says that we need “to speak with the heart” and “follow

the truth in love” then the miracle of encounter can take place. Every year Pope sends message to the world to make the blessings of media more relevant and meaningful with a theme. This year theme is “speaking” that will guide and direct our media and communication activities.

It is important to note that Pope Francis while giving the World day of Social Communication day message previous year had underlined “listening” as the prerequisite of meaningful communication. This year he gives importance to the “speaking”. Speaking implies expressing ourselves as an extension of who we are. We can extend ourselves through our speeches, writings, images, videos, hymns, dances, arts, signs and symbols. Pope Francis not only gives importance to the speaking but also speaking the Truth, with our heart. It is so important to understand that our speaking or expressing ourselves will be fruitful only if we speak with heart. Speaking with heart is having a communication that builds cordial relationship. It promotes and extends the Kingdom values that is peace, harmony, dialogue, and walking together.

In the light of the encouraging words of Pope Francis, the Communication Commission of Ranchi Province initiated several activities in the Province which spoke about the Truth and the Word with love. The initiatives supplemented the activities proposed by the Universal Apostolic Preference (UAP) and Ranchi Province Apostolic Preference (RPAP). The programmes and activities that were taken by the media commission were focused on speaking the Truth and Word through various platforms, namely social media, seminars, photo and hymns uploads, documentary films, composing hymns for Lievens birthday jubilee and Ignatian jubilee.

### 1. Divya Vachan (Divine Word) Daily Reflection



Divya Vachan is a 7-8 minutes daily reflection programme on the daily readings of the day for Christians who want to begin the day with the word of God. It is a joint venture of Manresa Scholastics, Fathers and Brothers and the Communication Commission of Ranchi Province aiming at reaching the people through YouTube to fulfill their spiritual needs. On the one hand, it is a Jesuit presence to cater to the needs of the people on the other hand it is part of the formation of the young men to deliver life messages meaningfully through the programme. Divya Vachan started reaching the people on October 15, 2022 with first episode being the foundation of



the Manresa House, the mission residence of Ranchi Province and the Jesuits of Chotanagpur.

## 2. Photos upload



Fr. Alex regularly updated the photos of the important events of the province and kept the province men up-to-date with the news and views. The work of Fr. Alex is not only the images but the images that speak to us and connect us with one another and give us a sense of belonging to the least Society. Fr. Alex is an example of selecting and framing the touching moments of the day to speak loudly in silence through the images. Fr. Tirkey uploads images of celebrations, jubilees, funerals, sports, inaugurations, and shares them through WhatsApp. Many of ours, especially those who are far in Diaspora and far in the mission land get updated with the happenings in the Province.

## 5. Jubilee hymn

To commemorate the 500 year anniversary of the Cannonball injury of St. Ignatius at Pamplona Fr. Justin SJ composed a song “prabhu me sab kuchh naya dekhien” (“to see everything new in Christ”).

The theme song was used by the prayer service organized by the central zone. Jubilee song includes all four aspects of Universal Apostolic Preference (UAP) namely sharing Ignatian spirituality, accompanying the youth, serving the poor and safeguarding the common home.

## 6. Lievens hymn

On 6th November 2022 the Ranchi Jesuit Province with the thousands of the faithful of Chotanagpur celebrated the death anniversary of Servant of God at the St. John’s football ground with great zeal and fervor. To mark the occasion Fr. Justin SJ composed the jubilee hymn “Ish sevak, constant livens hum tujhe pyar karte hai”(Servant of God, Constant Lievens, we love you). The choir led by Manresa Scholastics performed very well to give due honor to the great missionary and messiah Father Constant Lievens.



## 7. Smart Class

Satya Bharati, the province media center also organized a four month music course on Keyboard, Guitar and Octapad for the Manresa House Scholastics. Scholastics got the taste of playing musical instruments. It would certainly help them in appreciating different musical instruments and help them in conducting different types of musical instruments meaningfully and make the liturgy more effective.

## 8. YouTube uploading hymns of Sangeet Sagar, Lenten Hymn

The commission uploaded the devotional and melodious hymn composed by Rev. Fr. John Lakra, SJ in the YouTube. There are some 25 hymns





composed and sung by Fr. John himself. It is an example of the commitment and dedication to the work.

### 9. Lievens Documentary

Two of our scholastics Ashwin and Wilson studying Mass Communication in Vijay Wada were in the Province for an apprenticeship for four months with a precious project on the life of Servant of God Fr. Constant Lievens. The documentary presents Fr. Constant Lievens as a great missionary and messiah of Tribals of Chotanagpur. They had a well planned internship programme for four months (from December 2022 to April 2023) to complete the documentary. Before they completed their project they moved to various places of importance that include Dolda, Jamgain, Bendora, Bundu Lorhardaga and Jashpur. The Documentary speaks of Father Constant Lievens and his missionary activities that kindled the light among the Tribals of Chotanagpur and help them stand in their own feet.



### 10. Talks

Fr. Justin organized a media education course for various people in formation. They include Missionaries of Jesus the Eternal Priest Sisters, Ursulines and Jesuit Scholastics. Media education courses were geared towards making the formees critical media literates who will be able to consume media messages critically and use it judiciously. He also gave a talk to the BIJHAN members on the Church and media in an annual meeting held at Satya Bharati on January 21, 2023 on the theme of Church and Communication. Media users and consumers of the province have progressively understood the power of speaking and expressing themselves consistently in various ways.

One of the most powerful aspects of communication is speaking; expressing what is within so that there is commonness between the two groups, two hearts or lets us two parties. This sharing or communication will surely bring harmony healing and healthy growth and prosperity to all. The test of the quality of communication is the fruit it brings. Pope Francis has rightly underlined “speaking with the Truth in love.” It encourages and guides not only our actions but our intentions as well to be productive. It not only inspires us to be active in life but also encourages us to share our lives with tremendous love that will touch the hearts of others and make such an atmosphere where the responsibility of being good, wishing good and doing good will rest not only on one but on each shoulder and every heart.



15

## From the Frontiers (Assam Mission)

Fr. Thomas Barla, SJ

For which of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to complete it? Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it



begin to mock him, saying, ‘This man began to build and was not able to finish’ (Lk. 14: 28-30). The long process of prayerful discussion and discernment to identify current issues and select four very important ones for the Universal Apostolic Preferences (UAP) that would be concretely

lived out at the Conference, Zonal and the Province Level for a period of ten years from 2020 – 2030. True to what our Lord says in the Gospel mentioned above, it was a real planning. It has taken a lot of time and energy. Despite the challenges posed by COVID-19 and related issues, all members of the Society of Jesus participated quite actively.

The Universal Apostolic Preferences (UAP), 1. To show the way to God through the Spiritual Exercises and Discernment, 2. To walk with poor, the outcast of the world, those whose dignity has been violated, in a mission of reconciliation and justice and peace, 3. To accompany the young in the creation of a hope-filled future, 4. To collaborate in the care of our Common Home. Ranchi Province discerned on the UAP, contextualized it and drew up six areas as the Ranchi Province Apostolic Preferences (RPAP): 1. Being rooted and grounded in Ignatian Spirituality and sharing the same with others, 2. Walking with the poor, the oppressed and the marginalized, particularly the tribals, for peace, justice, reconciliation and harmony, 3. Understanding and accompanying youth for a meaningful life and a hope-filled future, 4. Caring for and Preserving our common home and promoting ecological justice and biodiversity, 5. Being men of competence, commitment, conscience and compassion to ensure quality and value-based education in accordance with the Jesuit tradition and heritage and 6. Promoting vocation and ensuring quality formation with good formation policy, programme, structure and implementation.

### Our Life and Mission in the perspectives of UAP and RPAP

Did the planning and preparation bring about some transformation? It did to ours to a certain extent. The very fact of coming together, talking, listening to one another, reflecting together, discussing seriously itself has created awareness about the UAP and RPAP. Although, all are busy in different ministries or studies but at heart the UAP and RPAP have become part of our life and mission. They are visible in our thoughts, talks, behaviour and different aspects of our life.

### Spiritual Life and Mission

With objectives and activities at the Province level in place, persons are assigned to initiate activities in different places to implement them. The practical results are visible in our community and the themes of the UAP and RPAP are used in talks, community prayers, recollections, seminars, retreats and similar activities. Different ministerial groups organized common retreats and many more are in the offing; spiritual readings and reflections have been initiated. The community wise spiritual conversations have become a common practice. The Province curia has initiated many more activities for the Province men.

How do these activities impact the Jesuits? Jesuits have had transformative impact of spiritual activities in their lives. Quite many are taking part in the spiritual activities with great interest and seriousness and speak positively about them. Of course, some Jesuits will have to grow in spiritual depth. But the process of immersing oneself into spiritual







conversation has begun with great enthusiasm. It may take time for internalization and transformation in spiritual life and mission.

### **Administrative Life**

The effects of UAP and RPAP are visible in our administrative life too. At the Province level the Provincial Superior has given guidelines through number of circulars and letters with regard to the administrative life. As part of our cura apostolica, all our Registered Societies, Trusts and Institutions with their proper documentations are getting streamlined. Similarly, our financial management have been taken seriously with proper budgeting and accounting. As part of practicing poverty and financial transparency, the Jesuits are instructed to opt for cheaper modes of travel like trains and buses rather than opt for pricey air travel. Jesuits have taken the administrative changes quite positively. The documentation of the properties have improved in all the communities in the province. The unnecessary expenses have been controlled and curtailed.

### **Ministerial Life**

Every member of the province is expected to implement the UAP and RPAP in his ministry. In the province, ministry wise meetings have been held and activities have been planned to implement the UAP and RPAP in their ministries. In the education ministry, the coordinators have been organizing seminars for the Principals, Headmasters, teachers and collaborators to inculcate the preferences in their life and works. In schools and colleges various activities like recollections, orientation programmes, tree plantation, exposure, visits, contributions for the poor people, extra coaching classes, social awareness and similar other activities are being organized

with the students keeping in mind the preferences. Similarly, the Formation Commission of the Province has planned various activities for those in formation like Novices, Juniors and Scholastics. The Novice Masters and the Province Coordinator for Formation discussed to strategize the issues. The social activists have their own set activities and projects keeping in mind all the preferences. The projects are implemented with and for poor and the marginalized people. Their children are especially attended to quality education through supplementary education. The youth benefit from career guidance given to them. Likewise other commissions have their plans and strategies.

In conclusion, it can be said that the UAP and RPAP have been set for the transformation of the Jesuits themselves, their collaborators and beneficiaries. And together they may bring about changes in the society, country and in the whole universe. It is a process of positive change and therefore, it will take time but sure to change. Secondly, it is very much in the line of the principle and foundation of the Spiritual Exercises. The principle and foundation of the Spiritual Exercises says that God created human beings to praise, reverence, and serve God, and by doing this, to save their souls. God created all other things on the face of the earth to help fulfill this purpose. While going through a process of spiritual discernment to set the Universal Apostolic Preferences and Ranchi Province Apostolic Preferences, consciously or unconsciously we have kept the Principle and Foundation of the Spiritual Exercises in our minds and hearts. Through these activities we remain true companion of Jesus and try to fulfill His Mission of glorifying God through our life and mission.





16

## Jesuit Mission in Andaman and Car Nicobar Islands

Fr. Alexius Dungdung, SJ

### The Ranchi Community: Pearl of The Church

Ever since the first quarter of the 20th century, when the Chhotanagpur tribals came to Andamans and Nicobar islands, the Church in the Islands kept flourishing. At present, the 'Ranchi church's (tribal church) is alive here. In many ways, they are the backbone of the church or diocese. They actively participate in the church programmes. They all belong to working class; their contribution in the development



of Andamans is great. They have cleared the forest to live, made ATR (Andaman Trunk Road) and the Airports. Without them, development of the islands would not have been progressive. Some are working in the government office, A.N. P.W. D. (Andaman –Nicobar public Work Department) Forest Department, Private jobs under contractors and some have encroached the forest land and doing the cultivation ( these people can be removed at any time) . They are in an interior places away from the towns. The level of the education among the Ranchi community is very poor. For their children's education they are depended on the government schools. They do not get proper guidance and right motivation in general. There are many drop-out students. Due to lack of quality education in remote areas they are left to their own fate. They have lost the determination and confidence in their life. They have very low self esteem in their life. Many graduates and post graduate girls are ready to marry with under matriculate boys. The Ranchi tribes are put in general category for the govt. jobs; they have to compete with other general category of the candidates. Once there was a time in islands when they used to get job without school degrees. There was not much difficulty to get the government job. But gone are those days.

### The Pattern Of Pastoral Work In The Diocese

The diocese gives more importance to nurture Basic Christian Community. Along with it the main pastoral concerns in the diocese are parish works, faith formation, visiting the sick , poor and old, praying with them., administering sacraments, saying Holy Mass in different units.

The present Bishop Rev. V. Selvaraj is very open to the other ministries and acknowledges it. Slowly Bishop is recognizing the other apostolate in the diocese.

### The Spiritual Director

It is another dimension of the Jesuit ministry in the isles. So far Jesuits have done a marvelous job in this field. It began with late Fr. Patrick Kullu, SJ, followed by many prominent Jesuits like late Fr. Joseph Minj, SJ, Fr. Amrit Kujur, SJ, (MP) , Fr. George Beck, SJ (DUM) and Fr. Tony Adrade, SJ (Del). The Spiritual director is a full timer to move from parish to parish for spiritual help. The priests and religious feel extremely happy to get the spiritual support. They can freely share their difficulties to him who can understand them. The person has to remain in the ships for many days when he makes his journeys to southern seas.

### Education Ministry of Ranchi Jesuits

Wherever educated people are available in the church, the community becomes more vibrant and helpful to the church. The community becomes more alive to participate in the church activities. They become instrumental in the church community.

As soon as Jesuits entered in the fourth phase of their ministry in 1987 to Andaman mission, they realized that there must be schools for their ministry. Many Jesuit Provincials saw this need. Late Fr. Ranjit Pascal Toppo, SJ had a vision to open a school in Diglipur. He had a blue print for this ministry and had visioned a "Loyola School."





Diglipur town is situated in the center of this Island. The town is connected by land and sea routes from all sides. It is an easy approach to the town. Seeing the standard of the schools in the town, need for a Jesuit school in the Archipelago was felt.

### **Loyola Academy**

It is a newly opened school by Ranchi Jesuits in Diglipur, North Andaman. It is opened and inaugurated on 1st April, 2022 at Diglipur. In the education field it is a pioneering work by the Society. It is a long cherished desire and dreams of many Jesuits. It is the first Jesuit school in the archipelago. In the opening year we had only 10 students. Within a year as the message spread in the islands that Loyola is opened by the Ranchi Jesuits, students are coming in big numbers. This year we shall have good number of students in Nursery. According to the plan of the province it will be up to +2 (Senior Secondary) as it is a general practice of the islands. This year we move up to UKG. The education ministry of Ranchi will have a great impact in the life of the people in future. It will bring about positive change in their thinking pattern and in socio-economic aspects of their life. In different ways they will be empowered by this ministry. Late Fr. Ranjt Pascal Toppo, SJ by his survey and vision, opened the eyes of the mission, Fr. Xavier Soreng, SJ had continued

negotiations with the Bishop of Port Blair, Fr. Joseph Marianus Kujur, SJ put forward the process effectively and present provincial Fr. Ajit Kumar Xess, SJ is actualizing the process and carrying out the necessary requirements. Along with it so many provincials, commission members and the minds of the Jesuits are involved in it. Pre-primary section of Loyola Academy building of two floors, is getting ready for classes. 'All Jesuits of Archipelagoes and mainland wish the success of this vital mission. It will bring miracles in the life of the people in days to come. The impact of it will be positive.



# SECTION C

## UAP & RPAP IN DIASPORA







17

## Search for Peace & Justice (Japan Mission)

Sch. Priyatam Lakra, SJ

A warm greeting to all of you from Japan! Here I am to share with you all about the appliance of UAPs at the province level in Japan Mission. The mission work in Japan has been a milestone for us as



we dive deeper into the Japanese society that has gone through numerous challenges in the past. Now a new era has come when the people here are ready to break through the changes that limit diversity. And so undoubtedly new challenges and

new possibilities have been realized to open door to accomplish the objectives of UAP.

Currently, I am in Hiroshima, teaching in a Senior and Junior High School here. Having faced the atomic disaster Hiroshima now has been much more conscious about peace and justice that reigns in the social and cultural society here. I am glad to do the mission work in such a place where people lost everything in the nuclear disaster and started a new chapter of life with new hope and dream. I continue to enjoy the mission work here and get to learn a lot from their cultural, social, philosophical, and academic life.

Here I am to share with you all about the Japan Mission under UAPs. When it comes to implementing the dreams in relation to the apostolic preferences; we begin to realize that the apostolic mission opens

to us with some eye-opening and enriching grace to be hopeful and revive the energy to the prioritized apostolic works that seriously need our attention. In communities focusing on the Jesuit mission centers, all our men engaged in the parish, social, educational, and spiritual apostolates, and province administration will aim to form “creative apostolic communities” that live and work together. In the given situation the communities have been highly encouraged to the groundwork for finding new and creative apostolates. Moreover, in restructuring our communities, we can aim at solving the issue of the member’s age balance. Keeping the decreasing number of Ours, the mission centers have been opened to collaborators and will aim at further involving them with us in our mission.

The implementation of UAPs has certainly been a time for a change in our approach to the apostolates. These changes; involved in some pains have been made for the vibrant apostolate. The Yotsuya mission center, aside from its functional province headquarters, is now the location of the social apostolate, the spiritual apostolate, and the youth ministry. It has formed a new mission now which through mutual solidarity and collaboration, has been aimed at reflecting the UAPs, especially the 4<sup>th</sup> UAP by forming a mission that consciously promotes “collaboration in the care for our “common home”. The educational research and parish apostolates have started working together





and engaging in our mission as a totality. As a center for youth ministry, it provides a place for youth to gather, and the various apostolates work together and engage in new programs geared toward youth. The vocation promotion team has started working on this with effect and the result is quite satisfying.

The mission centers here in Japan now engage constructively in the increasingly urgent migrant issues, support educational efforts to answer the needs of children with foreign connections, and build up a network of apostolates. This provides an opportunity to numerous collaborators. The Hiroshima mission center at Nagatsuka aims at serving the church mainly in western Japan and with a focus on the Spiritual Exercises, this mission center includes a composite mission in view of the UAPs. Realizing that in the future we will have fewer Jesuits to assign, we prepare for collaborators to take a central role in the administration. And so, most of our communities are now open to collaborators for the spiritual apostolate.

This is how there has been greater sharing of the province assets, as with collaborators. However, the environmental issues have, in fact, been missing and need to be inserted into the province orientations here in Japan. On a happy note, the province has furthered cooperation with non-Jesuits. A further instance of collaboration is the Sophia School Corporation merging of school boards, cooperation with students, and broader uses of “Tabiji-no-Sato”, the Kamakura and Nagasaki retreat houses, and Kobe Xavier House.

Under the universal and province preferences cooperation with other provinces has increased (the Roman houses, East Timor, the Manila novitiate,



Arrupe Month, international villas, and the proposed project for pilgrims to Nagasaki). Also under a province preference, we have increased contact with the African continent. The priorities for the future of the Japan Province are now focusing on theological research, religious dialogue, inculturation,







collaboration, and spirituality. Jesuit assignments to theology have been prioritized and we have used our strengths in this area to offer service to the church of Japan. The province inter-religious dialogue committee promotes gathering with Buddhists and continues to work towards an increase in friendships. Participation in our educational facilities has been quite good so far. We have four high schools under the Sophia School Corporation and the apostolates have been strengthened with voluntary support.

These are some of our mission aspects that I put across to you all as we continue to contribute to Japan's mission from our Ranchi Province. The mission work in Japan continues to be a challenge for us as the number of Ours goes down with the passage of time. A helpful image of our Japan mission is that of Peter walking across the water at Jesus' command. We undertake missions that are impossible by human standards. We trust in Jesus but sink if we become too conscious of the storm and lose sight of Jesus. And so let us stay united in prayers, support each other, and let the fire burn. Let us feel the urgency of a real call to undertake the tough mission that lies ahead of us with many different challenges and adventures.

Peace of Christ!



## Community and Mission

To see all things new in Christ has been the guiding thread that has guided our approach to St. Ignatius of Loyola, to learn to follow Jesus.



On 31st July, 2022 on the feast of St. Ignatius, to mark and to conclude the 500th Anniversary of Ignatius' conversion, all the Jesuits in Guyana-Jamaica Region renewed the Consecration of the Society of Jesus to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.



With a deeper conversation about our life together in community, we have faced the challenges that are common to the creation and cultivation of all communities: namely,

diversity of personality and culture, as well as the tendency to individualism. The diminished number of Jesuits in the Region also precipitated the greater dispersion of Jesuits across vast geographical areas largely for the sake of meeting apostolic needs. In some sense, this was an implicit recognition that the care of the mission integrates *cura personalis* and *cura apostolica*.

## An English-Speaking Caribbean Institute of Spirituality

Over the last few years some of the Bishops of the Antilles Episcopal Conference have specifically requested a Jesuit contribution to the spiritual formation of their local churches, echoing and reinforcing concretely the first Universal Apostolic Preference, "To offer a way to God through the Spiritual Exercises and Discernment". Caribbean Institute of Spirituality in Port of Spain in Trinidad is offering retreat, training and clergy formation. Fr. Peter McIsaac, SJ is in-charge of the Caribbean Institute of Spirituality. Locally, in our parishes, we offer the Ignatian Retreats to our parishioners. We have the novena prayers for the preparation for the

feast of St. Ignatius. We arrange recollection for the Parish Lay Assistants.

## Guyana Human Development Centre (GHDC)

The Region has developed a distinctly Jesuit Apostolic venture that goes beyond parish based pastoral ministry- Guyana Human Development Centre (GHDC) in Berbice. This is the centre for Inter-Faith Dialogue among Hindus and Muslims. The Centre has a well-organized programme of skills training and a competent staff to carry this out. The work done certainly embodies two of the Universal Apostolic Preferences, namely: To walk with the poor, the outcasts of the world, those whose dignity has been violated, in a mission of reconciliation and justice; and to accompany young people in the creation of a hope-filled future.

## Youths and Vocation

The Spiritual Exercises and discernment lead youths towards a life that is more centred and balanced – informing and inspiring youths towards a life of justice, reconciliation, and peace, as well as a deeper ecological awareness. The youth conventions,



Vocational discernment Retreats, Spiritual Conversations, Altar Servers' Training, sharing of our religious vocation stories and prayer for vocation were taking place in the Diocese to help the young people. Fr. Joel Thompson, SJ, Fr. Joseph Uchanna, a





diocesan priest for the Diocese of Georgetown and deacon Damian Gonsalves, IVE are the wonderful fruits of our efforts and God's grace.

### **Quality Bilingual Education Programme (QBEP)**

In order to preserve and promote the indigenous people's rich culture and tradition the Quality Bilingual Education Programme (QBEP) was initiated for pre-primary education among the Wapichan people of the South Rupununi. The Ministry of Education of the Government of Guyana, approved for expansion in September 2022. It is hoped that the programmes of this sort will be expanded to the first part of Primary Education and include other linguistic groups among the Patamona and Macushi people in North and South Pakaraimas respectively.

### **Lay Formation**

Lay formation is a priority for the Diocese of Georgetown. The formation of lay ministers is essential for evangelization and on-going pastoral care. Brother Pascal Jordan, OSB and his team offers the online lay leadership formation. This is very useful in the coastal area where there is internet facility. Many join the programme and benefit from it. In the East Coast Demerara, Georgetown, Fr. Anugrah Amar Bage, SJ arranged lay leaders formation programmes. In the interior, the team of the interior mission- Fr. Elias Surin, SJ, Fr. Joel Thompson, SJ, Fr. Poulouse Vellacada, SJ and Fr.

Ronald Fernandes, SJ prepared the syllabus and conducted the training programmes in their own respective areas.

Synod for the Synodal Church, in the Diocese of Georgetown is helping us to make our Christian life active and vibrant.

### **Caring for our Common Home**

All of us are experiencing the climate change in our daily life. The excessive rain and drought are making life miserable. Amerindian People Association (APA) arranged awareness seminars in every village in Guyana. In Aishalton, on 17th September, the parishioners planted fruit plants in the parish campus to bring awareness among the indigenous people. In the coastal area, particularly in Georgetown, the ocean is getting dirty by the Oil Company.

Over the years the Region has been able to assist a large number of students financially in Tertiary Education. There is certainly scope to offer a more structured programme of accompaniment for the beneficiaries of such scholarships and to prioritise courses that explicitly prepare young people for the work of "Caring for our Common Home".



**19**

## International Migration... Refugees (Jordan)

Fr. Bimal Kerketta, SJ

Pope Francis had addressed the refugees in Centro Astalli's soup kitchen, back in 2013. Centro Astalli is the Jesuit Refugee Service in Italy with these words, "Each one of you, dear friends, has a life story that speaks to us of the tragedies of war, of



conflicts that are all too often linked to international politics. Yet, above all, every one of you bears a wealth of humanity and a religious sense, treasures to welcome rather than to fear. Many of you are Muslim or members of another religion. You come from various countries, from different situations. We mustn't be afraid of differences....." The words of Pope Francis fit well in the context of Jordan also. The country has tried its level best to coordinate with this tragic human crisis.

There is a huge population of asylum seekers in Jordan. Jesuits are directly involved through Jesuit Refugee Service. It has been eye opening for me encountering a new world. People enter here from many parts of the world with a dream of going abroad through the help of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Here, the person is allowed to register officially or can be refused according to the case presented. Some have to wait for more than eight years to get their papers cleared. Some have to wait even longer without knowing their future. There are different cases. Thus, Jordan is an official door under UNHCR to help migrate to the USA, Australia, Germany, Canada and many other countries.

The issue of migrants and refugees is getting serious in many parts of the world. There are endless and horrifying sequences of wars, conflicts,

genocides, ethnic cleansings etc. In recent years, there is a marked increase in severe conflicts and other aggravating factors. War related poverty, environmental degradation or climate change such as severe floods, drought, etc. are also factors leading to migration. On the other hand, human beings have a natural desire to seek a better life. Often this makes a person cross any boundary and even risk their life. In spite of all challenges, life across the Mediterranean looks attractive for many migrants. Be it as a single or a family, many dare to take life threatening risks. Human trafficking and exploitation also play a role in attracting people. Huge amount is paid to them. The journey is only through the seas. Most of the boats are ill-equipped and thousands die in boat accidents. In such situations consciences are challenged. Man becomes an alien to the other. The relationships change with the others. The other is no longer a brother or a sister.

Pope Francis has often been straightforward in addressing the issues of migrants. He insists on making "personal journeys" with migrants and refugees through gestures of closeness to see, to listen, to welcome, to protect, to assist and integrate and to pursue long term solutions.

Unfortunately, a culture of indifference is creeping fast in many societies. Many become used to the suffering of others who think only for themselves. To bring a change in this regard would need a change of heart and mind bringing all the society together. At times, there is another face of the same coin. While listening to their stories, it is not easy to get into the real ground situation. The presentation of their life story is cleverly put to impress the listener to make their ways easier. It is a puzzle to comprehend.

In the Indian context, we have enormous challenges in our daily lives; be it personal, local, social, religious, political, national.....the list goes on. Time and energy take a heavy toll to solve these problems. For me, the condition of the poor in India is bleaker and more desperate compared to the said situations here. Not only that, maybe the definition of poor and needy differs in an international arena from country to country.





20

## Pontiff's Call To Universities and Institutions (Rome)

Fr. Kulwant Minj, SJ

**O**n different occasions, different Popes addressed the Pontifical Universities in Rome. Pope Francis too, ever since he became the Roman Pontiff addressed the Roman Pontifical Universities on several occasions. On Thursday 10 April 2014, Pope Francis addressed the staff and students, those working and studying at three Jesuit-run educational institutions namely the Pontifical Gregorian University, the Pontifical Biblical Institute, and the Pontifical Oriental Institute. In his talk, first of all, the Pope reminded the students that the Gregorian University and its affiliates – the Pontifical Biblical Institute and the Pontifical Oriental Institute – were united by Pope Pius XI in 1928 under the direction of the Jesuit Order. Each student at these institutions, he added, is expected “to serve as a soldier of God beneath the banner of the Cross....and to serve the Lord alone and the Church, His spouse, under the Roman Pontiff, the Vicar of Christ on earth” (Formula of the Institute, 1). The Pope then emphasized the importance of learning to appreciate the ability to work and study in the City and above all the Church of Rome. The Pope said that “the unique opportunity to study in Rome

allows one to appreciate the roots of the faith in the past and to be involved in the present”. The Holy Father encouraged the students to make good use of their time studying in Rome. “Here are the roots of faith,” he remarked; “the memories of the Apostles and the Martyrs; and here is the ecclesial today; here is the actual path of this Church which presides in charity, at the service of unity and universality. All of this should not be taken for granted. It must be lived and appreciated, with a commitment that is partly institutional and partly personal, left to the initiative of each one”. He further said that those who come to Rome also bring to the Church of Rome the variety of their own Churches and cultures. This, the Pope said, “is an inestimable richness of the Roman institutions. It offers a precious occasion of growing in the faith and of opening the mind and the heart to the horizons of Catholicity”.

The other aspect that the Roman Pontiff wanted to share is that of the relationship between study and spiritual life. The purpose of studying philosophy and theology, the Pope said, is to develop a capacity for “transmitting the knowledge and offering a key for vital comprehension, not a heap of notions unconnected to one another”. In that context, he said that this study “will be all the more fertile and





efficacious as it is more fully animated by the love of Christ and of the Church”. The study of theology is “fruitful only if it is done with an open mind and on one’s knees”, the Pope added. “The theologian who is satisfied with his complete and conclusive thought is mediocre”, the Pope said. A theologian should always seek to learn more about God and the truths of faith. Therefore, the Pope said that “the theologian who does not pray and who does not worship God ends up sunk in the most disgusting narcissism” – which he describes as “an ecclesiastical illness” that causes harm to the faithful.

Emphasizing the purpose of the studies in every Pontifical University, the Roman Pontiff said that, “research and studies are integrated with personal and community life, with missionary commitment, with fraternal charity and sharing with the poor, with the care of the interior life in relationship with the Lord. These institutes are not machines for producing theologians and philosophers; they are communities in which one grows, and that growth occurs in the family. In the university family, there is the charism of governance, entrusted to the superiors, and there is the diaconia of the staff, which is indispensable for creating a familiar environment in everyday life, and also for creating the attitude of humanity and

concrete wisdom, that will make the students of today persons capable of building humanity and of transmitting the truth in a human dimension.

On Saturday 25 February 2023, in the Paul VI Audience Hall in the Vatican City, the Holy Father Pope Francis once again received in audience the academic communities of the Pontifical Universities and Institutions present in Rome – around 15 thousand students from 120 countries in five continents. In his speech, quoting the Apostolic Constitution *Veritatis Gaudium* Pope Francis encouraged the students and reminded them that “they belong to an extensive and multidisciplinary system of ecclesiastical studies, which has flourished throughout the centuries, thanks to the wisdom of the people of God scattered throughout the world, yet one that is closely linked to the evangelical mission of the whole Church”. “You are part of a richness that has grown, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, through research, dialogue, discernment of the signs of the times and listening to many different cultural expressions” the Pope added.

The Holy Father went on to speak that the university is a school of harmony and consonance among different voices and instruments. It is not a school of uniformity: no, it is one of harmony and consonance





among different voices and instruments. Then he added that “this harmony must, first of all, be cultivated in oneself, in the three kinds of intelligence that resonate in the human soul: that of the mind, the heart, and the hands. Each of these has its timbre and character, and all of them are necessary. The language of the mind should be united with that of the heart and that of the hands: there should be a unity in what you think, feel, and do”. At this point, the Holy Father pointed out that many Religious Orders, inspired by their charisms have enriched Rome with a remarkable number of Faculties and Universities. The history and spiritual heritage of these Religious Orders must foster an evangelical joy of study, teaching, and research for the universal mission of the Church.

The Gregorian University, committed to the pedagogical tradition of the Society of Jesus, focuses on excellence in studies, complete formation as well as the human and spiritual growth of each student for the future universal mission of the Church. The University dedicates itself so that every student can become a protagonist of a Church which goes forth and, at the same time, can answer in-depth and with a spirit of service to many challenges of today’s world. Studying at Gregorian University offers a unique experience on a human, ecclesial, and academic level and leaves a mark of universality for life. Its international nature, with professors and students from around 120 countries, makes the University atmosphere unique. In a multicultural environment, Gregorian University offers a diversified formation in its six faculties, three institutes, and five specialized centers. The diversity of the academic areas allows the University to put into action what Pope Francis

asks of the Pontifical Universities in the Apostolic Constitution *Veritatis Gaudium*: “Inter-disciplinary and cross-disciplinary approaches carried out with wisdom and creativity in the light of Revelation.

Finally, we would say that for us Jesuits, living and studying in Rome is an opportunity to be in the city of Peter and Paul, to be at the heart of the Christian world, and also to be in close contact with our history and our rich spiritual heritage. The very building of the Church of Gesù and adjacent to it the rooms of St. Ignatius originally built in 1543 and where he lived and died leave a deep emotional and spiritual impact on us. In addition, the Jesuit students residing in Rome are exposed to an experiential knowledge of the holy places like Jerusalem, Manresa, Loyola, etc. They get ample opportunities to be in these places. In these paradise-like places, sharing in international groups, recollections, and retreats are arranged. All these things greatly enable Jesuit students to be “contemplative in action” and to be constantly sensitive to their in-depth spiritual yearnings. Also, there are highly efficient and skilled formators and professors who relish the prospect of contributing to the integral development of the students. Hundreds of Jesuits have been trained in Rome and we believe that most of them have contributed or are contributing to the Society and to the humanity in a very significant way. Thus, we feel honored and proud to be in Rome and to be part of its glorious history.



# **SECTION D**

## **STALWARTS TO FOLLOW**







21

## Fr. Ignatius Tete, SJ: A Shepherd to Feed His Lambs

Fr. Francis David Kullu, SJ

*[An interview with Fr Ignatius Tete, SJ by Fr Francis David Kullu, SJ, on April 23, 2023 at Jharna]*



**K**nowing a person interiorly rather than exteriorly leaves a deep impact in our lives. You may have seen and heard Fr Ignatius Tete, SJ, now Socius to the Novice Master after serving for 12 years as a Tertian Instructor at Stanislaus College,

Sitagarha, but you may not have been impacted that much, if you had known him interiorly – his mind and heart. It was indeed a blessing for me to have had a personal chat (interview) with him at Jharna/Ashirvad, Namkum on April 23, 2023. Ruminating some of his foundational experiences in life leaves a lasting impression in life. His life has been a constant leap of faith. Here is an excerpt of the interview for you to find how Ignatius Tete has nourished himself with the bread of life and has become a true shepherd of Jesus Christ to feed His lambs.

*Fr. Ignatius, with an attitude of gratitude, looking back your life, as a summary, what title would you like to give to your life story?*

**Title to Life story:** I thought about that quite a bit and very spontaneously, I felt that it is something to do with the bread. Hunger for the Bread of Life, I feel, defines my life from the very beginning. I give

just a few examples. When I was two and half years old I went to Rengarih Convent with my mother. We were given two types of bread – one was white and the other was brown. The white one was good but the brown still better. It was sweet. While I was tasting I told my mother spontaneously, “*Moho mother banbun*” (I will also become a Mother). My mother told, “*Kaisen banbe, toyn to chhonda hekis, uman chhondi hekain*” (How will you become? You are a boy. They are girls.) I didn’t know the differentiation between a boy and a girl. When I grew older, I realized that I had a craving for bread. My mother told me, “If you become a priest, you will get bread every day.” I felt inclined therefore to become a priest.

*In that way I think you have rightly chosen your theme to your life story – 'Bread of life'. With respect to your Scripture knowledge, you have nourished your life with the word of God and bread from heaven and you have indeed become bread for others! Now, how did your life story unfold?*

**Unfolding of life story:** The day I was born, there came two marriage parties to my village - one from the East and another from the South. One couple was to be the parents of Fr. Calixtus Tete, SJ. When I was born, one woman who had come from the South was very interested in this new born baby. She went around and told everybody, “A baby is born, come to





see!” When they were gathered there, she told, “This baby should be called Nobis!” A name was given! Villagers called me by that name until the age of 20 when I joined the Society. That name remains as my email ID even today. What she had meant was not clear. However, I have derived two meanings. What I write NOBIS is a Latin word meaning “for us”; the baby meant for many. That meaning became clearer when I was in tenth standard. Fr. K.C. Philip, SJ as a Novice came to Apostolic School, Samtoli (Gumla) to learn Hindi. Fr. W. Delputte, SJ the Director, who had come to know my name as Nobis through my uncle Br. Felix Tete, SJ said to me, “We put these two Novices together. You will learn English from him and he will learn Hindi from you.” After six years in the Novitiate, the day I took my vows, Calixtus, then a first year Novice, wrote a poem. There he said, “*Tumhare Nam ke bagal se N kat gaya, ab SJ ban gaya. Lekin mat bhulna, tum to janm se hi nobis ho.*” (N got cut from your name. Now you became SJ but forget not that you are a Nobis by birth). That struck me very much. I thought that I should ever remain a Novice (Nobis) – one who is ready to learn from others having simplicity, honesty and docility.

As I grew up in the Society, I came to know that I was being prepared to be a Novice Master. But I did very well in Scriptures during Theological Studies, therefore the Society sent me to Study Scriptures. After serving the word of God for seven years in St Albert’s College, Ranchi and 18 years in Tarunoday, a new call came to me for a new mission. I interpreted that this was the call of the Lord for me to be a Master for the 2nd Novitiate at Sitagarha in line with the birthday prediction. The twelve years there had been my golden years. From there I am sent to Ashirvad/Jharna to mediate God’s blessings to many. I am very happy that Novitiate is attached. Not only that few months after my coming, I am also assigned as a Socius to the Novice Master. I am now a Nobis for the Novices. So, my name Nobis has become very significant. In the year 2018, I celebrated my Golden Jubilee in the Society of Jesus. The Conference catalogue, that year marked my name as the only Jubilarian of the Year. But Surprisingly though, the date given there was my birthday date instead of the entry date in the Society. That mistake again I interpreted how God

had chosen me from birth. When I shared it with Fr Stany D’Souza, POSA, his spontaneous comment was, “Oh! You are a Jesuit by birth!”

*It is Interesting! 'You are a Jesuit from your birth'! Now, the vocation story? How did the seed of vocation grow in you?*

**Seed of vocation:** In the second standard, I failed. Actually I had no interest in studies. I felt that I was the most stupid fellow in the world. When my father asked me if I would like to go to school or be a servant, I said immediately, “I would become a servant!”. However, he told that I had to go to school again. After two weeks I went and sat in a corner. When the teacher came and saw me, he said, “This year Ignatius would be first in the second standard.” I was surprised. I told my mother about it. She said, “If you pray every day – One Our Father and One Hail Mary – certainly you will stand first.” So every day I started praying before going to bed, “*Dusra Class me Pahla howek lagin, ek bar He pita Humare aur Pranam Maria*” (To stand first in the second standard, one Our Father and one Hail Mary). Surprisingly everything became so very interesting and appealing for me to study ever after that. And I did stand first in the class but what was more important was that I assimilated lessons for life. I still remember many of them and act upon them. One lesson that happened to be the last one in the Hindi text book, stands out in my memory. It was entitled, “*Roti bol uthi*” (The Bread spoke up). I still find it very significant for my life and all the more today. I became very interested in prayers and studies.

However, then I realized that my heart was not pure. As a small boy I saw the children playing with their genitals to derive sexual pleasure and I joined them. Later, I felt very bad that my heart was heavy. So I wanted to make my confession. One day I went to confess when my aunt went. I was going after her but she returned me. “*Dharm School hon ni kaer his, Toyn kaisen jabe.*” (You have had no catechism class; how can you go for confession?” She said. I was disappointed. In the third standard I was instructed in the village for Confession and Communion. So, my first confession was a real liberation – real taste of spiritual thing – sense of purity. When I received





the communion, my craving for bread turned into that for the Bread of Life. Earlier it was physical but now spiritual. I felt very nice that Jesus was with me.

But soon I started doubting, “*Kab tak Jesu mere dil mein rahenge?*” (How long will Jesus be there in my heart?) I thought by the time communion is digested it is over. “*Jab tak tumhara dil saf hai Yesu rahenge.*” (So long your heart is pure, Jesus will be there) was the clarification of my teacher. That was very encouraging. I wanted to keep myself pure. In the fifth standard I went to Kurdeg School. There I picked up from a Gospel proclamation, “Those who love their parents more than me, are not worthy of me.” That shook me up. I realized that I still loved my parents very much. Because while schooling in Kurdeg, I was always thinking about my parents. My love for parents was more than Jesus. However, one consolation I got was when I receive the sacrament of the Holy Confirmation I would be able to love Jesus more. The Confirmation took place in the seventh standard. I was happy to receive the Holy Spirit. When I checked myself I found that my love for the parents was still more than Jesus. I began doubting whether I had really received the Holy Spirit. That was 10th of April 1961. I went to the School. Catechism class was on and the headmaster made a joke about God that He (God) has so many angels at his disposal. To some he sends to bring water, to some to fan him. That scandalized me. “God also needs that kind of service.” I was already disturbed with the Holy Spirit and now this had come. I started questioning - there is no God, No God the Father, No Holy Spirit, No Mother Mary. On coming to my senses, I felt as though I were thrown into a deep dark valley.

With that started my faith crisis. However, there was a great longing for God. I wanted to believe in Him. I felt as if my eyes were gone. But still, I promised God, “If I get back my faith, I will give that faith to others.” This faith crisis continued for seven years till I joined the Society. In 1968, the question was to join the society or not. I pondered, “What is the use of becoming a priest when I have no faith? I am not able to believe. So also, what is the use of living in the world if I have no faith?” So I went to the Chapel of the Apostolic School and surrendered myself (Lk 23:46) not knowing what to do. Deep

within me came an inspiration, “You will regain your faith in the Society of Jesus.” That was so very consoling. I was doubting if the Provincial would accept me. I told him (it was Fr. Luke Vastret!) that I wanted to become a Jesuit but I was having faith crisis. Provincial told, “Don’t worry. It is a process of growth.” That was very consoling encouragement again.

*In that way, faith is a journey. Like St Ignatius of Loyola, you have wriggled with faith crisis and how God himself has led you through this faith crisis. So then, who do you give the credit for your vocation to the society of Jesus?*

In the first place I would give credit to my prayerful, loving and caring mother who inspired me to be honest and simple through her words and example. Regarding my vocation, many have played their roles. And very specially this consolation in front of the blessed sacrament, viz., “You will regain your faith in the Society of Jesus.” That way, I felt God himself was calling me. My birthday name, Nobis was also a pointer. However, an insightful experience before the Blessed Sacrament was the confirmation.

When we were making the Long Retreat, I had good experiences but every now and then that doubt about our religious truths used to come. One day in the third week, the doubt was so terrible that I started crying. I felt all other religions were true except Christianity! I went to Fr Master and told him about it. “Saitan ka kaam hi” (It is the work of the devil!), he said. He advised me to go and pray before the Blessed Sacrament saying, “Jesus, I love you.” While praying thus, an inspiration came, “I don’t love Jesus, but Jesus loves me”. Therefore, I started saying several times, “Jesus, you love me.” Then I felt Jesus was present there and doubts disappeared. On the occasion of my First Vows, we were allowed to call our parents but I didn’t call. I thought to myself that the love of my parents had been the cause of my faith crisis. I would totally surrender myself alone. To my great surprise, since then, the crisis of faith disappeared, gradually though, and in Tertianship it got confirmed, “You will regain your faith in the Society of Jesus.”

*How do you recall then your formative stages of life?*

**Time to grow:** My formative life has ten stages:



Novitiate to Tertianship. My formation has been mostly in search of the Truth, in search of faith, viz., 'in the Society of Jesus you will regain your faith'. With faith, I mean also the other two theological virtues: love and hope. Therefore, all my studies and prayers were in search of these virtues. While studying Philosophy I compared three *margas* ('*Gyan Marga*', '*Karma Marga*', '*Bhakti Marga*') with three Key Meditations (Two Standards, Three classes and three degrees of humility), "O Tete, Something original. May I keep it" said the Dean of Philosophy. I gave it away and did not even keep a copy of it. Afterward I saw that he developed a book out of it. That way my growth had been both intellectual and spiritual, very much in the theological virtues of faith, hope and love. With regard to intellectual formation, be it in Juniorate or other stages of formation, my interest was in the line of Scriptures. Providentially, it was Hemraj, who was our Juniorate In-charge, who used to give us very good inputs on Scriptures. I used to keep my Bible open. I would take a biblical verse and try to remember it throughout the day. Secondly according to the date, I would take different books of the Bible and read and relish them. When I came to Manresa House, I pursued English Honors from St Xavier's College, Ranchi. One of my papers was on Shakespeare. It was well appreciated. I enjoyed participating in Elocution and public speech competitions. Once, Fr. Lawler, SJ came to my room in Manresa House with an elocution certificate. Appreciating me he gave a fraternal correction. "You could have stood first, but you were not able to pronounce certain words correctly."

In philosophy, I focused on developing my creative and critical thinking, speaking and writing. In theology there happened a vocation within vocation. Before my first oral exam on the Synoptic Gospels, I was rather nervous. I surrendered myself to the Blessed Sacrament and with my inner strength I did the exam very well. With this my interest in scriptural subjects grew stronger. At the end I was told, "Since, you are doing very well in scriptures, you will go for Scriptures." So, overall my spiritual formation that started in the Novitiate turned to be an integral intellectual formation in theology. For me the Spiritual thrust was first and within that there was an intellectual quest.

How do you look at your ministerial life in the society of Jesus?

Time to bear fruits: During my Tertianship, I decided that what I have experienced in Tertianship, I would share with my fellow Jesuits even if I am destined to be in St. Albert's College for life. My maiden course at St. Albert's College, Ranchi was the Gospel of St. John and there we have the powerful imagery of the Bread of Life. I had a very good experience of feeding the word of God not only to the theologians and philosophers of the Seminary but to many groups of catechists, teachers and youth all over Jharkhand. During my stay of seven years in the Seminary, I had the chance of teaching all the seventy-three books of the Bible. When I had just finished, Fr. Provincial came and said, "I want to induct you to the Jesuit Formation." Then I was assigned to look after the collegians in Manresa for two years and thereafter I was sent to Tarunodaya. After 25 years of feeding the word of God, there came again a new call. "POSA wants you to be a tertian instructor!", said my Provincial. Though I was not trained for that, I felt very good and was happy to receive this mission trusting God. The day I left for Sitagarha the Gospel in the liturgy was about loving Jesus and feeding his lambs and sheep. "Now God wants me to give the word of God and the Ignatian Spirituality." I was able to integrate both the aspects and the Tertians found the word of God tastier and Ignatian spirituality more appealing!

*What are some of your rumination looking back to your life? What do you think you would be leaving behind as Jesuit legacy?*

**Time to look back:** Looking back at my life, I feel very grateful to God. Loving surrender (Ps 31:5, Lk 23:46); trust in God, God will provide (Gen 22:8) and God brings good out of evil (Gen 50:20; Rom 8:28) are some of the key experiences I would leave behind. I divide my life-span into twenty parts. Before joining the Society, I was in five places. At the stage of 20 I joined the Society. Then followed eighteen years of formation. This formation took place in ten different places. Apostolic life in five places – St Albert's College, Ranchi, Manresa House, Ranchi, RTC Tarunodaya, SSC Sitagarha and finally back to the Novitiate in Jharna -Ashirvad, Namkum.





Throughout my apostolic life I have been engaged in the field of formation – first, in the formation of clergy and then in Jesuit formation. I was privileged to take classes in Vidyajyoti for 14 years consecutively and every 2nd year in Patna Regional Theologate three years. The way people appreciated was experienced as a sign that God was working through me.

I remember, two special events in my life. The first one was an incident of robbery that took place during my regency at St Ignatius High School, Gumla. It was a near death experience. All were thoroughly beaten up and at the end one of the dacoits came to me and at gunpoint said, “*Bachhu tum bache ho. Tumhare liye goli bachi hai.*” (Boy, do you think you have escaped? A bullet is left for you!). I thought that was the end of my life. I surrendered myself to God, saying “Father into your hands I commend my spirit.” I said that prayer in silence. As the fellow did not shoot me I said it the second time and waited for him to shoot me. I said it the third time going into a very deep silence. Then looked back to see why he was not shooting. The fellow smiled at me. Then he took a cycle from outside and dashed it against me. It did not hit my head but hit the back of the chair which was higher than my shoulders. With the hit and weight of the cycle, the chair tilted and I fell down flat unhurt on the ground. With that last stroke the fellows left. Looking back, I realize that my surrender to God has been my strongest point in life. I had surrendered to God in the Apostolic School before joining the Society, then at my first vows. Here in this event, it was a total surrender, a death experience!

The Second event was with regard to Bread. It was an accident while coming back from Mass to Tarunoday. An auto hit my mouth and my jaw was split into two parts. When I was flat on the ground. When I regained consciousness, I found myself surrounded by people. I was taken to the clinic of Dr. Shambhu. I surrendered my life again! Later I was taken to Raj Hospital. There I asked a question to the Lord, “Lord, why did you split my mouth which I make use of to preach and teach your word?” “I have broken your mouth in order to make it new.” The insight came to me. “You trust in me and I will speak through you”. It was a profound experience. My mouth was wired for one less forty days. I was

surviving on soup alone. During this period, I felt that the Lord was teaching me a powerful lesson, “Man does not live by bread alone...”.

*What would you like to advise to the people of next generation in general and Jesuits in particular?*

Words of wisdom: According to my simple philosophy and theology we have three levels of basic human needs. First, physical and material level – Food, clothing and shelter; second one is the need of the Psycho-Social level – recognition, human love and self-esteem. Third one is the need of the Spiritual level – Faith, hope and love. Keeping these three levels in view, my advice would be to take note of the words of our Lord himself, viz. Mt. 6:33 that says, “Seek first God’s Kingdom and his righteousness and all these things shall be given to you.” All the levels of human needs will be fulfilled, but first we need to take care of three theological values of faith, hope and love.

The Next piece of advice would be in reference to the second level. This is for our fellow Jesuits specially for developing a good food habit. It would be very beneficial to apply the Principle and Foundation (SE, 23) regarding eating and drinking: to eat or drink only insofar as it is helpful for God’s glory and our salvation. Those who can do, let them not touch liquor at all, so that they may feel more consecrated to God. The second advice corresponds to the psycho-social need. I would advise not to seek recognition from people but to seek what God wants. That grace I got to a certain extent as a Tertian Instructor. One day I felt God was telling me, “What really matters is what you do for me in my presence. What others think about your work does not matter much”. Whatever others may think or say, recognition must come from God.

The third one is regarding the power of God - trust in God. Anything that happens in life, God can turn that into good. That has been my experience also including my faith crisis for seven years. That turned out to be a great blessing! I have deeply experienced that nothing could satisfy me not even my parents. Hunger for God is more than anything else. The Lord taught me this in the period of my faith crisis. To live in the world is of no use if there is no faith in God. Therefore, one needs to have trust in God that He



can work good out of evil. This I learnt in the fourth standard with Joseph's saying, "You wanted evil of me, but God turned that into good" (Gen. 50:20). I understood it in the context of my failing at the 2nd standard. God made my failure into a stepping stone for my intellectual as well as prayer life. My accident too God turned into a blessing regarding the Word of God as Bread of life.

*What I observed here is that your advice is connected to the way Jesus cornered the three temptations?*

Yes. Exactly! It is based on that. Our Lord was tempted in these three levels. In that way Jesus himself is a model for us. First temptation of Jesus regarding food was of the first level; second one was that of recognition, human love and self-esteem and the third one was of faith. These were also the temptations of the Israelites who utterly failed. These are the temptations of human beings- first one is of possession, second one of prestige and the third one of power. That way these are correlated to the Two standards the Holy Father Ignatius talks about.

That way, you have made your life really as bread of life. You have nourished yourself with the word of God and now you have become source of bread or blessings for others. All these are very evident in your life. May you continue nourishing others.

Ruminating on my life, now here, what I enjoy is a grateful remembrance of the twenty stages of life. To mark it I take twenty rounds on the loan of Jharna on bare foot. Ten rounds in the morning, ten rounds in the evening. Each round corresponds to one stage of my life consecutively. I recall how God has been so gracious to me. Up to fifteen stages, I have received so much from God through the instrumentality of so many and the last five stages of life how God is making me an instrument of his blessings for others. I remember that Providence of God gratefully. I also remember all my people – my formators, my companions, disciples and anyone who came in contact with me in life. I remember my twelve batches of Tertians very much. Now I combine all these five communities as my one community – St Albert's, Manresa House, Tarunodaya, St. Stanislaus, Sitagarha and Jharna-Ashirvad, Namkum. I pray that all the members of these institutions may be more and more grounded in our charism, rooted in

Jesus' love and may enrich the Society, the Society in turn may help the church and the Church may help the human family and the latter may take care of the whole creation, and that the entire creation may return to God. Then I make the triple colloquies – to Mother Mary, to Jesus and to God the father.

*According to you, what is the future of the society of Jesus?*

I see that there are many challenges; but I have trust in God. The Society of Jesus, as St Ignatius of Loyola has said, has been founded by God himself. "It is only He can preserve it and carry it forward" [812] in his goodness and power. Hence, we need to seek those means which help us to collaborate with God. The four UAPs that we have got, are very good means to collaborate with God. All these are values and attitudes of Jesus, very well-articulated. So, there is a future. Structurally we are getting the future of the Society of Jesus but it is up to individual persons and communities to assimilate all these. Even if we fail on our part, the Lord will see to it that the Society is preserved. This is my optimistic view.

*In present scenario, how do you see the vocation in general and vocation to the Society of Jesus?*

In my view, now people are in a way more earthly-oriented. Many are concerned about fulfillment of life here on earth, not so much for life beyond. In other words, Faith has weakened. Fr Maury Dullard, SJ, my Tertian Instructor used to say, "the greatest problem of the world is the lack of faith." The Lord has led me to that faith. It is my duty to inculcate faith in people. So, there will be some people in the world who will always be instruments of God to bring about hope, even amidst hopeless situation of vocation crisis. God will find a way out! In this regard my deep conviction is that in God there is a hope against hope.

In a way, you seem to say, that vocation crisis is the crisis of faith, which God will surely take care. Well Father Ignatius, we spent almost an hour! It was lovely talking to you. Personally, I feel that I am also nourished now, inspired and rejuvenated. I am convinced now that you have really become a source of blessings to many others and the title you have given to your life story is so very fitting – Bread of Life for others. Thank you for this lovely chat! Wish you a good health and happy blessed life ahead.





22

## Fr. Sudhir Kujur, SJ: Age Quod Agis

Sch. Ajay Paulus Minz, SJ

Born of a devout Catholic parents Simon Kujur and Susanna Ekka on 28th October 1950, the baby was baptized within a few days in his parish Church, Tongo. Fr. Limpens, SJ, the parish priest strongly objected to the proposed name Sudhir Kumar. Simon and Susanna persuaded the minister



to administer the sacrament under the same name by producing a letter written by the child's uncle, Fr. Lawrence Kujur, then a Seminarian. It was inscribed, "the child should be called, Sudhir Kumar". The

child grew up in the care and love of God and the entire Kujur family. Although he suffered from poor health in his early childhood, as he advanced in years God was highly favourable to him.

Sudhir was enrolled in St. Paul's Middle School, Tongo. The dedication of the teachers and edifying life of the missionary Fathers, motivated Sudhir to achieve great things in life. Fr. Lawrence Kujur, his uncle, was instrumental in helping young Sudhir to

recognize and discern his vocation to the priesthood. When asked about his vocation to the Society of Jesus, Fr. Sudhir narrated that the previous night before joining the Minor Seminary his mother told him about two types of priests: one that help their family and the other that pray and live in their institutions. Young Sudhir says that this was the deciding moment for his vocation to the Society of Jesus. He responded to the call of the Lord to be His priest promptly without reserve. And the Lord was gracious to him all through. He turned out to be a brilliant student as his Jesuit companions of school and university days narrate.

Sudhir joined the Jesuit novitiate in Sitagarha, Hazaribagh on 7<sup>th</sup> October 1971. After his first vows he pursued the juniorate and University studies in Patna and Ranchi successively. He was sent to Shembaganur, Kodaikanal for Philosophy, and to Delhi for Theology. After his Ordination on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 1984 and completion of B.Th, in October of the same year, Fr. Sudhir worked as a parish priest in Bimarla till March 1985. The last stage of Jesuit formation came rather too early, recalls Fr. Sudhir; he was sent





to Shembaganur for the Tertianship barely 6 months after his Ordination.

Every Jesuit has a personal preference about the type of ministry he would like to do. But, above and beyond the individual preference God also has His plan for each individual Jesuit, which is manifested through the decisions of the Provincials and Superiors. Given the choice Fr. Sudhir would have liked to work either in the pastoral field or the education. But he landed up in the Gregorian University, Rome (1986 – 1992) for his licentiate and Doctoral degrees in Theology. Fr. Dr. Sudhir rendered his services to the students of St. Albert's Regional Major Seminary from (1992 -2018). In the year 2016, Sudhir took out six months to follow a diploma course on Ignatian Spirituality and Retreat Direction in Berkeley, Santa Clara University, California, USA. Since the year 1918, till date he is teaching in JFCT, Tarunoday. Asked about his opinion by then Provincial, Fr. Pascal Topno, to pursue theological studies, Fr Sudhir replied promptly that it would take quite a few years, which means loss of many souls whom he could have saved through an active pastoral ministry. To this Fr. Provincial retorted, “if you work even six months after the completion of your studies, you will have saved more souls than the ones you consider now going to be lost in your absence. Moreover, all the money the Society has invested on you so far will be duly paid off.” Today Fr. Sudhir has completed thirty-two years of service as a professor of Theology and 50 golden years in the Society in 2021.

Asked about his Jesuit life, Fr. Sudhir gratefully remembers the years he spent in formation. He fondly recalls the time and energy devoted to the research work, visits to different countries to learn foreign languages and writing his thesis. Those years, says Fr. Sudhir, taught him the basic principles of methodology of any studies, the discipline and perseverance required to achieve the desired goal. He also remembers the vital role the family played in shaping up his personality. He grew up in a family with religious atmosphere, deep Christian values, discipline, punctuality and hard work. The impact of the family is evident in the life of Fr. Sudhir. As one of his students, I found him very spiritual, loving, caring, disciplined, authentic, punctual, observant,



humble and soft-spoken. He has a great love for the Eucharist. He says, “Eucharist is my life”. His humble advice to his students and faithful is, “never miss the celebration of the Eucharist as it is the source and summit of Christian life. It is a mile stone; walk on it and you will reach the destination. In Eucharist I become one with Christ, which is communion; it means, in the words of St. Paul, it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me” (Gal.2: 20). Asked for his brief advice, Fr. Sudhir says, “Age Quod Agis, which means do what you are doing; live in the present; commit yourself to the task at hand; be consistent, punctual, humble; trust and you will be trusted; you have been given much, hence give 100% of your time and energy and never take things for granted.” As witnessed by his companions and students in formation, these virtues fully transpire in the life of Fr. Sudhir. When asked whether there were any difficult moments in his life as a Jesuit, Fr. Sudhir nods in affirmation. He says, “but they were momentary/transient; the Lord walked along with me all through my life” as he promised, “I am with you always” (Mt.28: 20). His final advise to the Jesuits is: Love Jesus, love the Society of Jesus and love the Church.





23

## Fr. Emmanuel Horo, SJ: An All Rounder

Fr. Michael Kerketta, SJ

Fr. Emmanuel, popularly known as ‘Manu’, an octogenarian, celebrated his golden jubilee (2012) and diamond Jubilee (2022) - two significant milestones of 60 years of consecrated life as a Jesuit.



Indeed, he is more precious than gold and diamond. Of the large family of eight children, four brothers and four sisters, he was the seventh, born on 24 Feb 1942 and at the age of 20 he joined the Society in 1962. After 14 years of usual formation, he

was ordained in 1976. Since then Fr. Manu has lived as a true Jesuit – ever available, generous, loyal and faithful, totally committed to the works entrusted to him. When Fr. Manu was asked the following questions, he politely responded to them:

*What inspired you to join the Society?*

Fr. Manu said, “As a child, I was fond of grazing cattle. Before going to school that was my daily task. I began my primary schooling in the village school. For the Middle School I had to travel to Dorma, nearly 8 KMs away from my village. I was keen to go to school and rarely missed my classes. I was a good student and was known to be good at Mathematics. While in the primary school, I met Fr. John Bodra, a diocesan priest who was living in the Jesuit community. I had no idea about the difference between the diocesan and religious priests but was impressed by the life of Fr. John Bodra. Later, when I joined the Apostolic School Ranchi, I came to know about the Jesuit way of life. Their hard work inspired me to join the Society of Jesus. My dream of serving the poor and the Church came true.”

*What did you cherish most as a Jesuit? Could you tell us some moments of consolation, and even desolation?*

Fr. Manu shared, “I cherish most the hard work in the community. I enjoyed most the two terms of socius to the Provincial when I learned much about Society and could contribute my share in the works of the Society.”

He also tells about his moment of desolation. It

happened during his Regency. He says, “I had almost lost faith in the Society because I was not trusted. Somehow, I had the courage to face the difficult moment.”

*Some inspiring message to the members of the Province.*

Fr. Manu said, “The Society is a wonderful community where one can find joy and support. Do your best and you will never be disappointed.”

The above responses do reveal the character and quality of the person. Fr. Manu took up diverse ministries soon after his ordination with a great sense of mission. In the golden Jubilee Letter, former Superior General, Adolfo wrote to Fr. Manu: “Always ready for any work that the Society entrusted to you in the spirit of Isaiah’s ‘Here I am! Send me.’” Your most creative and productive years so far were in administration at various levels: in-charge of Juniors, Minister of St. Albert’s Major Seminary, double or even triple stints as Socius to the Provincials, Superiors of philosophers at De Nobili College Pune, and Superior, treasurer and professor at the Regional Theology Centre (RTC), Tarunodaya, all at the same time.”

Further, Fr. Adolfo highlighted the quality with which Fr. Manu carried out his task of forming young Jesuits: “As Superior... you challenged the young men in formation, and knew how to blend strictness with kindness and understanding. Your personal interest in the all-round progress of those under your care has been the hallmark of your administrative aptitude as a formator. Moreover, as an administrator, whether in the Socius’ office, or in a parish, you were meticulous, methodical and systematic and brought efficiency to all you did. During a confused period (July- August 1987), in the Province, you were the Acting Provincial and passed on the baton smoothly to the incoming new Provincial.”

Fr. Manu was a good pastor who imbibed the spirit of the good shepherd (cf. Jn. 10) since his childhood as he was grazing cattle. Former General Fr. Adolfo



again underscored the quality and sense of a pastor in these words: “As a pastor, you encouraged lay-leadership, securing generous collaboration from laity, youth, and the religious to make the parish vibrant...while you take care of the pastoral work, you continue to teach in the RTC, Tarunoday. Thus, multi-tasking has been your second nature, and you

have never flinched from any task the Superiors entrusted to you.”

Certainly, the province feels proud of Fr. Manu – a wonderful gift to Ranchi Province. He is a man of sound spirituality, of personal discipline and dedication, loyalty and magnanimity.







24

## Fr. Benedict Kiro, SJ: An Untold Story

Fr. Rohit Kujur, SJ

In Ranchi Province if you seek someone to ask about this long and profound pastoral life experience full of interesting stories, then one of them is indeed Fr. Benedict Kiro, SJ. He has spent almost his entire life as a parish priest. Moreover, he has lived in many hardships, with all austerity and has gone through many adventurous moments. But it is the experience of God's providence in every difficult situation that makes him a great pastor. His life is full of



many untold stories of pastoral life. He holds within him treasures of rich pastoral experiences. If all his precious pastoral experiences are put in black and white, it can become an inspiring guide or footprints to follow for those who commit their life for pastoral mission. Now let us have some glimpses of his life which may be just a few lines from his life story. This is, in fact a way to thank the Lord for his life and service in the Society of Jesus because he has completed his fifty years of religious life in 2022.

Fr Benedict Kiro was born on 29th March, 1949, in Gangutoli Parish of Simdega diocese in Jharkhand, India. His life journey began from a very remote village called Amadar. The seed of vocation was planted in him by his elder brother Pascal Kiro, who was his spiritual guide and good friend who led him to Holy Mass every Friday and Sunday. As he grew up, this seed of vocation was nurtured and given direction by late Fr. Benedict Ekka, SJ But after all it was his strong desire to follow Jesus and aspiration to be a good Jesuit which led him to enter the Society of Jesus on 06 October, 1972 in Ranchi Province. A person with a short stature but with a high goal to become a Jesuit priest, went through a long years of formation and was ordained a Jesuit priest on 30 March, 1984. His mission started as an assistant parish priest in Sarwada Parish. For him a big challenge was to learn Mundari but for a person who was determined to face the challenges found a way. He used to read Hindi and Mundari Bible simultaneously to understand the meaning and used

to practise Mundari with the youth. After a month he could read the Mundari Bible very well and could speak in broken Mundari. Fr. Benedict shares a challenging life story when he was appointed Parish priest of Dokapath parish where no one was willing to go. The parish is situated on the top of the plateau surrounded by jungle. No bus, no car or motorbike could go there when he was working there. Even in the rainy season, bicycles could not reach there, thus he had to climb up on foot to reach Dokapath. He lived alone with a catechist. Some Naxalites would come to him to give him company. He certainly lived in fear but never let others know that he was afraid. He did not take any enmity with them. He used to share *bidi* (cigarettes) with them as a means to be friendly with them. The situation was like, if you are going to live by the river make friends with crocodiles. Thereafter, he worked in many places; Salgaposh, Keondtar, Kochang, Ramnagar in Andamans, Rengarih and at present at Reumtukel Parish.

Fr Benedict Kiro is a man of simplicity and honesty. He has worked among the simple faithful Christians in different parishes; he has seen closely the plight of the people in villages. He himself lives a very simple life. His frugal lifestyle reflects the richness of his spirituality. It takes time to befriend him, but once he becomes a friend to somebody, he is very faithful and trustworthy. He seems to be quiet at first impression, but has an ocean of humor in his heart and lacks no words. With his sense of humor, he handles many difficult situations of life easily. He believes in responding to the situation rather than reacting against it. He is not aggressive, so sometimes he may appear timid in some circumstances but he has tremendous strength to bear with the situation.

We can attribute to him many successes in his pastoral mission. However, most of his success stories are untold. What makes him very particular as a parish priest is that he deals with all the pastoral challenges with great calmness. Sometimes he is straight forward but many times he conveys the message with his dealings and in his actions. He has



a wise way of approaching any person. He believes in proposing and not in imposing. As a parish priest, he does not want to be like a one-man army, but likes collective decisions. His quality of integrity, deep spirituality and sensibility enable him to be more sympathetic. To be a good pastor, compassion is a key virtue to understand the needs of the faithful community. He has been deeply compassionate with people in difficulty.

As he has been mostly a parish priest, his pastoral experiences are very rich. He can be a good guide for young priests who newly begin their life as a parish priest. He has faced many difficult situations. Many times he has lived alone and handled many things single handedly. With his experiences he can really give pragmatic advice to young priests who

are in parishes. As he has dedicated his entire life to pastoral ministry, he is indeed a wonderful parish priest. His pastoral approach is remarkable. As a parish priest he is very caring and attentive to the needs of the people.

One cannot be a good shepherd without a life of prayer because it is a means to communicate with the divine power. He is a man of prayer. His spiritual life is edifying. His faithfulness to prayer makes him a man of God and helps him to remain calm in every situation. Whenever he celebrates Sunday Mass or Mass on solemn days, his homilies reflect the depth of his spirituality and his conviction of the Word of God. His homilies are original and profound. He has an ability to break the word of God to the common people with his lived experience of the Gospel. He has been faithful to his pastoral mission. Even in his old days he ministers all the sacraments with total dedication and devotion. He is a good spiritual guide. His spiritual guidance is inspiring. He is attentive not only to the spiritual needs but also to material needs of the people. His heart is ever open and ready to help the poor. Wherever he worked his heart was always with the people and specially with the poor. Whenever he receives help from the rich, he uses it for the service of the poor.

Fr Benedict has many positive habits which could be inspiring. He is very punctual in his life. First of all, he is disciplined in his daily life. The life of discipline makes him ever active, physically fit and ready for any call. He has hardly failed to begin anything on time, for example; Holy Mass, meeting etc. Even now in his old days he keeps up the same spirit of punctuality. He has the spirit of early Jesuit missionaries. He worked with a great zeal wherever he was sent. He went to the places even though it was not easy for him. This shows his obedience to the call and order of Superiors and authorities. He experienced different challenges in each place wherever he was appointed but he challenged the challenges with the saying of the Lord “I have given you an example so that you may copy what I have done to you” (Jn. 13:15).





25

## Br. Isidore Ekka, SJ: Humblest to the Core

Fr. Ajay A. Minj, SJ

### A Boy from Basen

**B**rother Isidore was born on 20th June, 1948 in a village called Basen then under Musgutri parish in Jashpur district of Chhattisgarh in India. He grew in a devout catholic family with four brothers and three sisters. He was the second youngest in the family. He did his primary schooling at village school and then went for his middle



schooling at Musgutri parish school. He completed his studies of high school and higher secondary at St. Xavier's School Ambikapur. In his own words, he was a shy person in his childhood. He recalls how he was ashamed of skin disease and would not mingle with others very openly. He was a very passionate hockey player. He never forgets how he was injured and fractured his leg in hockey ground by the hockey ball because it was similar to that of St. Ignatius getting injured in the battle field of Pamplona by the cannon ball.

### A Jesuit Call

It was during his high school and higher secondary studies Brother Isidore was attracted towards Jesuit life seeing the works of Jesuits in St. Xavier's School Ambikapur. He was very much touched by the prayer life and personality of Fr. Vandooseller, SJ at Ambikapur. He was particularly inspired to become a Jesuit brother and expressed his intense desire to become a Jesuit to Fr. Vandooseller. Taking the advice and inspiration from this senior Jesuit, he joined the Society to become a Coadjutor Brother. He joined the Jesuit Novitiate at Sitagarha at Hazaribag in 1970. He continued his Juniorate study at Sitagarha. Soon after Juniorate, he joined St. Joseph's Technical Training Centre at Pune. Now he was a technical man and very good at maintenance work. He could have been satisfied with his technical training but Ignatian Magis kept him eager to learn more. There was strong desire to study further. He completed his graduation from St. Columbus College, Hazaribag in 1982 and completed one year

of theological study at De Nobili College, Pune. He did his tertianship from Bangalore. He pronounced his final vows on 1st January, 1992 at Agriculture Training Centre, Namkum in Ranchi. Today he has already completed 50 years as a Jesuit but continues to serve others with the same zeal and vigor. Many younger Jesuits see him as an epitome of humility and simplicity.

### Jesuit Motivation

Brother Isidore loves and likes St. Francis Xavier and takes him as a model in his religious life. The zeal and commitment of St. Francis Xavier attracts him very much. Missionary zeal and fervor of the Saint has been his inspiration and motivation for his committed life. He chose to remain in Ranchi Province rather than choosing to be in Madhya Pradesh Province probably due to his missionary zeal. He has been serving the people and the Society in various capacities. He worked at Sitagarha taking care of workshops and house maintenance for six years. Then he joined Agriculture Training Centre, Namkum, Ranchi to look after the workshop and serve the community as minister. He served as a minister at Bardih parish, Manresa House, Ranchi and Regional Theologate Centre, Kanke, Ranchi. At present he is a house minister of St. Xavier's College, Ranchi. His sincerity and commitment in every mission he is assigned to is visible to everyone. He accepts every challenge that comes in his life with Ignatian spirit of availability, adaptability and universality. One of the things in spiritual Exercises he likes most is three degrees of humility. He himself is a very humble person. He tries to enshrine Ignatian humility in his daily life. Some of the the novices at Ashirwad Novitiate still remember the simplicity of Brother Isidore. When Novices gave their games shoes for mending, instead of getting it done by a cobbler he himself would do it for the novices. His availability for others and his generosity to offer his time and energy in mission continue to be part and parcel of his life because of his strong prayer life and strong motivation which he receives from Jesuit Saints and Spiritual Exercises.



### **Challenges to Religious life**

Brother Isidore opines that there are many challenges in his religious life. One of the challenges he has experienced is that of updating himself with technologically advanced modern world. He also mentions how the attraction of the alluring world continuously brings his committed life into temptations and tests. But he is very clear and confident that by faithfulness to his prayer life and commitment to his mission, he gets strength to overcome such challenges and temptations. In his evaluation on religious life in general, he expresses that religious life at present needs to be updated and made relevant to the context. He emphasizes that there is a need of ongoing personal formation and cooperation from the community members to keep one's motivation high and alive. According to him religious life is meaningful today and tomorrow if one is able to align his will and passion to that of God's Will. This as he says, is possible if one is faithful to one's prayer life and committed to hard work in the mission works one is assigned to. He firmly believes that mediocrity can never be a Jesuit way of life. He suggests that one should have training and mastery over one's own areas of interest. He always accepts the challenges with the Jesuit spirit of *Magis* in both prayer life and mission as well.

### **Message for the younger Jesuits**

Brother Isidore firmly believes that a Jesuit should commit oneself to prayer and mission. This requires lots of extra effort and sacrifice from each individual

because demand of religious life is apparently against the current of technologically advanced modern world. In order to fight against such disturbing current each individual needs to grow spiritually, emotionally, psychologically and intellectually. Against superficiality of contemporary world, there is a need to have in-depth knowledge and deep-rooted inner personal life. He suggests that the young Jesuits need to train themselves in the area of their interest so that they are able to walk with the pace of advanced world. Walking with the pace of the world is not enough. Jesuits need to have mastery over the areas of their interest so that they are able to lead others whenever there is an opportunity. He adds that Jesuits should always remind themselves of Jesus' approach to mission that is, working for the poor, marginalized and the needy. Commitment to justice must be the thrust of Jesuit mission because this is how Jesus worked. 'Life is given to us to be happy and make others happy' is his philosophy of life. He affirms that he is happy and satisfied in his religious life. He particularly finds joy in serving others. He says "my life is for others".

### **Brother Isidore in the minds of others**

Many younger Jesuits see Brother Isidore as a saintly and virtuous person. He is a man of few words. Many recall how with few words like 'Ok you get it from me in the evening', he took care of every small need of the novices in the Novitiate. Many Jesuits fondly remember him as a committed, responsible and generous person. He always provides the best things to others and one could see the reflection of inner joy in his face while feeding others with good things. Besides taking care of material needs he is also very much concerned about the formation of young Jesuits. Many Jesuits shared with me that his feedback for corrections has been very genuine and open. In the same chorus many agree that he works quietly but very diligently. He is appreciated and remembered by the Jesuits and everyone who visits a Jesuit House as a loving and generous minister for his service and hospitality. He serves others with a smile. The joy of his committed life and honest smiles is remembered by Jesuits and a gesture of warmth and welcome makes everyone who comes to him comfortable and at home.





## A Glimpse of Our Life & Mission



# SECTION E

## SPECIAL MOMENTS OF GOD'S GRACE...



- ◆ **First Vows**
- ◆ **Final Vows** (Fr. Vijay Kumar Minj, SJ & Fr. Ajay Arun Minj, SJ)
- ◆ **Ordination** (Fr. Anil Kullu, SJ, Fr. Lazarus Basumatary, SJ, Fr. Marius Baghwar, SJ, Fr. Pramod Bara, SJ, Fr. Valentine Sinduria, SJ)
- ◆ **129th Death Anniversary of Fr. Constant Lievens, SJ**





26

## Responding to God's Call Through First Vows

Fr. Ashok Sandil, SJ

We, the Jesuits, are grounded in love for Christ and animated by the spiritual vision of our founder, St. Ignatius of Loyola, to help others and seek God in all things. Our formation is one of the longest among the religious orders starting with the novitiate for 2 years. At the completion of two years, a novice pronounces his First Vows wherein he takes the perpetual simple vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience and promises to enter into the



same Society.

Ranchi Province is blessed this year with 10 fresh Juniors. Among them, 3 pronounced their First Vows in Arrupe Novitiate Shillong and 7 in Ashirvad Novitiate Namkum on 21 June 2023. Fr. Melvil Pereira, SJ, Regional Superior of Kohima Region, received the Vows of Abhinandan Tirkey, Nitish Dungdung, and Surbhi Tete in Shillong, and Fr. Ajit Kumar Xess, SJ, Provincial Superior, received the vows of Alok Abhay Bara, Eremias Kerketta, Jayant

Xalxo, Ujjwal Tirkey, Vijay Barla, Vikas Minj, and Viksal Minj in Ashirvad Novitiate Namkum in the presence of many concelebrating priests, neighbouring Religious Sisters, Brothers, and well-wishers.

Arrupe Jesuit Novitiate Shillong: On the beautiful cool weather of Meghalaya, three second-year Novices of Ranchi Province – Abhinandan Tirkey, Nitish Dungdung, and Surbhi Tete, together with their five companions from Kohima Region took their First Vows in Ka Rampei Arrupe Jesuit Novitiate Shillong at 10.30 am on 21 June 2023. Fr. Melvil Pereira SJ, Regional Superior of Kohima Region, officiated the Eucharistic celebration and received the vows in the presence of many concelebrating priests, Religious Sisters, Brothers, and friends. Fr. Raymond Kerketta SJ, Socius, delegated the Provincial of Ranchi, for the occasion. The presence of seven Ranchi Jesuits working in Assam Mission – Frs. Thomas Barla, Xavier Lakra, Anuranjan Purty, John Berchmans Dungdung, Suresh Aind, Kamal Chandra Bage, and Laurentus Kiro – gave a very good representation





of the Province. This certainly enhanced the joy of our new Juniors who returned to the Province the following day for their next stage of formation – Juniorate. As a token of love and appreciation, the Fathers from Assam offered to the dignitaries and all the new Juniors the Assamese gamochas, while Fr. Socius felicitated a few significant Fathers with Tribal shawls. After the sumptuous festive dinner, the guests departed for their respective places.

**Ashirvad Novitiate Namkum:** The ceremony started at 05.35 pm. Fr Camil Kerketta SJ, Superior, welcomed the august gathering whereas Fr Ignatius Tete SJ, Socius to the Novice Master, set the tone and context of the celebration with his beautiful introduction. He underlined the theme as “Called to be rooted in Christ for Mission” and explained briefly the well-chosen readings of the day, viz. 1Sam 3:1-10; Eph 3:14-21; and Jn 15:1-17. Highlighting the exemplary life of St Aloysius Gonzaga, the saint of the day, he called forth to live a life worthy of our call. He reminded the slogan of St Aloysius, “Born for greater things” and invited the congregation to pray for the 7 Vowents as they offer themselves to the Lord in total surrender that they ever remain faithful to their commitments.

While introducing the Holy Mass, Fr. Ajit Kumar Xess SJ, Provincial Superior, invited the Vowents to live a new way of life as friends in the Lord and as companions of Jesus – Jesuits. Further, he challenged them never to break (i) the relationship

that is built with the Lord, (ii) the promises that they are going to make today, and (iii) the hearts that are inclined to the Lord. The Holy Mass of the ceremony proceeded as usual. In his homily, Fr. Ajit Kumar Xess SJ, Provincial Superior, ruminated over the secrets of being fruitful in life, which indeed is possible by being united in the Lord. He motivated the Novices for First Vows with his triple reflections on (i) the Kingdom Meditation, (ii) the three classes of persons, and (iii) the three kinds of humility, and five points ever to remember in following the Lord (i) St. Ignatius – a man on a journey, (ii) Don’t be afraid, (iii) Be patient under trials, (iv) You are not alone, and (v) Be joyful witness of God’s grace. Finally, he wished them well to make their commitment in its fullest totality.

Thereafter the vows ceremony started with a public inquiry into the candidates’ wishes and desires. Before the Holy Communion, the 7 novices professed their First vows, and a good number of religious priests, nuns, and the faithful witnessed it.

At the post-communion, Fr. Ashok Sandil, SJ, Province Coordinator for Formation (PCF), welcomed these new Scholastics to the fraternity of Scholastics, called them to be excellent Jesuits in the future, and announced the places of their next stage of formation – Classical Juniorate.

The ceremony was followed by a short felicitation for the fresh Juniors and a sumptuous dinner for all thereafter.







27

## Fr. Vijay Kumar Minj, SJ

Fr. Ashok Sandil, SJ

A vow is a sacred promise made publicly in response to God's invitation to love Him completely and without reservation. In fact, all Christians are called to live the virtues of chastity, poverty, and obedience as these vows provide a purification of heart and spiritual freedom that uniquely mark the life of a Christian. The vows of consecrated life are means by which a consecrated person seeks to be more closely configured to



God. Being convinced that an intimate union with God gives meaning and credibility to his lifestyle, Fr. Vijay Kumar Minj made this free response to God to attain greater holiness in life.

Fr. Minj pronounced his Final Vows in the Society of Jesus on 18 February 2023. Fr. Ajit Kumar Xess SJ, Provincial Superior, received his vows in the presence of 36 priests and a sizable number of religious sisters and the faithful.

Fr. Amrit Tirkey, Superior of the Community, welcomed Fr. Provincial, priests, religious, and the faithful to participate in the ceremony and pray for Fr. Minj. Fr. Gilbert Barla presented a brief life sketch of Fr. Minj and requested Fr. Provincial to officiate the Holy Mass.



While introducing the Holy Mass, Fr. Provincial aptly brought out the significance of Final Vows in the Society of Jesus. He underlined that Jesuit formation is not to priesthood but to the final incorporation into the Society of Jesus that every Jesuit promises in the First Vows.

The first reading was taken from the book of Isaiah 43: 1-7 wherein God assures that we are precious in His sight, we are important and so He loves us. Further, He tells us, "Fear not, for I am with you" (43:5). The second reading was read from 1 Corinthians 15: 1-10 which describes the denial of the essential element of the Christian faith: the resurrection of the dead. Here St. Paul states in definite terms that Christ died, was buried, and was raised again. The Gospel was read from John 10: 1-10 which takes the Palestinian background of a sheepfold in which the flocks of various shepherds are gathered for the night under the vigilance of one caretaker, and of the shepherds at dawn each calling his sheep and leading them out, Jesus narrates this parable. It contains important lessons for contemporary religious leadership.

Fr. Ignatius Minj preached the homily beautifully blending the sacerdotal motto of the vowent, the meaning of the commitment to religious life, and the message of the Gospel for an abundant life. Fr. Minj could boldly say today in his vote of thanks, "By the grace of God, I am what I am" (1 Cor. 15:10).

Finally came the zenith moment, when Fr. Minj read the formula of Final Vows kneeling before the altar and was received by Fr. Provincial with a symbolic hug. At this moment, on behalf of the Ranchi Jesuits, Fr. Provincial congratulated Fr. Minj and thanked his family members for committing Fr. Minj to the service of God in humanity.

A short felicitation program was organized for Fr. Minj. Besides Jesuits of the community, FC sisters, schoolteachers, and a few parishioners were involved in the arrangement of the entire program of the day. Thereafter followed a sumptuous lunch for all prepared on the occasion.



28

## Fr. Ajay Arun Minj, SJ

Fr. Ashok Sandil, SJ

Fr. Ajay Arun Minj SJ completed 25 years of his religious life when the Society of Jesus invited him to pronounce his Final Vows within the Religious Order. The profession unfolded on 13 January 2023



during a Eucharistic Celebration presided over by Fr. Ajit Kumar Xess, SJ, Provincial Superior of Ranchi Jesuit Society, who received also his vows at St. Xavier's College, Ranchi on 13 January 2023.

Fr. Minj pronounced the fourth vow which was an expression of the Society's charism that reflects its unflinching loyalty to the leader of Christ's Church. In his apostolic exhortation *Vita Consecrata*, Pope St. John Paul II mentioned the three vows, or evangelical counsels, saying, "In every age, there have been men and women who, obedient to the Father's call and to the prompting of

the Spirit, have chosen this special way of following Christ, in order to devote themselves to him with an 'undivided' heart." In the light of this spirit, Fr. Minj made a free and deliberate promise to God to do something that is good and that is more pleasing to God aligning himself with the words of our Lord, "Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (Jn 15:13), the most heroic sacrifice a person can make for another.

The ceremony began at 4.30 pm in Fr. C. De Brouwer's auditorium of the College. Fr. Ajit Kumar Xess, SJ, Provincial Superior, presided over the Holy Eucharist and received the final vows of Fr. Minj in the presence of 46 priests, 26 Scholastics, 3 Brothers, and a sizable number of the Faithful along with his family members.

A brief life sketch of Fr. Minj was presented by Fr. Prabhat Kennedy Soreng, SJ before the Holy Mass followed by the entrance dance on the hymn, *Toyn*







*prabhu moke chunale, mor janam pahile se; toyn prabhu moke hankale mor aayo ker gatre se*, (Lord, you chose me before I was born; you called me from the womb of my mother). A group of St. Anne's candidates dressed in tribal wear danced to the melody and led the priests to the altar. Fr. Alexius Ekka, SJ, Rector of St. Xavier's College Ranchi, welcomed the entire gathering to the celebration and invited Fr. Provincial to lead the congregation through the Eucharistic Celebration. In his introductory note, Fr. Provincial featured the purpose of final vows in the context of the Society of Jesus wherein a Jesuit is fully incorporated through his total commitment to the mission of God.

The First Reading was taken from Psalm 118: 1-14 which accentuated the Sacerdotal Motto of Fr. Minj – The Lord is my strength (Ps. 118:14). This Psalm further recorded a dramatic liturgy of thanksgiving. It was probably sung at the re-dedication of the city walls and the Temple of Jerusalem after the people had returned from exile. The Psalm was sung by different groups while going in procession to the Temple in a responsorial style. The Second Reading from 1 Corinthians 1: 4-9 includes a simple note of thanksgiving, but here St. Paul is very formal and conscious that he is writing to a community in crisis. Nonetheless, he makes a prayer of thanksgiving for the rich graces they have received from God. These very graces have become the cause of dissension among the Corinthians. So, St. Paul reminds them

that all these graces come from the one Lord. The Gospel was announced by Fr. Minj from Lk. 1: 46-55. This is commonly called the Magnificat. It is composed of many Old Testament expressions and closely parallel to Hannah's canticle after the birth of her child (cf. 1 Sam. 2:1-10). It sounds like a note of joy at the salvation sent by God. The canticle is in two parts: in the first part (vv 46-50), God's favour to Mary is the theme of praise; in the second part (vv 51-55), the perspective broadens out to visualize God's favour and mercy being poured out over all the poor and lowly on the occasion of her conception of Jesus. In this canticle, Mary proclaims a revolutionary reversal of social and political situations which takes place with the coming of God's mercy in his Son, Jesus. And so, God remains faithful to his covenant promise made to Abraham.

In his homily, Fr. Ashok Sandil, SJ highlighted the pillars of Ignatian Spirituality – Spiritual Exercises, Prayer and contemplation, Examen, and Discernment – connecting them to the life of Fr. Minj and underlined the charism of finding God in all things in the service rooted in justice and love.

At the culmination of the Holy Mass, Fr. Minj thanked the congregation profusely and expressed his gratitude to the Society of Jesus and its Superiors. A short and simple felicitation program followed thereafter. The occasion was marked by the agape arranged for all present for the ceremony.





29

## Fr. Anil Kullu, SJ

Fr. Ashok Sandil, SJ

**F**r. Anil Kullu SJ was ordained a priest by Rt. Rev. Vincent Barwa DD, Bishop of Simdega. Congratulations dear Fr. Kullu on your ordination to the priesthood! God's blessing be upon you, we

pray, as you walk the journey of life in the Holy Priesthood of Christ. Our love and prayers will follow you; our blessings will support you. May you remain faithful to Him forever and be a blessing to all!



Fr. Kullu hails from Gozabantoli village in Karondabera Parish under Gumla Diocese in Jharkhand. He is the youngest among 6 siblings from Mr. Anjelus Kullu and Mrs. Martha Kerketta. Recently, he had to go through hard and shocking moments as he lost his beloved father and one sister just 5 months before his priestly ordination. Fr. Kullu could accept this reality as expressed in his

own words, "I never disheartened myself. I accepted it as God's will and said to myself like Job in the Holy Bible: God had given me an angelic father and sister. He took them back to Himself so that they may pray for me, and implore God's blessings to strengthen me." As the youngest child in the family, he received much love and care from his parents and siblings and lacked nothing practically. All in the family liked to see him happy always.

Undoubtedly, ups and downs were very much a part of his life like even and odd blocks on the way of a flowing river. In such moments, however, prayer was his sole strength that kept him moving on the path of his vocation. His overwhelming joy was rich in his smiling face as he stood in the queue being led to be ordained.

He recalls the days gone by during his Jesuit formation and finds solace in the words of the Lord, "For many are called, but few are chosen" (Mathew







22:14). This inspiration has gone deep in him as he remembers the providential love and protection of God right from his Apostolic School in Gumla: out of 66 of his friends, he could reach the other side of the altar today. In short, he feels that God has drawn straight lines in his zig-zag life.

Staying in Minor Seminary Ranchi, he completed his Intermediate from St. Xavier's College Ranchi and joined Jivan Deep Pre-Novitiate Khunti in 2008. After a year of formation in language proficiency and in learning the spirit and charism of the Society of Jesus, he was invited to join the Jesuit Novitiate in 2009. He spent two years in Ashirvad Novitiate, Namkum, discerning his vocation and directing his energy to be a Jesuit priest, and at the end of the training he pronounced his first vows on 21 June 2011. Thereafter followed for him the regular Jesuit formation: Juniorate at St. Stanislaus' College Sitagarha (2011-12), Graduation in Commerce at St. Xavier's College Ranchi (2012-15), Philosophy at De Nobili College Pune (2015-17), Regency at Apostolic School Samtoli (2017-19) and Theology at Tarunoday and Vidyajyoti Delhi (2019-2022).

It was 9.10 am to be exact when the Church premises thundered with the Entrance hymn – *Moy tor hath dhair rahbu Prabhu Yesu, pachhe pachhe tor chalte rahbu*, (Lord I will hold hand and walk behind you always). Fr. Emmanuel Kujur, Master of the Ceremony, read out the life sketch of Deacon Kullu. Fr. Linus Pingal Ekka, Diocesan Administrator of Gumla, wholeheartedly welcomed the Bishop, Provincial, Priests, Religious, and the faithful on behalf of the Diocese, and Fr. Moses Xalxo, Parish Priest, took his turn to warmly welcome the dignitaries, guests, and the faithful once again.

The Ordaining Prelate Rt. Rev. Vincent Barwa introduced the sacerdotal Mass by recalling the martyred of the soil, namely, Fr. Lawrence Kujur, Fr. Joseph Dungdung, and Bro. Anup Indwar. Invoking their intercession, he asked the entire congregation to offer their prayers for the Ordinand in the Holy Eucharist.

The First Reading was read by Deacon Kullu's elder sister Mrs. Cecilia Kullu from the Book of Isaiah 6: 1-3. The Second Reading was read by his elder brother Julius Kullu from the Book of Hebrews 5:

1-10 which reminds the Ordinand that every priest is taken from among men and appointed to be their representative before God. It falls to him to offer gifts and sacrifices for sin. Deacon Kullu himself read the Gospel from Mathew 22: 1-14.

In his homily, Bishop instructed Deacon Kullu that priesthood is an amazing gift from God wherein the Anointed One, once ordained a priest, belongs to Christ – the High Priest. Therefore, his attitude and behaviour must be like that of Christ – alter Christus – rising above all human frailty. It is possible only when he constantly desires and seeks the will of God in his life, reflecting on the Word of God daily, and believes and practices the same in his day-to-day living.

Fr. Ajit Kumar Xess, SJ, Provincial Superior, on behalf of the Church, requested his Lordship Vincent Barwa to ordain Deacon Kullu when his mother Mrs. Martha Kullu, and brother Mr. Clement Kullu dedicated him to the Church for the service of God in humanity.

The sacerdotal ritual was performed in the presence of 73 priests, and a big number of religious sisters and the faithful. The ceremony ended with the vote of thanks proposed by Fr. Kullu to the entire gathering for their specific role in making the day special followed by sumptuous lunch and felicitation program.



**30**

## Fr. Lazarus Basumatary, SJ

Fr. Ashok Sandil, SJ

**F**r. Lazarus Basumatary, SJ was ordained a priest by Rt. Rev. Michael Akasius Toppo DD, Bishop of Tezpur on 22nd January 2023 at St. John De Brito Church, Balipara. Congratulations dear Fr.



Basumatary on your ordination to the priesthood! Your decision to live a life of service to others is one that your parents and villagers would be very proud of. May you find joy and satisfaction in your priestly ministry!

Fr. Basumatary hails from Tarabari village in Balipara Parish under Tezpur Diocese in Assam. He keeps the third position among 8 siblings from his beloved parents Mr. Jeremia Basumatary and Mrs. Helena Basumatary. He had his primary education from L. P. School Phuluguri, middle school from M. E. School Rekamari

Amloga, and high school from Govt. High School Chenglimara. After his matriculation, he made a shift from Bodo medium to English medium and joined St. Xavier's Junior College Balipara where he had his first encounter with the Jesuits. He belonged to the first batch of students of Junior College studying Intermediate Commerce.

Fr. Basumatary with all his humility could hear the simple call to priesthood through the instrumentality of Fr. Xavier Lakra, SJ when Fr. Lakra came to his village to celebrate the New Year Holy Mass in 2008. It was tea time after the Holy Mass when Fr. Lakra wanted to know the ambition of this young Lazarus. Spontaneous was the answer that he desired to join the seminary. Fr. Lakra immediately took the chance and gave a bait to pull him to the Society of Jesus. Yes, it was a big catch.

After completing his study in Junior College, Fr.







Basumatary joined Premanjali Pre-Novitiate at Matigara in Darjeeling Province. When found suitable at the end of the course, he was welcomed to join the Society of Jesus in Ranchi Province by the then Provincial Fr. Ranjit Pascal Toppo SJ. He confirmed his priestly vocation in Ashirvad Novitiate Namkum after going through various experiments. He grew in the knowledge of the Society of Jesus and in the love of Saviour and Lord Jesus Christ. During the novitiate, he could recall the transformative works done in his home parish and its vicinity by Ranchi Jesuits. Eventually, he was convinced of his vocation and pronounced his first vows on 21 June 2011. He completed his Jesuit formation as usual: Juniorate from St. Stanislaus' College Sitagarha (2011-12), Graduation from Andhra Loyola College Vijayawada (2012-15), Philosophy from De Nobili College Pune (2015-17), Regency from St. Xavier's School Manas Bansbari Assam (2017-2019), and Theology from Tarunoday Kanke and Vidyajyoti Delhi (2019-2022).

As a young boy, Fr. Basumatary always dreamed of becoming a good farmer with modern technology after his father's profession. However, during his Jesuit formation to the priesthood, the sense of being chosen and set apart overwhelmed him. He knew for sure that God wanted him to be a good gardener in His vineyard. He accepted the grace of God repeatedly telling him, "You did not choose me but I chose you" (Jn. 15:16). So, this becomes the sacerdotal motto of Fr. Basumatary ever to inspire him in his priestly ministry ahead.

The sacerdotal liturgy started at 10.10 am in the open auditorium of St. John's School, Balipara. Deacon Basumatary was led to the altar by his parents with the entrance dance on the hymn *Newta delain Ishwar Aaba bolalain naam dhair ke*, (Lord gave the invitation and called by name) by a group of girls from Panipotta village. The Ordaining Prelate, Rt. Rev. Michael Akasius Toppo, Provincial Superior, Fr. Ajit Kumar Xess, SJ, Mission Delegate, Fr. Thomas Barla, SJ, and Parish Priest, Fr. Elvius Kerketta SJ along with 56 Priests followed to the altar. The Master of Ceremony, Fr. Anuranjan Purty, SJ invited the Community Superior, Fr. John Berchmans Dungdung, SJ to welcome the dignitaries and the congregation gathered for the ceremony. After his

welcome speech, the newly ordained priest, Fr. Marius Baghwar SJ brought up a brief life sketch of the Ordinand and recounted his life journey.

The First Reading from the Book of Isaiah 61: 1-3 was read by Mr. Anthony Basumatary, the eldest brother of Deacon Basumatary. The Second Reading from 1 Peter 5: 1-4 was read by Sr. Junaishri DSA, a relative of Deacon Basumatary. The Gospel of Luke 12: 35-44 was proclaimed by Deacon Basumatary himself.

Fr. Provincial officially presented the Ordinand to the Ordaining Prelate His Lordship Michael Akasius Toppo who in his homily instructed the Ordinand on the duties and responsibilities of a priest and conferred the sacerdotal rites and rituals. All present for the ceremony were the witnesses of it. The priests and religious were honoured with Assamese Gamosa at the end of the ceremony.

The choir, consisting of Holy Cross sisters, Ursuline sisters, and youth from Old Adabari, was conducted by Fr. Suresh Aind SJ and Fr. Erenius Toppo SJ with musical accompaniment by Sch. James Ekka SJ, Sch. Alok Soreng SJ, and Sch. Robin Minj SJ. It was melodious and lovely. The offertory dance was performed by the girls from Baithabhanga, the Bilbe procession by the girls from Kochubil, and the *Aarti* by the girls from Holy Cross Hostel Balipara – they were all beautifully executed, adding colours to make the ceremony deified.

A sumptuous lunch was served immediately after the ceremony prepared by the parishioners for all, followed by a felicitation program for the newly ordained priest Fr. Lazarus Basumatary SJ from different units and institutions.



**31**

## Fr. Marius Baghwar, SJ

Fr. Ashok Sandil, SJ

**F**r. Marius Baghwar, SJ was ordained a priest by Rt. Rev. Michael Akasius Toppo DD, Bishop of Tezpur on 8 January 2023 at St. Teresa Catholic Church, Ambagaon. Congratulations dear Fr.



Baghwar on your ordination to the priesthood! May the good Lord grant you strength, courage, and wisdom in your ministry. Thank you for your sacrifices and commitment to loving God's people. We love and appreciate you!

Fr. Baghwar comes from Kabirali village in Ambagaon Parish under Tezpur Diocese in the Bodoland Territorial Autonomous District (BTAD) of Udalguri in Assam. He is the second child among the 3 children of Mr. Daniel Baghwar and Mrs. Martina Lugun. His elder sister Mary Stela Baghwar and younger brother Michael Baghwar are married

and settled. No wonder, the seed of faith germinated in him in his early days and became stronger day by day as his grandfather and father were catechists in the village.

As a young boy, Fr. Baghwar was always inspired by the then Parish Priest, Fr. Bosco Kujur, who often visited their house. He always cherished a desire deep down to become like him to the extent that he was even ready to eat the leftover food from the priest's plate. However, as he grew in age, he changed his mind and started dreaming about becoming a soldier but he feared untimely and unexpected death probably because he had heard about the tough life and destiny of a soldier.

During his graduation from Mangaldai College, however, he could direct his energy on deciding his fortune. Simultaneously, he served the hostel boys as hostel warden in Mangaldai Parish. He participated in the daily Masses and prayer services







with the hostel boys invariably. Somehow, he was mesmerized by the lifestyle of the priests and religious in Mangaldai. One fine day, he expressed his deep interior call to become a priest to the Parish Priest, Fr. K. V. Sebastian, of course with clarity to become a religious priest and not a diocesan priest, as he could distinguish between these two by then. Fr. Sebastian, as part of his pastoral care, directed this young Marius to Fr. Xavier Lakra, SJ, Fr. Lakra invited him to stay in Balipara Parish to see and experience the Jesuit way of life. Convinced of this way of life, he expressed his wish to grow in the Jesuit formation to the priesthood. This decisive step brought him to Vivek Sadan Daltonganj for Pre-Novitiate. In Ashirvad Novitiate Namkum, he nurtured his vocation every day and eventually pronounced his first vows on 21 June 2014. He continued his normal formation thereafter: Juniorate at St. Stanislaus' College Sitagarha (2014-15), First Year Regency at St. John's School Balipara (2015-16), Philosophy at Satya Nilayam Chennai (2016-2018), Second Year Regency at Cambodia Mission and finally, Theology at Tarunoday and Vidyajyoti Delhi (2019-2022).

While going through the various stages of formation in the Society of Jesus, Fr. Baghwar believed that God called him from among many friends and experienced his providential love very closely and deeply that He has chosen him to work in His vineyard. So, his priestly ordination motto is, "I have called you by your name" (Is. 43:1).

The priestly ordination ceremony began at 10.05 am with the entrance dance on the hymn *Cando rakap piric piric, girja ghanta rang rang, Piya care rak leke aranokan, Tol gira leka gidoi newayidin kan*, (Morning sun is coming up with bright light, Church bell is ringing, Birds are singing as if giving me an invitation) in Santhali tune to which the local Santhali youth danced and escorted the Bishop and Priests to the altar. Fr. Mathias Hansda, Master of the Ceremony, invited Fr. Joseph Kongari, Parish Priest, to welcome the dignitaries, guests, and the faithful. After the general welcome, Fr. Libin Moukal narrated the life sketch of Deacon Baghwar. Thereafter, His Lordship Michael Akasius Toppo officiated at the Eucharistic Celebration.

The First Reading from the Book of Jeremiah 1: 4-9

was read by Mr. Raphael Hemrom, the elder brother of the Claretian Deacon Joseph Hemrom who was ordained along with Deacon Marius. The Second Reading from 2 Timothy 1: 6-14 was read by Dr. Michael Baghwar, the younger brother of Deacon Baghwar. The Gospel from Mathew 9: 35-38 was announced by Deacon Baghwar which highlights the teaching and healing ministry of Jesus which was the proclamation of good news. It requires workers to gather the harvest.

Immediately after the Gospel reading, Fr. Ajit Kumar Xess, SJ, Provincial Superior, called out to Deacon Baghwar by name and presented him to the Ordaining Prelate, Bishop Michael Akasius Toppo, with a request to ordain him a priest.

Bishop Michael Akasius Toppo acquainted the Ordinand with the dos and don'ts of priestly ministry in the Church and reminded him that as a priest he was to endure the challenging responsibilities because he is the representative of Jesus Christ on earth. Finally, Bishop laid his hands, as per the Church tradition, on him conferring the sacerdotal rites and rituals in the presence of 79 Priests, a Deacon, and a huge number of the faithful. Lo and behold! We have yet one more priest in the person of Fr. Marius Baghwar SJ in the order of Melchizedek!

The singing and the dancing during the sacerdotal liturgy added to the devotion of the people. The parishioners, especially the youth, played a vital role in the total arrangement for the occasion.

A felicitation program immediately followed after lunch. Fr. Provincial in his turn thanked the Lord for granting Fr. Baghwar to Ranchi Province as also he was grateful to Bishop Michael Akasius Toppo for kindly ordaining him a priest of the Lord. He expressed his gratitude and appreciation to Fr. Joseph Kongari, Parish Priest, and the entire congregation for making the day outstanding and memorable.



**32**

## Fr. Pramod Bara, SJ

Fr. Ashok Sandil, SJ

**F**r. Pramod Bara, SJ was ordained a priest by Rt. Rev. Patras Minj, Bishop Emeritus of Ambikapur on 8 January 2023 at Catholic Church Roshanpur. Congratulations dear Fr. Bara on your ordination to



the priesthood! God has chosen you as a true witness to Christ. May He endow you with wisdom and ever-deepening holiness as you embark on your priestly ministry among the holy people of God!

Fr. Bara was born in Atakora village in Roshanpur Parish under Gumla Diocese in Jharkhand. He is blessed with lovely parents Mr. Ruben Bara and Mrs. Rajni Bara. He is the youngest of 3 siblings with two elder brothers, namely, Arvind Bara and Praveen Bara. He had his primary

education at R. C. Middle School, Roshanpur and later moved to St. Ignatius' High School, Gumla for further education. Though he stayed in the hostel for a year, later with the purpose of becoming a Jesuit priest joined the Apostolic School in Gumla itself. Having completed his matriculation in 2006, he came to Minor Seminary Ranchi and pursued his Intermediate Arts at St. Xavier's College Ranchi.

His early ambition of becoming a priest was still fresh in his mind. He opted to join the Society of Jesus and came to Jivan Deep Pre-Novitiate Khunti in 2008. After rigorous training for a year in language and knowledge of the Society of Jesus, he was found fit. He received the invitation to join the Society of Jesus in Ranchi Province. He had his novitiate at Ashirvad Novitiate Namkum. This was the time again for him to nurture his vocation through the







Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola, prayer, contemplation, meditation, and mortification being in a confined atmosphere away from hustle and bustle of worldly life. At the end of two years of discerned life, he pronounced his first vows on 21 June 2011. Thereafter he followed the normal suit of Jesuit formation: Juniorate at St. Stanislaus' College Sitagarha (2011-12), Graduation in Political Science at St. Xavier's College Ranchi (2012-15), Philosophy at Satya Nilayam Chennai (2015-17), Regency at St. Xavier's School Doranda (2017-18) and Prabhat Tara School Dhurwa (2018-19) and Theology at Tarunoday Kanke and Vidyajyoti Delhi (2019-2022).

On the day of his ordination, he recalled his childhood when the seed of faith was sown in him that took a shape of a shady tree now. God kept an eye on him, walked along with him, and led him on a smooth path. God tested his faith through a number of challenges, hurdles, and obstacles in his journey to the priesthood. Traveling through the rough roads of life were the moments of grace that made him stronger in his faith and vocation, in his call and mission.

During his Jesuit formation, he did struggle to get a clear picture of what he was called for in life. But it was clarified over the years when he realized that God gives life with a purpose. Finally, he was convinced that God directed him according to His plan and purpose and helped him to persevere in it. His overall experience had been that he was unworthy and weak, yet God made him worthy to work in His vineyard. Therefore, he found his life being synchronized with his sacerdotal motto, "By the Grace of God, I am what I am" (1 Cor. 15:10).

The sacerdotal Holy Mass began at 8.00 am with the entrance dance on the hymn, *Toyn prabhu moke*

*chunale, mor janam pahile se; toyn prabhu moke hankale mor aayo ker gatre se*, (Lord, you chose me before I was born; you called me from the womb of my mother). Fr. Praful Ekka SJ, Master of Ceremony, presented the life sketch of the Ordinand and invited Fr. Augustus Kujur, Parish Priest, for a short introduction cum welcome speech.

The First Reading was read by the sister-in-law of Deacon Bara, Mrs. Pratima Bara, from the Book of Isaiah 61: 1-11. The Second Reading was read by his elder brother Praveen Bara. It was from 1 Cor. 15: 1-10 wherein St. Paul states in definite terms that Christ died, was buried and was raised again. Deacon Bara himself announced the Gospel which was taken from Jn. 15: 1-8.

After the Gospel reading, the sacerdotal rites started. Deacon Bara was led to the altar by his parents with emotional steps as the send-off song was sung by the choir. Fr. Raymond Kerketta, SJ, Representative of Provincial Superior, presented the Ordinand to the Ordaining Prelate with conviction that Deacon Bara was found worthy to be ordained a priest.

In his homily, Bishop emphasized God's unconditional love in spite of our disobedience. He also mentioned the need for our personal efforts which would unite us with God the Almighty. He invited the entire gathering to pray for Deacon Bara so that by the grace of God he may rise above all human frailty and faithfully execute the priestly mission. Finally, he conferred the Sacerdotal blessing on Deacon Bara in the august presence of 67 priests, 35 nuns, and a big number of the faithful.

A grand felicitation program followed thereafter. The Bishop and all the distinguished guests were felicitated in a grand manner. The day culminated with agape spreading smiling faces in the people gathered for the occasion.



**33**

## Fr. Valentine Sinduria, SJ

Fr. Ashok Sandil, SJ

**F**r. Valentine Sinduria, SJ was ordained a priest by Rt. Rev. Vincent Barwa, Bishop of Simdega on 22 April 2023 at Sacred Heart Catholic Church Lachragarh. Congratulations dear Fr. Sinduria



on your ordination to the priesthood! As you share in the ministry of Christ, may you be filled with the sure knowledge of His love, and open to the power and grace of the Holy Spirit! May God bless you abundantly in your priestly ministry!

Fr. Sinduria comes from Turubdega village in Lachragarh Parish under Simdega Catholic Diocese in Jharkhand. He is the second among 4 siblings from Mr. Dominic Sinduria and Mrs. Electa Surin. He lost his father on 30 October 2020. His mother and maternal aunt supported and guided him in that moment of grief and loss. It was their support and guidance which helped him to accept the sudden death of his father. His maternal aunt stood as a pillar of support for him in his time of grief and loss.

He received the seed of vocation from the life and work of the Montfort Brothers of St. Gabriel as a student in Middle School at Lachragarh. In fact, he wanted to become a Montfort Brother but his maternal aunt directed him to join the Society of Jesus. He completed his primary education at R. C. Boys' Middle School, Lachragarh. He moved to St. Mary's High School, Samtoli for his secondary education. He attended his secondary education as an Apostolic Schoolboy of St. John Berchman's Apostolic School Samtoli. He pursued his Intermediate in Science from St. Xavier's College Ranchi while staying in St. Aloysius' Minor Seminary Ranchi. After his Intermediate, he joined Jeevan Deep, Pre-Novitiate Khunti in 2006. After gaining basic knowledge of English and the Society of Jesus, he was sent to Ashirvad Novitiate Namkum Ranchi where he nurtured his vocation. He grew in personal knowledge of Jesus through prayer, meditation, and contemplation and learned the spirituality and charism of the Society of Jesus. After the completion of Novitiate formation for 2 years, he







pronounced his First Vows in the Society of Jesus on 21 June 2009. Henceforth, he did his Juniorate at Xavier Teachers Training Institute (XTTI) Patna (2009-2010), Bachelor of Science in Mathematics at St. Xavier's College Ahmedabad (2010-2013), Philosophy at Jñana Deepa Vidyapeeth, Pune (2013-2015), Regency at St. R. C. Boys' Middle School and St. Mary's High School Bardih (2015-2017), Master of Science in Mathematics at Loyola College Chennai (2017-2019) and Theology at Tarunoday, Regional Theology Centre Kanke (2019-2021) and Vidya Jyoti College Delhi (2021-2022).

The liturgy for the Priestly Ordination began at 7.15 am with the entrance dance on the hymn, *Nyota delain Ishwar aaba, bolathain naam dhairke* (Lord gave the invitation and called by name). Fr. George Burh, Master of Ceremony, read out the life sketch of Deacon Sinduria. Fr. Eric Joseph Kullu, Parish Priest, welcomed Rt. Rev. Vincent Barwa, Bishop of Simdega, Fr. Ajit Kumar Xess, SJ, Provincial Superior, Priests, Brothers, Nuns, and the Faithful. By way of introducing the Sacerdotal Holy Mass, Bishop indicated the role of a priest in the Church and the significance of priesthood today. Further, he asked the entire congregation to invoke God's blessings upon Deacon Sinduria.

The theme of the Priestly Ordination was "I am the vine; you are the branches" (Jn. 15:5). Deacon

Sinduria chose the readings for the Mass proper to his vocation in the Society. The First Reading was taken from the Book of Isaiah 61: 1-3. It was read by his younger sister Miss Sunita Sinduria. The Second Reading was taken from Hebrews 5:1-10. It was read by his cousin Prasann Sinduria. The Gospel was taken from Jn. 15:1-15. It was proclaimed by Deacon Sinduria himself. In his homily, Rt. Rev. Vincent Barwa dwelt on the unconditional love of God for his people. Connecting it to the life of Deacon Sinduria, he said that it was God who chose and appointed him to be a priest in the order of Melchizedek.

Fr. Ajit Kumar Xess, SJ, Provincial Superior, requested Rt. Rev. Vincent Barwa to ordain Deacon Sinduria a priest. Deacon Sinduria was led to the altar by his beloved mother Mrs. Electa Surin and his uncle Mr. James Sinduria. At the examination of the ordinand when found suitable, the sacerdotal rituals began and Deacon Sinduria became Fr. Valentine Sinduria, SJ in the presence of 81 priests, many religious brothers and sisters from different Congregations, and a very big number of the faithful.

After the ordination ceremony, a fellowship meal was served for all. The newly ordained priest Fr. Valentine Sinduria, SJ was felicitated by priests, nuns, brothers, parishioners, and relatives.





34

## Solemn Eucharistic Celebration and Veneration On the Eve of the 129th Death Anniversary of the Servant of God Fr. Constant Lievens SJ At St. John's Ground on Sunday: 6 November 2022

Fr. Alex Ekka, SJ

### A Spectacle of Heaven on Earth

The historic Solemn Eucharistic Celebration and Veneration on the eve of the 129th Death Anniversary of the Servant of God, Fr. Constant Lievens, SJ, was held at the magnificently decorated sprawling ground of St. John's School Ranchi on Sunday, 6 November 2022 in the morning from 8.00-11.00 a.m. at a gathering of about 8000 faithful.



It was indeed a spectacle of Heaven on Earth with joyful singing led by the choir, rhythmic dancing at the entrance, Bible Procession, offertory, Arti, Doxology and recession.

Before the Eucharistic Celebration started, Fr. Florence Kujur, SJ, Principal of St. John's School, welcomed the gathering and explained the locations



of various facilities on the campus. Then Fr. Francis Minj, SJ took over as the Master of Ceremonies and gave the context of the Solemn Eucharistic Celebration. He said that it was a fitting tribute to the Servant of God, Fr. Constant Lievens, SJ to offer the Eucharistic Sacrifice on Sunday 6 November 2022, the eve of his 129th death anniversary, so that all – the Religious, Priests and the Faithful could

participate in it thanking the Lord for this great Apostle of Chotanagpur. Fr. Francis then read out a brief biography of Fr. Lievens, the significance of the occasion, and announced the Public Devotion to him after the Mass. He continued giving commentary at various sections of the liturgy informing the faithful as to who took the lead in those activities. It was no coincidence that Christine Vandenhende, wife of the nephew of martyr Fr Herman Rasschaert, SJ, was seated among the faithful. The faithful welcomed them with thundering applause.

### History of the Cause for Beatification and Canonization

Finally, just before the Mass started, Fr. Alex Ekka, SJ, gave a brief account of Fr. Lievens' beatification and canonization process over the years. It can be put into 14 main points.

1. The idea to start the process of canonization came in 1993 when the mortal remains of Fr. Constant Lievens were transferred from Belgium to Ranchi (India).
2. On 1 November 2000 an edict was issued and the process was officially proclaimed after Mgr. Omer Tanghe was appointed as the Diocesan Postulator on 20 June 2020. It took time because permission to start the process was needed from the Archbishop of Mechlin-Brussels, Cardinal Godfried Danneels, for Fr. Constant Lievens had died in Leuven, which falls under his Archdiocese.
3. On 15 March 2001 the process started with a solemn Holy Mass in St. Martin's Church Moorslede and a Diocesan Tribunal was installed with 3 members, Cannon Wilfried





Dumon was appointed as Episcopal Delegate, Fernand Van Neste SJ, was appointed as Promotor of Justice and Georges Houwen as Notary. Along with them another four theological experts were sworn in to prepare the dossier concerning the content, namely Patrick Degrieck, Antoon Wullepit, Ghisleen Windey SJ, and Kurt Priem.

4. On 12 November 2001, the second Postulator, Odiel Denorme, was appointed due to the untimely death of the first Postulator, Mgr. Omer Tanghe. At the same time two Vice-Postulators were nominated, Frans Herpels in Belgium and Flor Jonckheere, SJ in India. Yet the work slowed down because of the death of Frans Herpels, the Vice-Postulator and of Georges Houwen, the Notary, in 2005.
5. In September 2007 the process re-started by appointing two new experts, Robert Houthaeve, a specialist on Lievens and Leo Loosveld, Deputy Archivist of the Diocese of Bruges. Thus finally in 2008, Nihil Obstat from Rome was granted.
6. In 2010 the Diocese of Bruges saw a new Bishop, Josef De Kesel, who took great interest in the process and appointed Father Bart Geryl as the third Postulator and gave him full support to acquire the competence in Rome by following the course on the cause of Saints and by giving freedom to work in the Diocese.
7. Thus in November 2012 a fresh start was made with a partly newly installed tribunal under the direction of Delegate Wilfried Dumon, Promoter of Justice Father Philippe Hallein and Greet Hemeryck a Notary. A Vice-Postulator, Father Aurel Brys, SJ was appointed to gather the witnesses in India. The process has to be written in one of the four languages understood in Rome, therefore a Translator into English, Marc Oliver, was appointed at the same time.
8. In January 2013 a Historical Commission was set up with Jo Luyten, Archivist of Jesuits in KADOC Leuven, Peter Bentein, historian of the minor seminary, Kurt Priem, Archivist

of the Diocese of Bruges and Leo Loosveld, Deputy Archivist of the Diocese of Bruges. In two years they collected 3000 documents from 18 Record Offices from Flanders and India.

9. The work proceeded well but in September 2014 a new Tribunal had to be formed for Delegate Wilfried Dumon passed away in May 2014. He was replaced by Philippe Hallein and Antoon Willepit took the place of the Promoter of Justice.
10. Finally, on 14 May 2015, the final Diocesan Session was presided over by Bishop Josef De Kesel, and on 17 October 2015 concluding Holy Mass was presided over by Josef De Kesel in St. Martin's Church Moorslede. On 5 November 2015, the documents were handed over personally to the Congregation for the Cause of Saints by the Postulator cum Carrier Father Bart Geryl.
11. On 21 January 2017 in the Auditorium of the Congregation for Saints, the cause for the Beatification and Canonization of the Servant of God, Fr. Constant Lievens, SJ, was officially opened at 16.00 hours in the presence of the Postulator General of the Jesuits, Fr. Anton Witwer, SJ, his two Collaborators Fr. Linus Kujur, SJ and Fr. Prem Xalxo, SJ, and some students of the Gregorian University.
12. The "Acts of the Diocesan Inquiry" was given AFFIRMATIVIE official "Decree of validity" on 2 June 2017 by the Prefect of the Congregation of the Cause of Saints, His Eminence Angelus Cardinal Amato, SDB.
13. The Public Copy of all the Documents about the Servant of God, Father Constant Lievens, SJ was handed over to Fr. Linus Kujur, SJ and Fr. Prem Xalxo, SJ, the Collaborators of the Roman Postulator, by Fr. Anton Witwer, SJ. The twelve-volume Documents are now to be consulted and a Position (Positio) has to be written under the guidance of Relator Mons. Paul Pallath.
14. Meanwhile a new Roman Postulator for Jesuits, Fr. Pascual Cebollada Silvestre, SJ is appointed in the place of Fr. Anton Witwer, SJ



to continue the process of Canonization from the Jesuit Curia Rome. The untimely death of Fr. Linus Kujur, SJ on 14 October 2021 caused a short break in completing the Position. The remaining work is being done by Fr. Prem Xalxo, SJ, who hopes to complete the work by December 2022. The copies of the Position will be submitted to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints through the Roman Postulator for Jesuits, which will be studied, analysed, cross-checked and verified by a Commission of expert historians and seek more information and additions. If those experts find the arguments presented in the Position suitable, they will recommend the Roman Pontiff to declare Fr. Constant Lievens a Venerable. Meanwhile, fervent public devotion and constant prayers for some miracles through the intercession of Fr. Constant Lievens are urgently required.

### **The Eucharistic Celebration**

After setting up the context, the Eucharistic Celebration started with the entrance dance of 90 students of Nirmala College, Ranchi under the guidance of the Principal, the Superior and the Hostel In-charge. The 30 dancers in each of the three groups made their graceful entry from the centre, left, and right of the makeshift tent for the occasion, and in each group, the con-celebrants followed them. His Grace Felix Toppo, SJ, Fr. Ajit, SJ, Provincial, Fr. David Anand, Parish Priest, Fr. Alex Ekka, SJ, Rector, St. Xavier's College, Fr. Amrit Lakra, SJ, Rector, Manresa House, Ranchi Fr. Ajay Xalxo, Rector, St. Albert's College, Ranchi and Fr. Aurel Brys, SJ followed the central group of dancers. All the celebrants went up to the stage of the stadium wherein was the altar erected magnificently by the Ursuline Sisters of the Study House, Ranchi. The Holy Mass was officiated by His Grace Felix Toppo, SJ. The choir conducted by Fr. Justin Tirkey, SJ led the faithful into melodious singing of the Kyrie, Gloria, and other hymns at the Mass. The parishioners of Christ the King Church Kanke performed the spectacular Bible Procession carrying on a palanquin a statue of Fr. Lievens mounted on a horse and escorted by four DSA candidates dressed up as the first St. Anne Sisters namely Veronica

Kandulna as Mata Bernadette, Sushmita Bodra as Mata Cecilia, Megha Tigga as Mata Veronica and Bimla Jasmin Oreyas as Mata Mary. The entourage was led by Ms. Amulya Anchal Bara holding the Bible. The first reading of the day was taken by Mr. Abhijit Paul Toppo of Hulhundu Parish and the second reading was by Ms. Bibiana Ekka of Mandar Parish. Fr. Anand David Xalxo read the Gospel and Fr. Ajit Xess preached a memorable homily with the parable of four candles.

### **The Parable of the Four Candles**

The four candles burnt slowly and the ambience was so soft that you could hear them speak talking. The first one said, "I am peace. However, nobody keeps me lit. So I believe I will go out." Its flame rapidly diminished and went out completely. The second one said, "I am faith. Most of all, I am no longer indispensable, so it doesn't make any sense that I stay lit any longer." When it finished talking, a breeze softly blew on it putting it out. Sadly, the third candle spoke in its turn, "I am love. I haven't got the strength to stay lit. People put me aside and don't understand my importance. They even forget to love those who are nearest to them." And waiting no longer it went out. Suddenly, a child entered the room and saw three candles not burning. "Why are you not burning? You are supposed to stay lit till the end." Saying this, the child began to cry. Then the fourth candle said: "Don't be afraid, while I am still burning we can re-light the other candles, I am hope." With shining eyes, the child took the candle of hope and lit the other candles. The flame of hope should never go out from your life and each of us can maintain hope, faith, peace, and love. The faithful listened to the homily spellbound and got the message right away. They understood how Fr. Constant Lievens had proved to be the candle of hope in desperate situations and motivating others by repeatedly saying, "The Fire Must Burn."

### **Continuation of the Holy Mass**

The singing of the creed was deepening the faith of all. It was followed by the prayers of the faithful. The offertory dance was performed by the students of St. John's School, Ranchi along with the teachers of the school carrying the bread and wine and Ms. Christine Vandenhende, wife of the nephew of Fr.





Rasschaert holding a candle for the offering. The Aarti performed at the Doxology by the Ursuline of Purulia Road was no less enchanting. After the singing of the Our Father and the Lamb of God, the holy communion was distributed by about forty Seminarians of St Albert's College, Ranchi with all devotion and decorum in fifteen minutes to all the faithful. After the final blessing of His Grace, the main celebrant and all the con-celebrants came down from the stage of the stadium to the ground for the Public Devotion to Fr. Constant Lievens, SJ.

### **Veneration of Fr. Constant Lievens at His Portrait**

The mortal remains of Fr Lievens are interred in the Cathedral but it was impractical to take such a large number of people to the Cathedral. Hence, the ceremony took place at the venue of the Mass. Garlanding the portrait of the Servant of God, Fr. Constant Lievens by His Grace Felix Toppo, SJ was the first act of offering tributes to the great apostle of Chotanagpur, followed by Fr. Ajit Kumar Xess, Provincial, Fr. Anand David Xalxo, Parish Priest, Fr. Ajay Xalxo, Rector, SAC, Sr. Lily Grace Topno, Superior General of the Daughters of St. Anne, Ranchi, Sr. Matilda Dungdung, OSU, General Assistants; Sr. Bernadine Tirkey SCJM former Provincial Superiors; Sr. Deepika De Chunha SRA, Assistant Provincial; Mr. Petrus Ekka, President Catholic Sabha, Ranchi; Mrs. Francisca Xalxo, President Catholic Mahila Sangh, Ranchi and Mr. Abhishek Sagar, President Yuwak Sangh, Ranchi.

Then followed the opening prayer led by His Grace, Felix Toppo SJ. After this, Fr. Ajit Kumar Xess SJ, Provincial, read out the extracts from the letters of Fr. Lievens addressed to his classmate at Roeselare

and to the Provincial of Belgium. Fr. Francis Minj SJ, Dean of JFCT, Tarunoday, had collected the extracts. Thereafter, followed the placing of the miniature photos of Fr. Lievens on the stands made for the purpose in pairs as follows – Jesuit Scholastics Sandeep Bara, SJ and Ashwini Tigga, SJ, Seminarians Ajit Kujur and Avinash Minj, Religious Sisters Sr. Rohita Ekka, DSA and Sr. Vidya Soreng, OSU; Catholic Sabha delegates Mr. Vijay Tigga and Mr. Ranjit Bara; Mahila Sangh delegates Mrs. Rani Toppo and Mrs. Rosi Tirkey; Yuwak Sangh delegates Ms. Saumya Kujur and Mr. John Tuti and Krusveer representatives Supreetim Christopher Bara and Niharika Lakra. The fifth item in the veneration to Fr. Lievens was the singing of a hymn ईश सेवक कोनस्टंट लीवन्स” composed by Fr. Justin Tirkey, SJ for the occasion. Then followed the recitation of the prayer by all, for the beatification of Fr. Lievens. A hymn was sung thereafter to Our Lady “कुँवारी माँ हे निष्कलंक मरिया” the Protector of Chotanagpur. After this, a final prayer was said by His Grace, Felix Toppo, SJ. And at the end, Fr. Binod Toppo, SJ, Vice Principal of St. John's School, Ranchi proposed the vote of thanks. After this, many Religious and Priests as well as the faithful including Ms. Christine Vandenhende and the guests from Belgium offered floral tributes to Fr. Lievens at his portrait placed in the centre. The recession hymn and dance followed thereafter performed by St. Anne Novices of Lowadih, Samlong, Ranchi.

### **Outcome of Committee for Constant Lievens' Museum (CCLM)**

3. The aforesaid Solemn Eucharistic Celebration and Veneration to Fr. Lievens was the outcome of the series of meetings for the Project of





Livens Museum, known as the Committee for Constant Lievens Museum (CCLM) held at Sadbhavna and St. John's School from 6 August to 3 November 2022. Fr. Provincial, Ajit Kumar Xess constituted this Committee on 1 August consisting of the following members: Fr. Prem Xalxo, SJ; Fr. Alexius Ekka, SJ; Fr. Francis Minj, SJ; Fr. Anand David Xalxo, Fr. Ravi Hemant Kujur, SJ; Fr. Amrit Lakra, SJ; Fr. Edwin, SJ; and Fr. Ashok Sandil, SJ.

The objectives of the said project were: (1) to present the Life and Mission of Fr. Lievens to the general public in a simple and attractive manner, (2) to let the faithful know God's great work for the people of Chotanagpur through Fr. Lievens, and (3) to create public devotion to Fr. Constant Lievens. The ultimate end of the project envisaged was to speed up his beatification process.

In the first meeting of the CCLM with the Provincial, Fr. Prem Xalxo gave a brief appraisal of the progress in the beatification process of Fr. Lievens. He also shared the experiences of his visit to Belgium prior to his home visit in August. He said that some important items related to Fr. Lievens should be brought to Ranchi from Belgium and kept in the proposed Lievens Museum.

In the discussion regarding the feasibility of constructing the Lievens Museum, all the CCLM members endorsed the idea of going ahead with the Lievens Museum Project. It was also agreed that various items in the museum pertaining to Fr. Lievens would be his relics, images, statues, descriptions, videos, photographs and light and sound system. As regards the location of the Lievens Museum, options suggested were his mission field like Torpa, Bendora, Jamgain and Manresa House, etc. But ultimately it was unanimously agreed to locate it in Ranchi, the Capital City of Jharkhand at Manresa House from where Fr. Lievens worked as the Director of Mission in the neighbouring districts and areas. It was also decided that the blessing and foundation stone laying ceremony should be held on 7 November 2022, his 129th death Anniversary. All agreed with Fr. Provincial's idea of Fr. Herman Rasschaert Museum too in the course of time. Other

suggestions made during the discussion were: (1) the history of the life and Mission of Fr. Lievens to be retraced by Fr. Alexius Ekka, and Fr. Francis Minj, (2) Intercessory Prayer Cards to be reprinted, (3) Preparing the Calendar 2023 on the life and mission of Fr. Lievens, (4) Making of his statues and (5) Drama to be staged on the life and mission of Fr. Lievens. Fr. Prem fondly remembered the late Fr. Linus Kujur gratefully for forwarding the cause of Fr. Lievens' beatification.

In the 2nd meeting of the CCLM held on 13 August 2022 Fr. Provincial appraised the group of the approval by the Extended Consult to the Lievens Museum Project. Once again the CLM reiterated its decision regarding the location of the Lievens Museum at Manresa House in the space between the Bulcke Library and the Office of the Hoffmann Law Associates. As regards the structure of the museum, it was suggested to go for the initial 1st floor with the provision of a few more floors for future expansion.

In the meeting Fr. Prem explained that by December 2022 the Positio on Fr. Lievens would be submitted to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints through Fr. Pascual Cebollada, Postulator General for the Society of Jesus. Consequently, to support the cause of Fr. Lievens' Beatification, public devotion is a must, which should be promoted as much as possible especially through printed prayers and pilgrimages at shrines where Fr. Lievens lived and worked like Torpa, Jamgain and Bendora to mention a few.

Regarding the upcoming events at Bendora on 16 October 2022, it was decided that a well-planned public ceremony should be organized. For this purpose, the existing shrine of Fr. Lievens at Bendora should be renovated making it more attractive and devotional. The Diocesan Administrator of Gumla Diocese should be taken into confidence and adequate publicity should be made for the event.

Similarly, it was suggested that on Sunday 6 November 2022 there should be a Solemn Eucharistic Celebration on St. John's School Grounds in the morning commemorating the life and work of Fr. Lievens on the eve of his 129th death anniversary. Greater publicity and propaganda for the occasion must be made along with proper planning and event management. After the Holy Mass, the faithful would





then be led to the Cathedral for the veneration of the relics of Fr. Lievens. The blessing and the laying of the foundation stone for the Lievens Museum in Ranchi at Manresa House should be held on 7th November 2022 the 129th death anniversary of Fr. Lievens. Public devotion to Fr. Lievens must also be organized on the same day at Torpa and Jamgain.

In both the cases of the beatification of Fr. Constant Lievens and Fr. Herman Rasschaert, for the promotion of their public devotion, the ecclesiastical support and involvement of the church in Chotanagpur, Orissa and Chhattisgarh must be envisaged as an absolute requirement. So also the collaboration of the diocesan clergy, other Religious Congregations and the faith should be ensured.

It was finally concluded that for the promotion of the beatification of Fr. Lievens and of Fr. Herman Rasschaert, there should be an integration of the faithful's visit to the museum and their veneration at the respective shrines. The Province men who are artists and sculptors could also help out in designing these structures in the proper historical context and the socio-economic and politico-cultural milieu of the times of Fr. Lievens and Fr. Rasschaert.

### **Preparation for the Solemn Eucharistic Celebration & the Veneration of Fr. Lievens on 6 November 2022**

The meeting of the CCLM on 19 October 2022 was crucial for the decision and planning of the proposed Solemn Eucharistic Celebration and the public veneration of Fr. Constant Lievens. In the absence of Fr. Provincial and Fr. Prem Xalxo, Fr. Alex Ekka took the initiative for the final decision and planning by the CCLM. Besides the existing members of the

CCLM, a few more Jesuits were co-opted in the core committee for the preparation of the proposed liturgy on 6 November 2022. They were Fr. Justin Turkey, SJ, Fr. James Peter Balmuchu, SJ, Fr. Florence Kujur, SJ, and Fr. Sudhir Minj, SJ. First of all, an online urgent request was made to His Grace Felix Toppo, SJ to officiate the Holy Mass on 6 November 2022 at St. John's Ground. And after his consent to the request, the rest of the logistics were planned out as regards the Solemn Eucharistic Celebration and the veneration of Fr. Constant Lievens as described above and held on Sunday 6 November 2022 in the morning. Similarly, Fr. Sudhir Minj SJ and his team at St. Albert's College had taken the responsibility of organizing the public veneration of Fr. Lievens.

Due to unavoidable circumstances, the blessing and the laying of the foundation stone of Fr. Lievens Museum were carried out the same day at 4.00 p.m. by Fr. Provincial in the presence of the CCLM members and other Jesuits of the Province.

### **Conclusion**

The Solemn Eucharistic Celebration and the Veneration of Fr. Lievens on 6 November 2022 were indeed milestones in the beatification process of Fr. Constant Lievens. The collaboration of the Archdiocese of Ranchi, including the Priests and Religious of various Congregations as well as of the laity in this religious event, was highly commendable. The public devotion to Fr. Lievens must spread far and wide in Chotanagpur and the neighbouring States of Orissa and Chhattisgarh. The plan of the Lievens Museum needs to be actualized as early as possible. All must pray that the beatification and the canonization of the Servant of God Fr. Constant Lievens, SJ are accomplished soon in the days to come.



# SECTION F

## OBITUARY

**R.I.P**

*Rest in peace*







35

## Fr. Benjamin Lakra SJ (1944-2022): A Jesuit Agricultural Scientist with No Guile

Fr. Henry Barla, SJ

Fr. Benjamin Lakra was convalescing at the Manresa House infirmary (2020-2022) under the watchful care of Srs. Lucy DSA, Suchita DSA, and Bro. Telesphore Horo SJ, and other helpers. He was suffering from diabetes, high cholesterol, blood pressure, and a grievous wound, just above the heel, which seemed like a crater emitting appalling stench, inflicted in a paddy field while transplanting, on August 27, when he was Parish Priest at Patrachauli for only a few months. Two days later he was taken to the Seva Nilaya Clinic, Ara Gate for treatment of the wound. Seeing the size and the putrefied wound's condition, Drs. Ram Prasad and Samir's instant opinion was amputation to save life. But daily dressing continued and after some weeks he was brought back to Manresa House again. On November 5, his BP shot up to 500 and he was feeling very restless. After his return from Simdega, Fr Raymond took him to the LHRC Mandar Hospital in the evening, and Benjamin was at once put in the ICU; after some time, he was shifted to a single room. His restlessness continued unabated till the next whole day and he was completely exhausted. Finally, at 7.30 p.m. on November 6, 2022, the Lord took his faithful servant to himself.

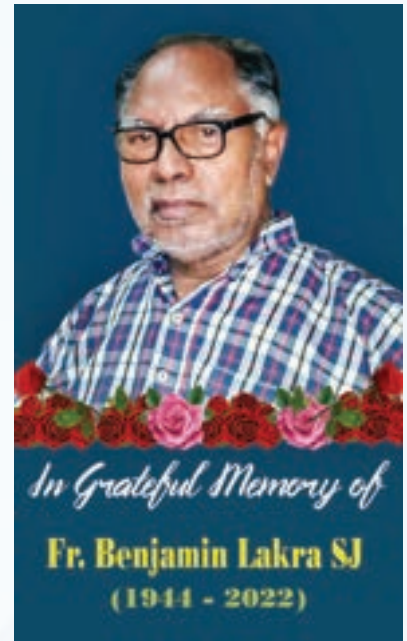
Benjamin hailed from the Gajmara village of the Kurdeg Parish, and from a simple, God-fearing, farming family. He was the third child of his parents Patras and Angela, who had altogether three sons and four daughters. As he grew up, he wanted to go to school. His kind parents sent him to the Kurdeg parish school nearby for his primary and middle school. His Head Master was Rev. Habil Lakra, a good priest but terror to all boys for he had always a stick in his hand and another one in his room; compassion or sympathy was missing from his glossary in his dealings with boys: thrashing first, then questions. Benjamin had a few such ordeals with Rev. Habil which he loved to narrate. After his Middle school, he expressed his desire to go to the Apostolic school. His parents understood what it would lead to and joyfully granted his wish. He was sent to Gumla with

some companions. Except Benjamin all of them fell by the wayside though; Benjamin persevered. From Gumla, he moved to Ranchi for his Pre-Univ. at St. Xavier's College, Ranchi.

Then came the next decisive crossroad for which he had desired to go to the apostolic school: whether to join the Seminary or the

Society. He chose the latter and went to Sitagarha in 1965 to begin his two-year Novitiate under Fr. Francis Eelen, assisted by Frs. L. Dejaegher and later by Jan Van Bogaert. The batch had to leave Sitagarha without taking the First Vows because, as there was no Juniorate around here, the then-Provincial, Rev. Fr. Francis Crick asked them to leave for Bangalore, for their Juniorate was starting within four days. They went to Mt. St. Joseph, Bangalore and pronounced their First Vows a day after arriving there. Br. Benjamin made some lasting friendships with some of the local Juniors there.

After a year of Juniorate in Bangalore, all returned and settled down for their University studies, almost all of them at St. Xavier's College, Ranchi. In those times, English, Hindi, and Science subjects were encouraged by the Superiors for whatever reasons; but things began to change by and by. Br. Benjamin was interested in agriculture; so along with another Brother, who later discontinued the Society, he was sent to the Birsra Agricultural University, Kanke. He stayed in the Parish and studied in that University (1969-72). As a university student, he openly





declared that he was a son of an Adivasi Agriculturist hailing from Kurdeg Parish of Simdega diocese in Jharkhand. This self-esteem helped him to study in Birsa Agriculture University. With his studies at the BAU over, Br. Benjamin was sent to the Loyola Higher Sec. School, Kunkuri for a year of Regency. He was a great help to the then-Principal Fr. Samuel Barla. He enjoyed his stay there in the company of the late senior Br. Cyril Kerketta, also from Kurdeg.

Novitiate, Juniorate, University studies, Regency: all done with great satisfaction. Now remained two major studies as his stepping stones to the priesthood: Philosophy and Theology. Br. Benjamin was sent to the Sacred Heart College, Shembaganur for his two-year Philosophy (1973-75). And since he had had his Regency, the then Fr. Provincial Philip Ekka sent him to Pune for Theology (1976-78). He loved the Adivasi culture, singing, and dancing. During the community days at DNC, he would organize a tribal dance. One would hardly believe but Br. Benjamin played the Dholak or the Mandar with full gusto, with his dhoti flying about, accompanying those who sang and danced. After completion of the Theology course Br. Benjamin Lakra was ordained a priest on 22 April 1978, in Samtoli Parish.

Now began his active ministries in the Society as a priest. Since he was an agriculturist, the very first mission he received was as Vice-Principal of ATC, Namkum (1979-86). Then he was appointed as Director of ATC Extension for a year followed by Principal of ATC Namkum (1987-98) after his Final Profession. He taught improved agriculture to the trainees at ATC with passion, besides animal husbandry, piggery, and goatry. Those were the days when the boys from the rural areas, after their middle school studies came to ATC Namkum for training in improved agriculture. He also visited the rural parishes to meet his former students who were now known as Kamdars whose duty was to teach the rural farmers simple improved agriculture. The duration as Principal was quite crucial, with many problems eating away his sleep and peace. But thanks to shrewd advisors; the crisis was solved, and all headaches ceased, though it took time.

Fr. Benjamin had gone through more than enough tensions at the ATC and received equally enough barbs from all across some communities. But he had

steeled himself and displayed tremendous patience. That was the need of the hour too. Nevertheless, he was exhausted mentally. Oftentimes he felt he was alone. So, it was high time that when the ATC's nagging predicament came to a successful but grinding halt, his Superiors decided it was high time that he was shifted from Namkum to some congenial community with an appropriate ministry of his own bent. That was how he landed in the XISS in 2000 as Minister and In-charge of Field Project. Like other Professors of this discipline, he took a group of Rural Management students for ten days of two rural camps each year. He enjoyed teaching and talking about rural society, economy, polity, religion, and culture. He would also be seen working in the fields teaching the students agriculture. Back in the institute, he guided some students in their annual dissertations as other students worked under other Professors. As the Assistant Director, he performed his duty very well too, and indeed was the right hand of the Director. Both the faculty and students came to him for advice and guidance. And to the non-teaching staff, he was a sort of mentor.

His community members opined that Fr. Benjamin was a profound Jesuit religious. Besides the daily Masses and the evening prayers in the community, he had time to say his prayers in his room. He also very faithfully went to celebrate the holy mass to the convents where he was assigned. As the minister of the house, he arranged for monthly recollections and provided the community with the latest books on Jesuit spirituality. He also gave recollections to the Sisters in the convents when asked for. He carried out fondly his spiritual duty as the extraordinary confessor to the Missionaries of Charity at Radha Rani which was established at the behest of the late Fr. G. Lawlor, SJ. He was also a good companion in the community. He had endless stories to tell about his adventures and the medical properties of various plants and creepers, roots, and herbs.

Then Fr. Benjamin was sent to Belgium for his doctoral studies in the Louvain University during which years he stayed at St. Barbara Jesuit H. School in Gent where the good Fr. Van Der Ghote was the Rector. Fr. Charles Dierckx, SJ, (the younger brother of our late Frs. Paul and Vincent Dierckx) in the community, Rev. Odille De Norme (the PP of





Moorslede) and many others became his great and unforgettable friends. Br. Van de Zande, SJ, one of the most interesting persons in many ways, was the receptionist at St. Barbara community. Fr. Benjamin's doctoral thesis was on the nutritional properties of the Adivasi rice beer. It was a masterpiece! But Fr. Benjamin regretted that in India the people refused to take him seriously.

After his return from Belgium, Fr. Benjamin was sent to Jammu as Director of the Minor Seminary where he lived with the young boys showing them the way to God, and helping them to discern their vocation to the priesthood. This was from 2009 to 2015. When his term was over, a new landscape of priestly life opened up. Just as he was missioned from Ranchi to faraway Jammu, now he was sent as PP to take care of the Church of Balipara, Assam. Parish life was a new field for him. He loved to offer every Mass on Sundays and solemnities even though there were companion priests in the parish: Masses were not to be shared with others. Did he have some reservation that the other priests would pocket the stipends? He loved his illiterate parishioners dispersed in the tea plantations, eking out their livelihood. He visited them almost daily, covering different areas, and spending much time with them. During his trips in a four-wheeler, often he would doze off. A couple of times, as told by his colleagues, Benjamin's vehicle slowly headed into ponds, and the vehicle had to be hauled out with the help of cranes. Thank God, no major accidents occurred, but certainly, his companions did face the music from the police despite their good connection with the authorities. Benjamin was not ready to accept that he was past-driving age. Anyway, in 2019 his sojourn at Balipara was over and he was transferred to Patrachauli, again as PP. He was there only for a brief period. One day as he was driving the Ecco jeep from Ranchi to Patrachauli, he fell with the jeep and all into a huge trench on the road. Miracle of miracles; despite the near fatality of the accident, Fr. Benjamin remained glued firmly behind the steering. Probably he was again dozy. Sad to say but that was the last day of his driving spree. He was brought to the parish but the vehicle remained in the dugout. The next day Fr. Benjamin was brought to the Province infirmary for better care.

Many ask for the cause of Fr. Benjamin's passing away. It is already mentioned above that he had developed certain health disorders. Besides, he had no control over his eating and especially drinking. Every time he was taken to the hospital, some bottles were removed from his room. Where did those bottles come from? remained a constant question for the infirmary fraternity. Excessive drinking of liquor aggravated his health and probably burnt his vitals slowly. Although his wound had somewhat improved, but it kept festering; it never healed completely. He suffered much due to this and other ailments. But in the infirmary of Manresa House, he always looked cheerful despite the fact that he was suffering incurably. He enquired about others and received visitors who came to see him. One used to feel that he had a sense of contentment in life for whatever he had been and done. He was and remained an Adivasi Agricultural Scientist. Occasionally if asked how he was, like the revered late Fr. Medard Vermeire, SJ, Fr Benjamin would say, "Zehr kontent, zehr kontent" (very satisfied...).

Some flaws aside which are in every one of us, Fr. Benjamin was a good and very friendly person. His commitment to his ministries was magnanimous. He would make many sacrifices to visit his people, especially in the Parish of Balipara, gave them more than ample time to listen to their stories which became his agenda as Parish Priest. Besides visiting his people in the tea estates, he would also go around to see the feeder schools and encourage the village teachers and children. All in all, he had endeared himself to his sheep there. Once back from Balipara to Ranchi, he loved to narrate his experiences of nearly four years there. His stay at Patrachauli was short, and he could not do much for the people although he went around visiting them in their villages. None of us had expected that he would be taken away from us so soon. But God has his own plans. The Psalmist is never wrong when he meditates on human life cautioning us: "Our life is cut short by your anger; it fades away like a whisper. Seventy years is all we have – eighty years, if we are strong; yet all they bring us is trouble and sorrow; life is soon over, and we are gone . . . Teach us how short our life is, so that we may become wise" (Ps 90:9-12).



36

## FR. PATRICK TETE, SJ (1925-2022): A PASTOR PAR EXCELLENCE

Fr. Xavier Soreng, SJ

*“Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.” (Mt. 25:21)*

Fr. Patrick hailed from a small village called Paikpara Baijutoli in Rengarih Parish of Simdega Diocese. He was born on 12.06.1925. He had four brothers, and he was the eldest among them all. He did his early schooling at R.C. Boys’ Middle School Rengarih and after which he joined St. John’s High School Ranchi. He graduated from St. Xavier’s College Ranchi. He entered the Society of Jesus on 1 July 1949. He was in De Nobili College Pune for his philosophical studies and in St. Mary’s Kurseong for his theology. He was ordained Priest on 18 March 1959 at St. Mary’s Kurseong. He did his tertianship from St. Stanislaus’ College Sitagraha. He took his final vows on 2 February 1963 in St. Michael’s Church Khunti.

He was inspired by Fr. George Martin’s life and his mission. Later, he himself became a legendary icon of a Parish Priest, a good shepherd who smelt of the sheep. He worked as Parish Priest in Khunti, Ulhatu, Karra, Salangaposh, Patrachauli, and Kanke. His devotion and faithfulness to the pastoral ministry for 40 years have made him memorable. In his ministry what was of prime importance for him was to speak the language of the people in order to remain close to their hearts. Learning the language of the people was a call within a call for becoming a good shepherd to them. He did not know Kharia, his own mother tongue, but I had personally heard him communicate with people in the Mundari language very fluently. Later, I came to know that he had picked up most of his Mundari in Khunti and Karra and mastered the same.

He had the privilege to have worked with Fr. Louis De Meester in Khunti, the famous Fr. Herman Rasschaert who was martyred in Gerda, and the great Banker Fr. Albert Van Exem. His association with the Belgian missionaries helped him to develop his own approaches to reaching out to the people. He was

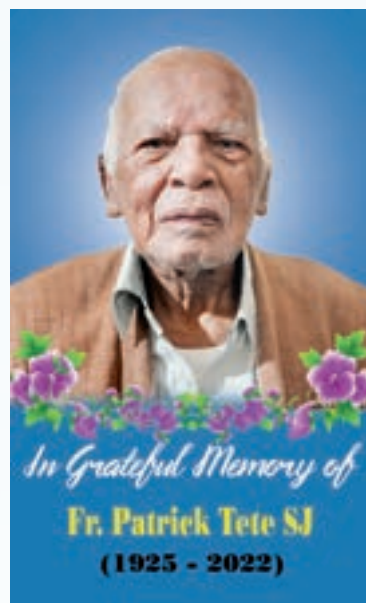
the man of his own time. The roads were not as good as today. The travel from one place to another was difficult. However, his dynamism, enthusiasm, and passion for service put him in good stead and helped him accomplish great things for Him who had called him for a specific purpose.

He was very faithful to his prayer life.

One could invariably see him with his breviary in his room and rosary in the corridors. He was very close to God and was faithful to his mission of bringing the people around him. He had kept up the commendable tradition of carrying rosaries and scapulars when on his visits to different places.

He was loved by the people wherever he went probably because of his simplicity, humility, trustworthiness, availability, and empathy with people. He never lost his calm and composure. The joy of dedicated life and honest smiles never betrayed his lips, and a gesture of warmth and welcome made all those who came to him extremely comfortable and at home.

Though not a professional, he took fundraising as his mission which was mostly need-based. I would like to quote from the article of Fr. Henry Barla SJ in the Ranchi Year Book 2021, “We may remember that Fr. Patrick had several good friends from Europe during his theology days. He never lost track of them but used to keep correspond with them from time to time. The donor agencies were generous because Fr. Patrick was sincere, transparent, and trustful. But he capitalized more on earnest prayers to Our Lady







who could beg for him. He never forgot to bulldoze God's gate day and night. Like a good beggar, he kept looking daily for a letter or two from the donors. And God always answered his prayers."

Jesuits will ever remember him for his contribution towards buildings and infrastructure as per the need of the mission. Some of his important contributions in this line are: Church in Dumki Mission, a portion of High School building in St. Mary's High School Samtoli, restructuring of the residence of St. Mary's community of Jesuits, renovation of the school hall, the Church and residence of Patrachauli, Maranghada Parish, etc. The best contribution one can give to the world is to make the most of oneself. Fr. Patrick Tete gave his best for serving the mission of God wherever he went not only in terms of buildings and infrastructure but also in terms of building up the people of God by faithfully investing his time,

talents, and energy with great sincerity and with a deep sense of love for God and his people.

Fr. Patrick died at the ripe age of 97 years. He was blessed with very good health of mind, body, and spirit. He was never admitted to any hospital. Except for a few minor accidents, he was never seriously sick. He spent his last few years in the Jesuit infirmary of Manresa House Ranchi praying for the Church and Society. He was always hale and hearty and never complained about anything whatsoever. He was a man of resilience and great faith. He passed away peacefully on 26 November 2022 early in the morning. He has become a legend in the realm of pastoral ministry and has left us with a great legacy of love of God and compassion for his people. May the life and mission of Fr. Patrick Tete SJ continue to inspire all of us Jesuits for many years to come.



**37**

## **Fr. Vinod Kumar Bilung, SJ (1957-2023): A True Mathematician**

Fr. Nicholas Tete, SJ

“Though he brings grief, he will show compassion, so great is his unfailing love.” (Lamentation 3:32). Late Fr. Vinod Bilung was a very courageous and optimistic person who surrendered to the Lord though he wished to work in the Society for more years after his retirement from the Department of Mathematics, St. Xavier’s College Ranchi. God has his own plans for each one of us.

The only son of the late Shri Remis Bilung and late Mariam Bilung, Fr. Vinod Bilung was born in a very devout catholic family at Mariampur Samtoli on 27 July 1957. He has one elder sister and two younger sisters. As his father was a teacher of Mathematics in St. Mary’s High Samtoli and a great leader in the Kharia community, Fr. Vinod inherited some of the best talents of his father in teaching Mathematics, leadership, dedication, committed lifestyle, generosity, religious inclination and the love for figures and data.

His secular and religious studies: For Apostolic School, he came to Gumla after completing his primary and middle school studies in Samtoli and passed his matriculation examination in the year 1975. He completed his Intermediate Science from St. Xavier’s College Ranchi in the year 1977 and in the same year, he joined the Pre-Novitiate and Novitiate at Sitagarha on 12 November 1977. After his Novitiate in Sitagarha, he completed his Juniorate in Sitagarha itself and came to St. Xavier’s College Ranchi to complete his B.Sc. Maths (Hon). He completed his M.Sc. from Loyola College Chennai, and later in the year 2018 he completed his Ph.D. He retired from the Department in 2022.

After his regency at St. Xavier’s College Ranchi, he went for Theology to Vidya Jyoti Delhi and he was ordained priest on 6 May 1992 in Catholic Church Samtoli. After his ordination, he spent one year in Catholic Church Tongo for his pastoral ministry. Afterward, he joined St. Xavier’s College in the Department of Mathematics in 1993. He was the IGNOU Coordinator in 1994. In the Society of



Jesus, he pronounced his Final Vows on 15 August 2002. He took charge as Rector of the College from 2009-2015. He was also taking care of AICUF in the College. On that fateful day in January 2021, as he was going to bless a marriage in Tainser Parish, near Kalebira he felt unwell and stopped his car and came out and then collapsed near his car and was paralyzed. Since then, he received treatment at Konbir-Noatoli Hospital, Samtoli dispensary, at home, Orchid Hospital, Hazaribagh, and Borea-Kanke. Partially, he recovered but on 23 March 2023, there was a massive stroke, and breathed his last.

**His Personality:** Although he suffered from Tuberculosis in his early stage, he got cured by the end of Novitiate. He never got discouraged about his health again. He was a man of prayer, dedicated, charitable, generous, open-hearted, and always looked happy and smiling. He was a good planner and was a visionary and self-dependent. He had a technical bend of mind. He was intelligent and wise. He was a friend to everybody. He took his suffering cheerfully. Fr. Vinod was a special person. He was chosen by God and was precious in the eyes of God





(Eph. 1:3-13).

As a Priest, he was cheerful and amiable. His smile was very infectious. Anybody who came to see or talked to him went back happy and contented. He was always ready to help anyone in need. He carried out his priestly ministry with diligence and respect.

As a professor of mathematics, he was very systematic and clarity was his hallmark. He taught his students simply so that all bright and slow learners could understand the intricate mathematics. As an administrator, he was the Rector of the College, Coordinator of the IGNOU study centre, Minister of the house, and for some time a Bursar of the College. He carried out his responsibility in an efficient manner. He loved nature. He had made a small nursery of fruit saplings and cuttings on the terrace. That was his hobby. As a Jesuit, he was committed to his Jesuit life and lived a simple and

dedicated religious life. After all, he was a very good soul, a good person, a good human being, and very optimistic. His oft-repeated sentence was that he would recover soon from his partially stroked state and return to the College. In spite of his suffering, there was a smile on his face. In general, he was a dynamic person. He was a man of a positive mind. After the death of his dear father and mother, he was low in spirit but he never showed it to anyone. He was a man of principle. He had a round personality - a fine teacher, a good player, a creative person, never to give up anything, he lived in determination without fear. He was a courageous person and very friendly with everybody. He will be remembered by everyone for years to come for such a personality. May the Almighty and good God reward him with eternal rest and peace!



**38**

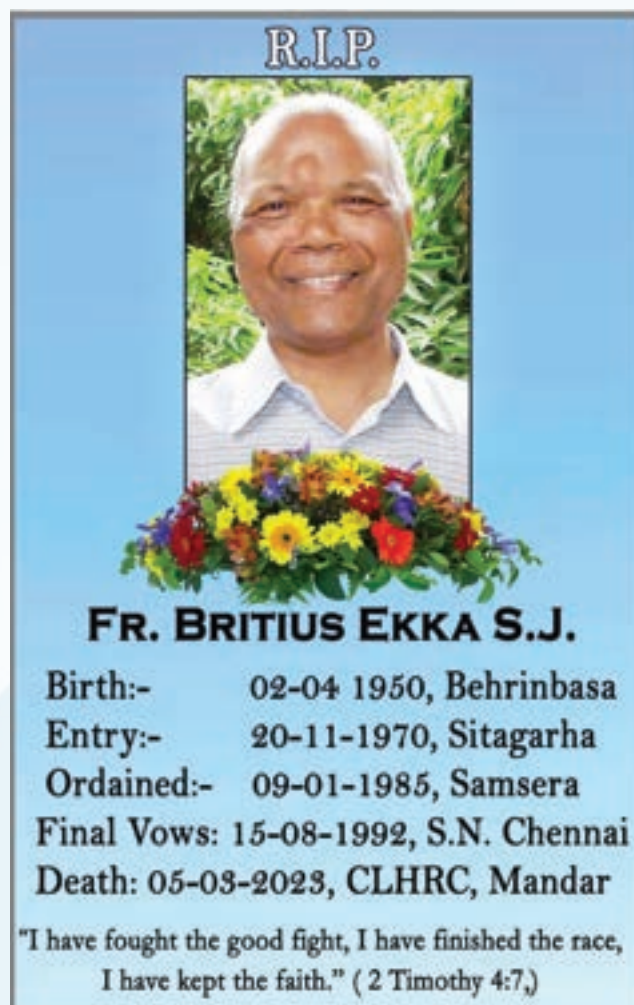
## **Fr. Britius Ekka, SJ (1950–2023): I Have Fought A Good Fight**

Fr. Fuldeo Soreng, SJ

**F**r. Britius Ekka SJ went to be with his Lord around 1:37 am on 5 March 2023 at Constant Lievens Hospital Mandar, Ranchi, Jharkhand, while recuperating from his illness. He was suffering from a heart problem and recuperating in the Infirmary of Manresa House Ranchi.

Fr. Britius was born on 2 April 1950 to Mr. Junas Ekka and Mrs. Josphine Ekka at Behrinbasa under Catholic Church Samsera in Simdega Diocese. He had three brothers and one sister. He was the youngest son. He completed his early schooling at Samsera. He came to St. John's High School Ranchi in 1965 for his further studies and completed it in 1969. He did his Pre-University studies at St. Xavier's College Ranchi. He joined the Novitiate in 1970 at St. Stanislaus' College Sitagarha Hazaribagh and pronounced his First Vows in 1972. Having received the first vows, he went to XTTI Patna for his classical Juniorate in 1972. For his graduation, he was sent to St. Xavier's College Ranchi from 1973 to 1975. For his philosophical studies, he went to Sacred Heart College Shembagnur from 1975 to 1977. Soon after completing his philosophical studies, he was involved in his active ministry as a regent at Pre-Novitiate, Kanke from 1978 to 1979. He was in PUG Rome for his theological studies from 1979 to 1981. He was ordained a priest at St. Mary's Church Samtoli Simdega on 9 January 1985. As a newly ordained and vibrant young Jesuit Priest, Fr. Britius Ekka went to Catholic Church Tongo for his pastoral ministry and shared his God experiences with the faithful.

Having completed his pastoral ministry at Catholic Church Tongo, Fr. Britius received a beautiful opportunity to guide the young candidates as the Director of Apostolic School College Section (Minor Seminary) Ranchi from 1986 to 1992. He went to Satya Nilayam Chennai in 1992 as a spiritual director of the philosophers. While he was there, he received his Final Vows on 15 August 1992 on the feast of the Assumption of Mary. His presence gave confidence to the Scholastics to excel in their philosophical



studies. He accompanied them till 1997. He moved to JDV Pune in 1997 again as a spiritual director to guide the growing and maturing Seminarians. Very faithfully and with great enthusiasm he carried out his responsibilities till 2004.

Fr. Britius Ekka came back to the Province in 2004 after many years. He was appointed as the Superior of the Jesuit Community and Vice Principal of St. Xavier's School Doranda (SXD) in the Junior Section. He worked at SXD till 2017. His impact was great on the lives of children and parents. He was a loving father. He loved and cared for the students in the school. The teaching and non-teaching staff were very eager to listen to his rich ministerial





experiences. His presence on the campus gave spiritual strength to the staff. They miss his presence today. He then went to St. Michael's Residence in Khunti as the Superior of the community in 2017 and took care of the community as a father for one year only. He returned to SXD once again in 2019 as a Spiritual Guide. He stayed in the community and prayed for the whole Society till 2021. He spent most of his time reading spiritual books and reflecting on the beautiful life given by God. He was then taken to the Province Infirmary at Manresa House Ranchi for better medical care in 2020 and he continued praying for the entire Society and the Church. Celebrating the Golden Jubilee of religious life in itself is a blessing for a religious. So, the year 2020 was a year of blessing for Fr. Britius who celebrated the Golden Jubilee of his religious life. The whole Society thanked God for his life and works.

Fr. Britius looked at his life as a gift of God to him and associated it with Jeremiah, Elijah, and other prophets as God called them for His mission. He had expressed that he experienced God's love and care through his parents, brothers, sisters, relatives, and near and dear ones. He thanked God for the brothers and sisters with whom he grew up in the village. Later he realized that God had called him on His mission. He said that God had created him only and only for this purpose. When he celebrated the Golden Jubilee in the Society of Jesus, he expressed profoundly that God had done marvels for him.

In one interview, he shared his mixed feelings about religious life. Fr. Britius said that he had missed his mother; his father had died before he was born. That was a great shock and painful moment for his mother at that time. She did not like him to be born without the shadow of his father. However, she took care of him very well. She said that he was a gift to her from God; therefore, she would offer him to God. He said that his mother maintained a strict discipline and prayerful atmosphere in the family. That was the bond that kept all of them together as one family. Those were the days that he still remembered.

Further, he mentioned his vocation saying that he was attracted by the dedicated life of foreign missionaries who gave their lives so generously. He appreciated the dedicated services that they rendered

to Chotanagpur. All these things made him think that 'if they can do so, why can't I'. This inspiration led him to his priesthood in the Society of Jesus.

He enjoyed the companionship and the sense of freedom with responsibility in the Society of Jesus. The Society took great care of him in the initial stages of formation. He gave his message to the youngsters that wherever they have been planted, they should bloom and be fruitful. He further gave his message to the formators that they should take care of the young ones and should mould them accordingly. They must be their friends who can understand them. He said, "Let the Scholastics grow ..., but occasionally they should be guided if they stray." To all the Regents, he would advise them to enjoy their responsibilities and to be what they ought to be. They should give their best as Jesuits. Everyone looks at them with trust. They should keep the promises that they have made to the Lord.

He expressed his gratefulness that offering oneself to the Society for the whole world was his core experience. He liked almost all the ministries in the Society as they were important to him. He felt happy seeing others growing in all spheres of life.

While at Manresa House Infirmary, he spent his time reading the Scripture, books, and newspapers. He also helped other sick and aged members in whatever way he could. Towards the end of his life, he said, "We need to keep growing in finding strength, courage, and consolation from the Lord."







Promoting Eco Culture



Working in Youth



Plantation



Ranchi Province Educators with Collaborators



# **RANCHI PROVINCE**

## **APOSTOLIC PREFERENCES**

### **(RPAP) 2020 – 2030**



**Being rooted and grounded  
in Ignatian  
Spirituality and  
sharing the same with  
others**



**Walking with the poor,  
the oppressed and  
the marginalized,  
particularly the tribals, for  
peace, justice,  
reconciliation and harmony**



**Understanding and  
accompanying  
youth for a meaningful  
life and a hope-filled  
future**



**Caring for and  
Preserving our  
common home and  
promoting ecological  
justice and biodiversity**



**Being men of competence,  
commitment, conscience  
and compassion to ensure  
quality and value-based  
education in accordance  
with the Jesuit tradition and  
heritage**



**Promoting vocations  
and ensuring quality  
formation with good  
formation policy,  
programme, structure  
and implementation**