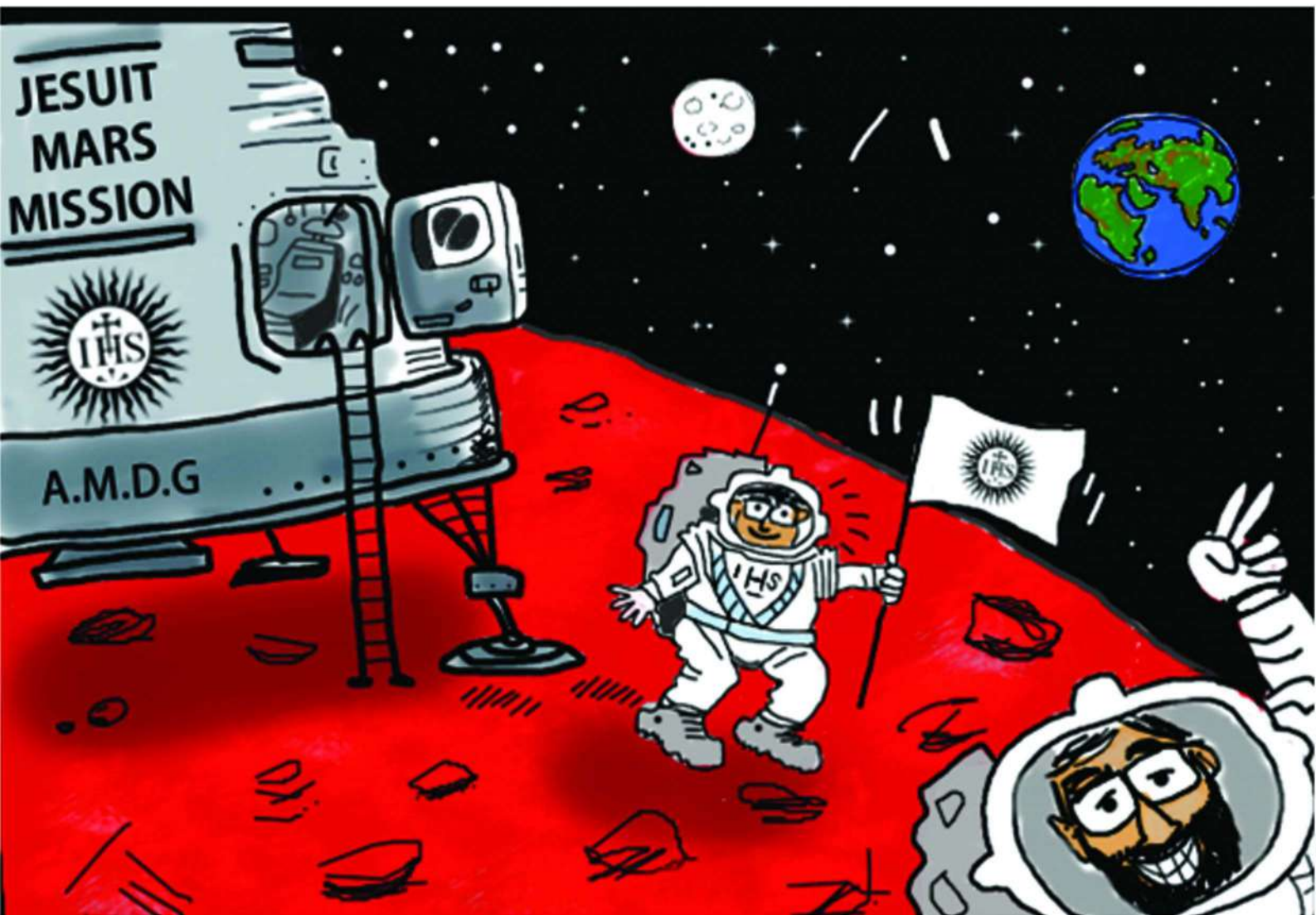


DNC TIMES

July | 2021 | Vol. II

JESUIT MISSION TO MARS



The Impossible Dream

To dream the impossible dream
To fight the unbeatable foe
To bear with unbearable sorrow
To run where the brave dare not go

To right the un-rightable wrong
To love pure and chaste from afar
To try when your arms are too weary
To reach the unreachable star

This is my quest,
To follow that star
No matter how hopeless,
No matter how far.

To fight for the right
Without question or pause,
To be willing to march
Into hell for a heavenly cause.

And I know if I'll only be true
To this glorious quest
That my heart will lie peaceful and calm
When I'm laid to my rest

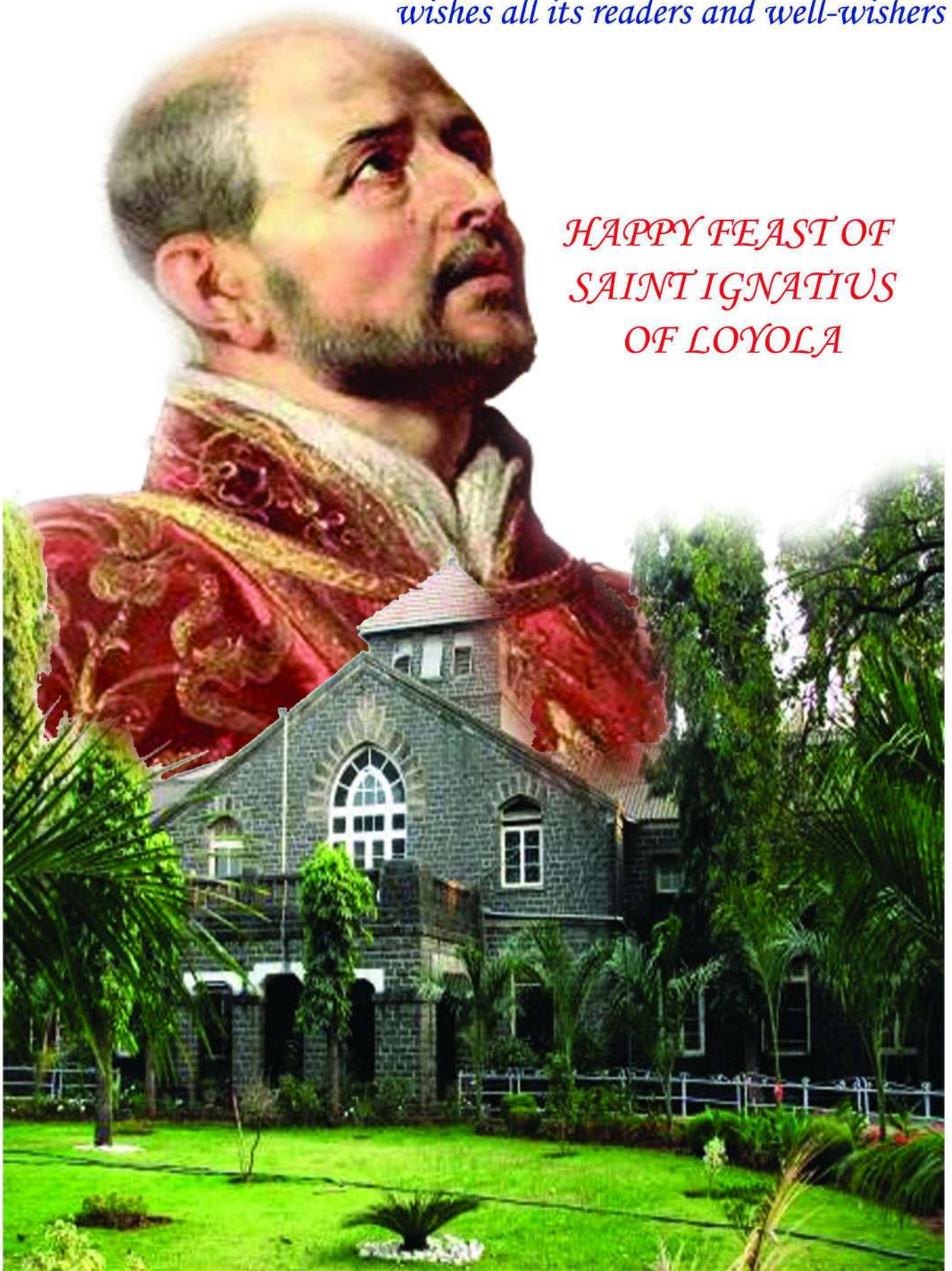
And the world will be better for this
And one man, sore and covered with scars
Still strove with his last ounce of courage
To fight the unbeatable foe
To reach the unreachable star

Andy Williams

DNC TIMES

wishes all its readers and well-wishers

*HAPPY FEAST OF
SAINT IGNATIUS
OF LOYOLA*



EDITORIAL

To keep the sky as the limit was the maxim that we were taught very early in our Jesuit formation. Today, we are going beyond the sky! What at one time may have seemed impossible has now become possible. What is it that has made this shift possible? It is that powerful tool called discernment given by our founder, St. Ignatius.

Discernment helps us to challenge our way of thinking, our way of doing and our way of being. Yes, it invites us to think out of the box! Thanks to the tool of discernment. Today our ministries have taken us to the ends of the globe - from parishes to prisons, retreat centers to refugee services, from schools to hospitals, seas to skies. Name it, and we are there!

St Ignatius began his mission in a small way. He and his little team of men were much sought after by the Pope to be sent to different parts of the world on mission. The mission, to put it in a nutshell, was to spread the Good News to all the ends of the earth. In this endeavor of spreading the Good News, those early Jesuit missionaries toiled tirelessly with a spirit of *Magis* seeking God in everything. God invited Ignatius to continue the mission started by Jesus. The same Jesus held the hand of Ignatius and led him to places, which not many would have dared to go to. The three questions that kept bugging Ignatius – What have I done for Christ? What am I doing for Christ? And what can I do for Christ? – have continued to disturb Jesuits down the centuries, leading them to do things which would have seemed humanly impossible.

Fr Arturo Sosa, the Superior General of the Society of Jesus, in his homily at the Mass of Thanksgiving immediately after taking over as General, stressed the idea of the mission of the Society of Jesus. "Since we believe in God's help, we can do not only the improbable but the impossible," he said. These words have made us row into the deep, move to the periphery and go to places where others would not dare to go. Blending with the words of Fr Arturo Sosa, Pope Francis says "I am a mission on this earth; that is the reason why I am here in this world". Each one of us is called to seek and find the mission that the Lord has deigned for us and to go out and fulfill it.

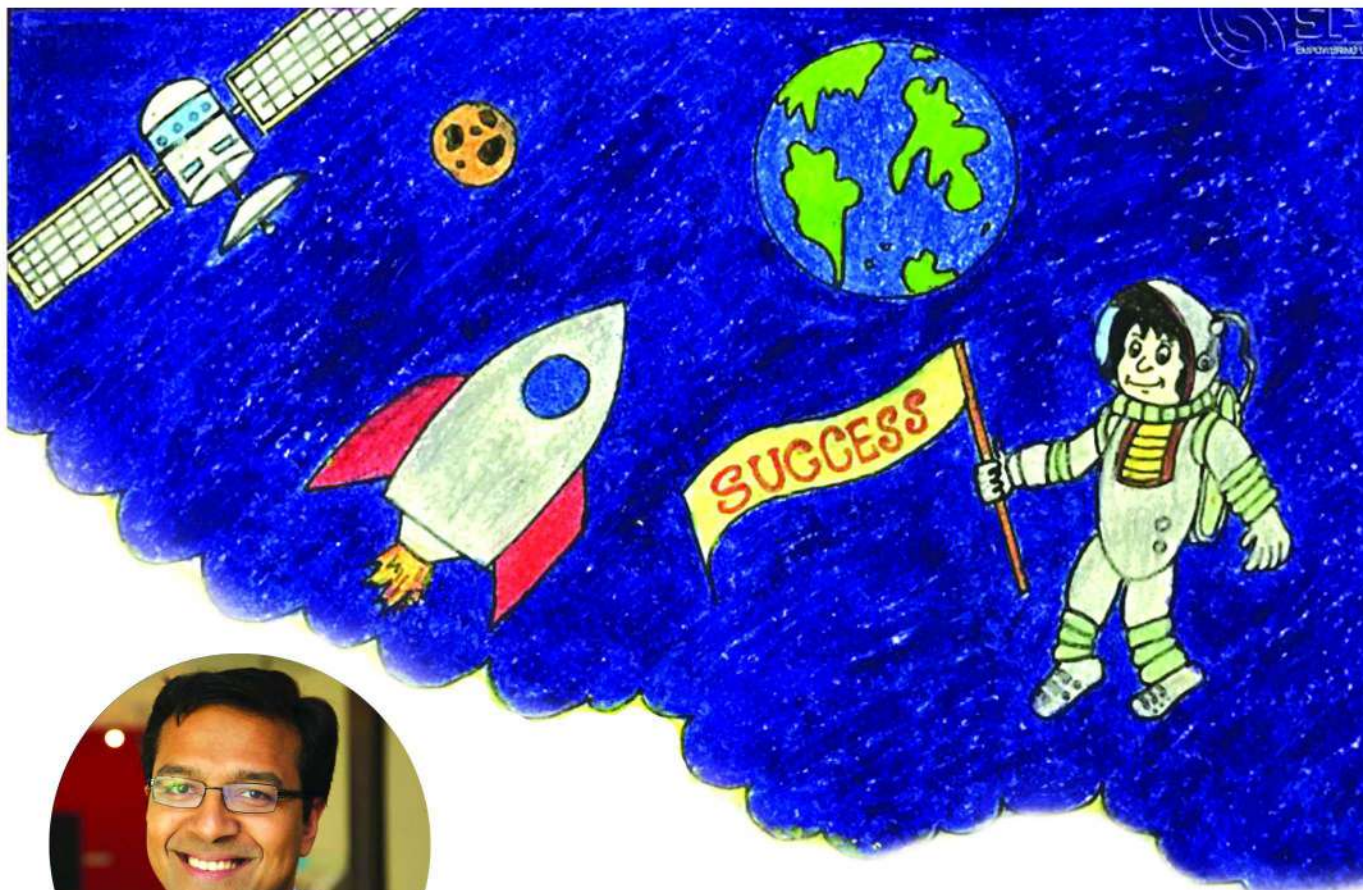
The articles, stories and poems in this magazine invite us to experience the mission journey of our founding fathers as well as that of our contemporaries. We hope that this experience will spur us to attempt the impossible by coming out of our comfort zones. We will soon realize that nothing is impossible for us when we walk and talk with the Lord, just as St. Ignatius, did.

The DNC Times owes a debt of gratitude to all our writers for taking time out crystallizing their thoughts. Articles such as "The beginning of Tripura Mission from scratch" and "Online platform as a modern means" give us a glimpse of the ways in which we are moving beyond the skies to Mars. We are being challenged not just to think big and to think out of the box, but to reach for the better and the bigger in the true spirit of *Magis*.

Wish you an enjoyable journey to Mars.



Royal SJ



Fr Richard D'Souza SJ

F E A T U R A R T I C L E

THINKING AHEAD TO *MARS*

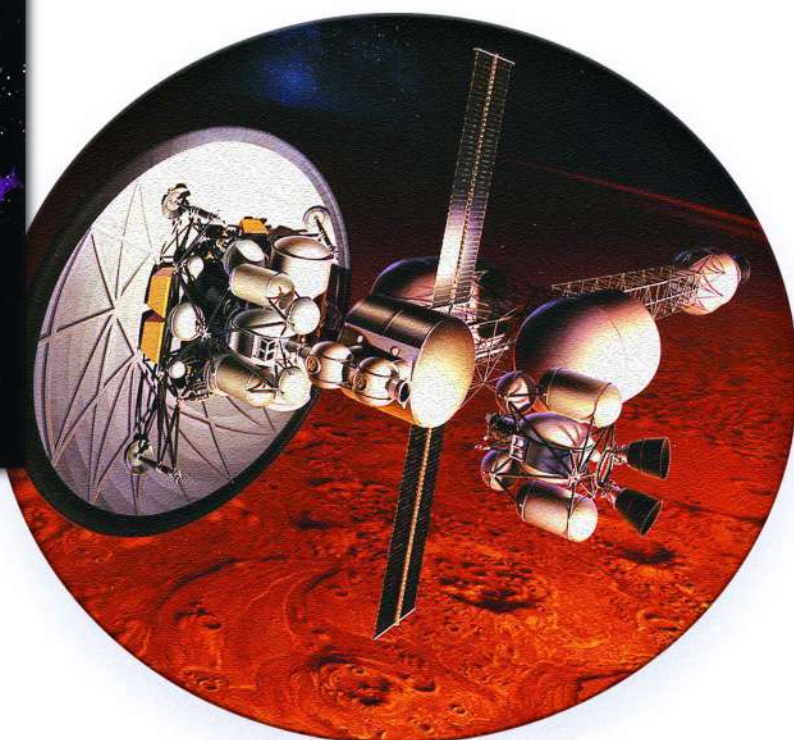
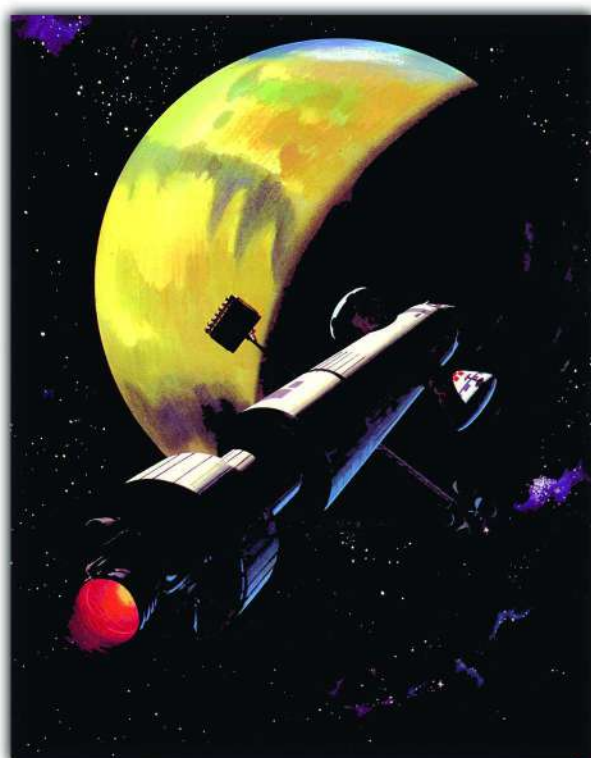
The recent success of the landing of the rover Perseverance to Mars has once again sparked our imaginations about the mysterious Red planet. While the moon landing of 1969 inspired the generations of the "baby boomers", it is recent missions to Mars, including Spirit (2003), Opportunity (2003) and more recently Curiosity (2012) that has influenced present generations including the "millennials" to dream about space and especially, the possibility of future colonies on Mars. Young Jesuit scholastics are no exceptions, and it is only right that we ask the question about a possible Jesuit contribution to a mission on Mars. There are many technical hurdles to overcome before a "human" mission to Mars becomes a reality. The rover Perseverance not only will specifically look for signs of ancient life on Mars but will also test important technologies which will one day help sustain human presence on Mars.

Given the history of Jesuit missions to the new worlds and the continuing interest of the order in science and astronomy, it comes as no surprise that the literary world have long imagined possible Jesuit missions to other planets. In particular, novels like *A case of Conscience* (1958) by James Blish or *The sparrow* (1996) by Mary Doria Russell try to grapple with various complex issues that arise as Jesuits encounter alien races. As advances in technology open up possibilities about interplanetary visits, the collective experience of the Jesuit order in approaching new worlds and cultures can be of an aid to prepare for future

an aid to prepare for future “human” missions to Mars. While space travel as well as life on other planets will open up new and difficult challenges, a number of them will closely resemble those encountered by Jesuit missionaries as they crossed the oceans to evangelize the newly discovered worlds.

While the prospect of finding intelligent life on Mars is remote due to its hostile atmosphere and landscape, a number of other problems arise with attempts to colonize the Red Planet. In particular, as more and more commercial companies eye the prospect of mining the moon, asteroids and even Mars, important questions can be raised about ownership and mining rights of these new and unclaimed extra-terrestrial regions. If primitive forms of life are found on the planet, what should our relationship with them be? Would any form of mining or colonization pollute the Red planet and infringe on the “rights” of such indigenous life-forms? Will these life-forms be deserving of protection, similar to endangered life-forms on Earth? And what would future colonies on Mars look like? What type of organizational structure could they have without destroying the local Martian environment? What would be the ecological impact of future colonies? Who would have rights to settle on Mars? Would a person born on Mars be entitled to be a citizen of a country on earth? In a limited sense, all these problems are similar to those we have encountered before, and it is worthwhile we start developing a discourse that includes these difficult questions, so as not to avoid re-committing the mistakes of the past. It is clear that these questions cannot be limited to merely scientists but must encompass a number of disciplines and sciences. Moreover, as Jesuits, it is equally important to initiate the development of a “Christian vision” to a future mission on Mars.

As Jesuits, it is equally important to initiate the development of a “Christian vision” to a future mission on Mars.



However, the prospect of a possible human mission to Mars raises the more immediate question of extra-terrestrial life or astrobiology, a current theme of interest for a number of the Jesuit members of the Vatican Observatory. Astrobiology is an interdisciplinary scientific field concerned with the origins, early evolution and future of life in the Universe. At the moment, scientists are concerned with recognizing the signatures of extra-terrestrial life, while acknowledging that different physical conditions could possibly give rise to different forms of life, some of them unfamiliar to us. The harsh conditions of the planet Mars give us an opportunity to re-imagine life in physical conditions different to our own. However, a study of the history of life on our own planet has revealed how much its primitive life-forms changed its harsh early environment making it conducive for hosting more complicated organisms. While these processes lasted millions of years, it spurs us to imagine how it would be possible to re-engineer a planet and its environment in a shorter timeframe to make it more habitable for humans.



If 500 years ago travel across the oceans became routine and led to the “discovery” of the new worlds, it is probably reasonable to expect that within a similar timeframe human missions to other solar planets would become feasible. In imitation of our first fathers, it is important for us younger Jesuits to dream big, and to begin developing the necessary resources to enable a future Jesuit mission to Mars.

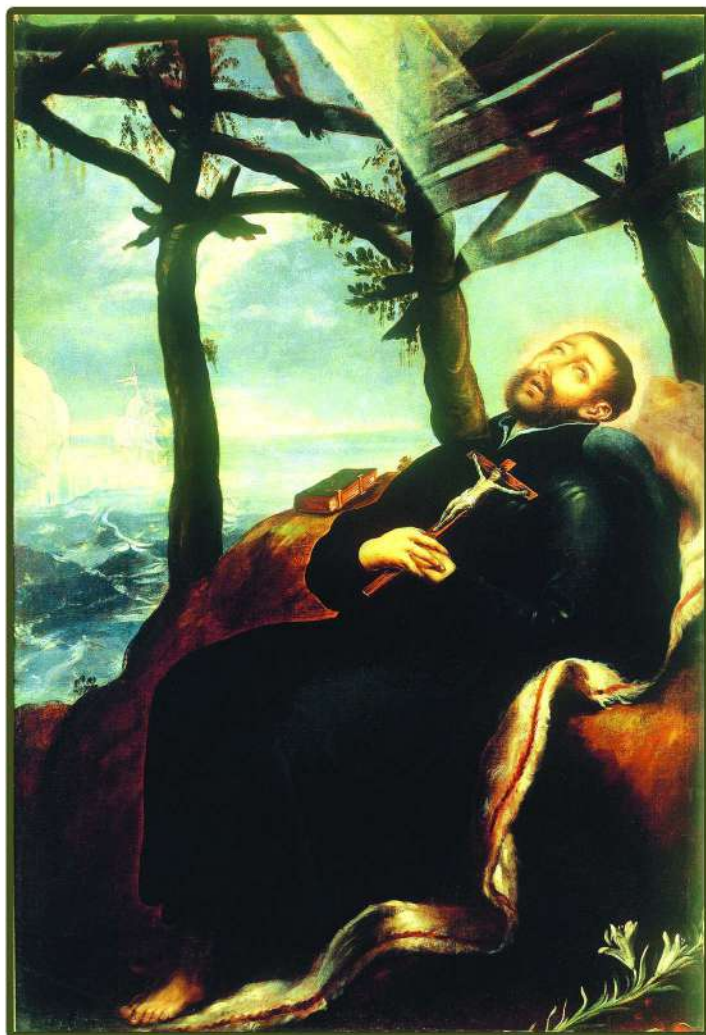
Fr Richard D’Souza SJ, belongs to Goa Province. He is the staff member of the Vatican Observatory, an Astronomical Institution. He is a scientist who recently discovered that Milky Way had a “sibling galaxy”.



THE FIRST JESUIT MISSIONARY TO INDIA

St Francis Xavier was the first Jesuit missionary to arrive in India. He arrived in Goa on May 6, 1542. He was the greatest Roman Catholic missionary of modern times who was instrumental in the establishment of Christianity in India.

His later visits included Ceylon, the Molucca Islands, the Banda Islands and the Malay Peninsula.



Saint Francis Xavier is well known as a man of great desire and zeal despite of the difficulties he faced, he stood free and courageous before the powerful...

GROUND LEVEL TO MARS

A CHOTANAGPUR MODEL

The Need of the Hour

The "GURUS" of Chotanagpur

To walk in the footsteps of Jesus, St. Ignatius enkindled in his followers a fire that can subsume the world. He seems to have said: "Go and set the world on fire". I would like to recapture the fire and zeal of the Belgian Jesuit Missionaries, who showed the way to help Adivasis to stand up for their rights in Chotanagpur.

Fr. Constant Lievens SJ (1856 - 1893)

The Guru of the Adivasi

"Here I am, send me" said Fr. Constant Lievens, who burnt himself out by his labours in the crusade of defending the fundamental rights of the Adivasis. Fr. Constant Lievens was like Moses for Chotanagpur who stood by the Adivasis starting the Co-operative Movement in the Chotanagpur region, especially in Ranchi. He restored the tribal land rights, identity, and dignity in a radical way. The Bible verse "Now I am sending you my messenger to liberate my people" (Ex3: 7-10) would be best suited for Fr. Lievens.



Fr. Herman Rasschaert (1922 - 1964)

May be called the Guru of Reconciliation between Muslims and Hindus

"Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit." In the early of 1961, he was appointed as the parish Priest in the region of Kutungia where harmony between the Hindus and Muslims was threadbare. That was the time when the Pakistan Muslim community accused the Hindus in India of the alleged theft of a Holy relic of the Prophet Mohammad from a mosque in Srinagar in Kashmir. The Hindus from Bangladesh were persecuted and were left with no option but to quit the country. The tension among Hindus and Muslims reached boiling point. They wanted to take revenge on the Muslims in India and started rumours that 'Pakistan had declared war on India'. Many Muslims were attacked and killed during the communal violence. The Hindu-Muslim riots had forced hundreds of Muslims to take refuge behind the low boundary wall of a mosque at Gerda, a village under Fr. Herman Raaschaert's parish. Deeply distressed, Fr. Herman rushed to the scene. He tried to negotiate for peace and save the refugees, repeating, "Killing people is a grave sin, stop this madness". Hundreds of people were also slaughtered along with him. A great missionary and an upright man died a martyr for peace!

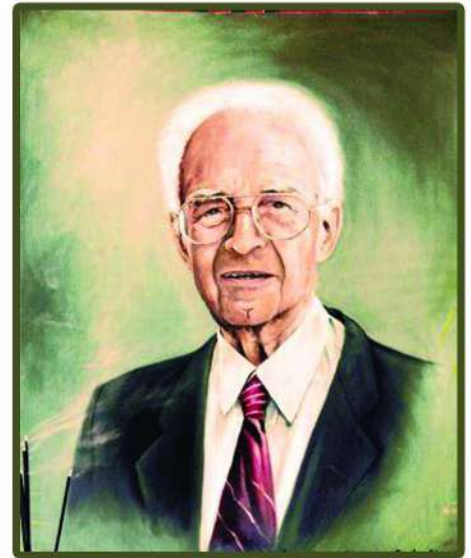
Go and
set the world
on fire



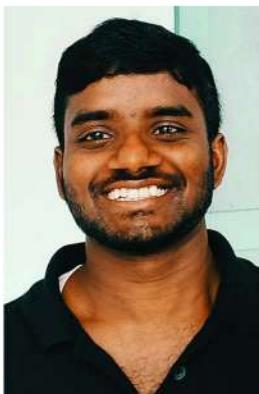
Fr. Michael Vanden Bogaert SJ (1928 – 2009)

A Management Guru

With his multi-talented personality, he prepared himself to teach management in our educational institutions. In 1963, he took up his first job as the Director of Xavier Institute of Social Service (XISS) Ranchi. Later on when he did his Ph.D., it was titled "To stand together and to sit together: the Case of the Chotanagpur Catholic Mission Cooperative Credit Society". This title shows how enthusiastic he had become in the cause of the uplift of the Adivasis. The 'Vikas Maitri' in 1967 and the Integrated Rural Development Course (IRDC) in 1975 bear witness to his preference for the deprived. The National Adult Education Programme in 1970 and Entrepreneurship Development Programme enabled the poor to toward self-employment. He established Xavier Institute of Management, Bhubaneswar, Orissa and Xavier Institute of Development Action & Studies. He wanted these institutions to uplift the poor. He died in 2009. He lived like "leaven in the dough" a theme he preached upon quite often.



For the Mission to Mars, we need persons of the calibre of Fr. Constant Livens who conscientized the local Adivasis into signing the Chotanagpur Tenancy Act to protect their 'jal, jameen, and jungle', Fr. Herman Raaschart, who laid down his life to promote communal harmony among Hindus and Muslims, and Fr. Michael Vanden Bogaert, who sought ways to give equal opportunity to the aboriginals to come up in life. It is persons with "guts, grace and gumption" who will be ready for any Mars and will be the game changers wherever they get missioned. If our early Gurus succeeded in bringing about change on the ground level, can we not be ready to play the role of game changers in our own Mars!



Sch. Arun Prasath I SJ, belongs to Jamshedpur Province is pursuing his second year philosophy at JD, (DNC) Pune.

JESUITS

LATEST



VENTURES

TRIPURA JESUIT MISSION

THE GRACE OF THE HOUR

ARCALI

A NEW BOAT INTO THE SEA OF SOCIAL WORK

DIGITAL JESUITS

**PROMOTING FAITH AND JUSTICE THROUGH
TECHNOLOGY AND COMMUNICATION**

TRIPURA JESUIT MISSION

THE GRACE OF THE HOUR



Fr Babu Paul SJ

"Go, therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, (Mt. 28/19)" The mission has been continuing for the last two thousand and twenty years and it has finally reached us. The Universal Apostolic Preferences – Showing the way to God through spiritual exercises, walking with the excluded, Journeying with the youth, caring for our common home - are the expressions of our mission today. The Province had an inner movement to have a mission outside the Province and the desire became a reality in the year 2018 when the Kerala Province decided to respond positively to the call of the Bishop of Agarthala, Latin Diocese Rt. Reverent Lumen Montereio CSC. Fr. James and I were chosen and sent to begin the mission. After being in Tripura for the last thirty three months our deep feeling is that He has been doing wonders. A great realization of the 'magnificat' rises within us. I am attempting to make a brief personal reflection on my life in Tripura.

Go therefore
and make
disciples
of all the
nations



An Experience of a Spirit-led Life:

A new land, a new culture and literally nothing but only ideas were our first experiences. With great enthusiasm and a little anxiety, we both landed in Tripura and were given accommodation in Kumarghat parish, a Holy Cross parish to stay for two months. We learned how to read and speak Bangla, the State language and began searching for a plot of land to start our mission. We landed in a village called Jamtolbari and began staying in the village after two months.

A new beginning:

We began to feel that we now have something to do, we have people around us hoping that they would be able to improve their lives through our intervention. The people and our interaction with them energized us to begin our life every day. It is the Spirit that led us towards this village. In the beginning it was very gloomy and barren but now we realize that the Spirit has led us to the right place to get rooted and to flourish for the kingdom of God. The Jamtolbari, a Christian village where the Spirit led us gave us a foot hold and enabled us to frame a mission and vision statement for our presence in Tripura.

An experience of reading the Gospel in the context of the people around us



In this life we find our greatest comfort living in the midst of danger, that is, if we comfort them solely for the love of God.



The innocent children who are deprived of good education, the youth who are not motivated and the families that are poor and struggling, the tribal community that is exploited by the dominance of the Bengali population were all the burning issues when we considered formulating our mission and vision. God opened our hearts to the grim realities that people faced and inspired us to respond effectively for the well-being of the people around us.

We learnt to read the Word of God in their mother tongue and listen to the Spirit speaking through the life of the people around us. The children who are very loving and innocent prompted us to begin remedial classes and nursery in the village. It is going on well now and has spread also to nearby six villages. Many children are benefitting from the fruit of our work. We were able to identify many youth who could be trained as animators and collaborators. With their help our remedial classes are going on well.

The energetic youth, who had plenty of time and nothing to do except spending time on their mobile phone for entertainment, gave us the motivation to begin spoken English classes, soft skill training and youth animation. The youth who are doing their studies are given help to improve their academic performance.

We take care of the Catholic community and Father James has now been appointed Parish Priest of our own parish, St. Ignatius Parish, Kailashahar. The people are men and women of simple faith and it is the first generation of a Catholic community. It is our task to build them up.

We collaborate with the Sisters of St. Joseph of Annecy. Their presence allows us to offer more services in the area of health care and nursing. Health care was the need of the place and God provided us the way to meet their requirements. We get excellent cooperation from the people.

An experience of living our Jesuit life fully with greater satisfaction

Xavier wrote while in the mission "In this life we find our greatest comfort living in the midst of danger, that is, if we comfort them solely for the love of God." He was successful because of his ability to mix easily with persons of varied social classes, races and beliefs. (Debra Mooney, Who Was Francis Xavier? A Modern View of his Life and Work).

As we were growing and getting rooted in Jamtolbari, we were invited to take up a tribal school in Jampuijala, near Agrathala, the capital of Tripura. A thirty year-old school but poorly managed and, therefore, attracting very few students. Though the school had State recognition up to 8th class, there were only 83 students. But since it appeared a good opening towards the tribal area, we decided to take it up and now we are running it from June 2020 onwards. The school came into our hands as a gift and we believe that it is a gift from the Divine. There are hostels for both boys and girls and we get a chance to train them well. In the school also we get the collaboration of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Vincent De Paul. They are doing wonderfully well. We feel great satisfaction every day though we live with limited resources. However, the people give us a greater hope and challenge. It is a "holy disturbance" to go ahead in this territory. Our visits to the nearby villages give us a lot of opportunities to feel one with them. We too feel good when we look at the life of the people with whom we live and how it is changing for the better because of our presence.



An Experience of Total Surrender to God

We began from scratch and now we have two places of work with various activities. At Jamtolabri we focus on remedial education in many villages for the education of the backward and poor children. We offer them soft skills and other training for both girls and boys. Our parish has five villages under it with a nursery. We take care of many families in the form of providing them a livelihood. In Jampuijala we run a school given by the tribals exclusively for the tribal people. We have hostels for both the boys and girls. In just two years and nine months we were able to grow through God's grace. We were fully open to the reality and totally free to take up any challenge for the development of the people in Tripura. "Let things be done" has been our attitude and experience. That itself is doing wonders. Seeing the crowds, Jesus was moved to compassion and was ready to surrender his life for the benefit of the people. We too undergo the same emotions when we are with the people and offer our life for them. It is a struggle to learn their language and be part of their culture but the fruits that we see in our lives become very rewarding. It is only a beginning. We have miles and miles to go before we reach home.

Life has become very simple. Our needs are very few. We learn to live within our limitations and brokenness. We adjust within the limited facilities. We learn to be contemplatives in action.

Fr Babu Paul SJ, belongs to Kerala Province. He is the pioneer and the Co-ordinator of the Tripura Mission

ARCALI

A NEW BOAT INTO THE SEA OF SOCIAL WORK



Stepping into Literal Peripheries

In social work, we talk about venturing into the peripheries. Periphery may be a symbolic word to describe the state of a particular group of people. But when it comes to fisher folk the word periphery has both symbolic and literal meanings. When we consider the geographical location, they all live in peripheries - the sea, which is at the periphery of any given landscape. Madurai Province which is known for its pioneering ventures in all possible areas of social work, somehow, until recent times, never set its foot squarely on/in the seashore area. Once Fr. Jebamali became the Mission Superior of Chennai Mission, he expressed his desire on starting a new mission among the fishing communities of North Tamilnadu. In the year 2019 June, Fr. Philip was assigned to take up a feasibility study for the same purpose. Based on the study, Chengalpattu and Vizhupuram Districts were chosen as their working area, as 90% of fisher folk communities belonging to these areas were found to be below the poverty line.



Fr Philip SJ

Three Key words

The new mission is named 'ARCALI' (Accompaniment for the Rights of Coastal Areas through Leadership Initiatives). ARCALI is a literary Tamil word which means sea. ARCALI's slogan is 'Accompany 'n' Assist'. Here we identify Accompaniment, Assistance and Leadership as three key words for ARCALI's mission. Accompaniment is the best we could provide to our target people. Our traditional social work terms like Empowering, upliftment, etc. seemed to be vocabulary coming from the upper-class mentality. As a humble social worker, what we could provide to our people is Accompaniment. A constant accompaniment with our target people will take us into deeper commitments. Assisting connotes 'not that we lead and people follow us' but 'let people lead and we assist them in whatever possible manner'. If we want to have any sustainable and ongoing changes in the villages, we ought to promote local leadership. When we have well capacitated and committed local leadership, wonders would take place. That is why ARCALI sees 'capacitating the traditional marine fishing gram-panchayat leaders' and 'organising the women from inland fishing villages into a forum' as its primary task. The success of all the other initiatives would depend on the depth of this primary task.



Our Perspectives and Strategies

Identity Centre for Fisher Folk Empowerment and Coastal Environmental Protection.

Vision Building self-reliant, just, dignified and eco-friendly communities

Mission Accompaniment for the rights, life enhancement and cultural preservation of the fishing communities and protection of coastal environment in North Tamilnadu.

Target People Our target group is divided into two: One is the marine fisher folks. These are traditional fishing communities who are involved in sea fishing and related activities. The other is inland fishing communities who only fish in the back waters. They are not allowed to fish in the sea. They do backwater fishing and other available kinds of work. They are mostly Dalits and Tribals.

A constant accompaniment with our target people will take us into deeper commitments. Assisting connotes 'not that we lead and people follow us' but 'let people lead and we assist them in whatever possible manner'. If we want to have any sustainable and ongoing changes in the villages, we ought to promote local leadership.

Our Objectives

1. Improving knowledge and enhancing access to entitlements
2. Gaining access to quality education and jobs
3. Networking with NGOs, likeminded organisations and movement to initiate environmental activities and also to work towards policy level changes.
4. Stopping the infiltration of fundamentalist ideologies in the coastal belt and sowing the seeds of constitutional values.
5. Documenting and propagating the unique elements of coastal lives and important issues, etc. through print and visual media.
6. Taking care of the neglected elderly folk and young widows in the coastal villages.
7. Organising the inland fishing community under one strong forum.

Our recent activities

In July 2020 four part time staff were appointed and ARCALI slowly began its mission. Usually education and children are the best entry points into any new villages that we target. We did the obvious. 250 general knowledge questions and answers were printed and distributed to 20 villages. Prizes were distributed to all who appeared for the exams. This gave us an entry into the villages. Evening study centers were started in 15 villages. During the cyclone we distributed relief materials worth rupees 500 to 730 families in 35 villages. We organized 15 inland fishing women into a self-employment group and gave them rupees 4000 each to start a small scale business. Two tailoring training centers were established in two villages. With the view of organizing the inland women into a forum, consultative meetings were held with the women representatives. ARCALI also had consultations with 50 village Panjyat leaders from 20 marine fishing villages. From them, a group which would represent the village issues to the Government officials was formed. Once in 15 days, plastic waste from the seashore are cleared up. Need and problem analysis is done in 36 villages. Part of promoting the values of the Indian constitution, memory competitions were conducted for school going children on the preamble of the Indian constitution. Pamphlets on the importance of the Indian constitution were printed and distributed around a 50 kms stretch. Periodically, we provide legal assistance to the fishing communities with the help of competent lawyers. The remarkable achievement of ARCALI, within some 10 months of starting its mission, could be, 'Arcali gaining the confidence and acceptance of the 20 marine fishing villages, and 15 inland fishing villages.'

ARCALI

***Accompaniment
for the Rights of
Coastal Areas
through
Leadership
Initiatives***

ARCALI's slogan

***Accompany
'n'
Assist***



Awaiting the Unfolding

ARCALI just now has started to crawl. It requires lots of capacitation and collaboration to start its marathon run towards attaining its vision. The roads are long, our legs are weak, but we will never give up walking. This is so because we believe that our cause is noble. We may have our perspective and strategic plans. But, when it comes to social work, newer ventures may unfold before our very eyes. Arcali awaits this unfolding ... with hope and love!

Fr. Philip Kumar SJ, belongs to Chennai province, is the founder of Arcali Mission, Chengalpattu, Tamil Nadu.

POSA: Raymond, I'm impressed with your passion for the frontier missions.

Sch: Thank you, Father.

POSA: Which place would you like to opt for?

Sch: Not the moon but to Mars, Father.

POSA: Are you pulling my legs, Raymond?

Sch: Father, there's enough talk about earth and moon. Let me talk more about Mars in my book.

Sch. Vicky Lal S.J, belongs to Patna Province.

DIGITAL JESUITS

PROMOTING FAITH AND JUSTICE THROUGH TECHNOLOGY AND COMMUNICATION

We are aware how the world has shrunk with the advent and the ever growing World Wide Web. Out of this massive network that connects every cellphone on this planet is this tiny little tool called the social media. I call it tiny, because it is in fact, a small part of the entire web network. It may be tiny but it is indeed very powerful just as a neuron in our brain which is the basic building block upon which our body functions. The social media is all about technology and communication connecting every smart device on this planet. I would love to quote the motivation speaker and the author of Socialomics), Eric Qualman: "The power of Social Media is that it forces a necessary change." It was here that the Scholastics of the South Asian Conference felt the need to venture into the Faith and Justice Ministry through technology and communication to reach out to youth and families.



Sch. Joshua D'Souza SJ

The origin of this novel idea was stimulated by the online retreat hosted by JCSA and, more generally, from a need to cater to those affected by the pandemic, through communication and technology. As the sophistication of technology and communication keeps nurturing the mindset of the current generation in various ways, we felt that it is our prime duty to accompany them through the digital world. All of us need to tune in with the superfast growth of artificial intelligence along with understanding its pros and cons.

We have come a long way ever since we started this journey. We did begin our journey taking up the issue of Fr Stan by showing our support through social media storms whose analytics have shown us a positive reach and outcome. We also proudly have been the front runners in starting prayer for Stan (A Candle Light Prayer) which now has been taken up by other Provinces. The Hashtag (#Standwithstan), our very own creation, is now making waves worldwide. The wonderful posters on Stan and Lenten Reflects that you see doing the rounds on the internet is the fruit of the hard effort put in by some of our talented Scholastics. We have received official support from JCSA and are now very much a part of it. This is a venture that is run by Scholastics and is all for our Scholastics. The event "Cheers with Berchs" very well showed the wonderful bond among us Scholastics bringing the entire Scholastic contingent of the South Asian Assistency under one roof of the online platform for an evening of fun



and frolic celebrating our patron Saint St John Berchmans. During advent last year, we had organized a series of advent talks which culminated at Christmas with our "4G Jingle Bell" competition choc-a-bloc with a plethora of activities. We were enthused by the fact of having more than 1000 participants in this event. We also have been offering webinars on various topics ranging from social justice, peace, and social media through our collaboration with the top Jesuit Institutes in the country. Webinars like "Peace is your Right" done in collaboration with the Centre of Humanities XUB(Xavier's University Bhubaneswar) and "Social Media & Me" in collaboration with Indian School of Media and XIE(Xavier Institute of Engineering) Mumbai, and the like are some of our stand out events. One of our proud achievements has been our collaboration with "Jesus Youth" for a Taize youth movement prayer which was a serene and a grace-filled event.

As a part of the team of Digital Jesuits Coordinators, I am really glad to have taken up the opportunity to be a part of this wonderful venture. It has helped me in many beautiful ways, be it in connecting with my Scholastic friends from all across the country, helping me with regard to developing my communication skills, or firmly rooting me in my vocation. We are always on a lookout for Scholastics who would love to be part of Digital Jesuits, wanting to grow and who are ready to give themselves generously in helping this ministry grow. Yes, we are growing and the future for Digital Jesuits looks exciting.

The Scholastics of the South Asian Conference felt the need to venture into the Faith and Justice Ministry through technology and communication to reach out to youth and families.

Sch. Joshua D'Souza SJ, belongs to Bombay Province is pursuing his second year philosophy at Satya Nilayam, Chennai



Results on Planet Mars

Magis is our Spirit
God's Glory is our merit
Into the stars, to Mars, is our flight
Beyond any boundary, goes forth our light!

Waterless Mars matters the least –
Christ's, our life-giving water counts the most
Marching to Mars we make a mark
Christ is the Life, to the lifeless flock!

With this hope we venture forth
Not turning back is our fight
Mission impossible, be not our barrier
To the Almighty, we stand noble warriors!

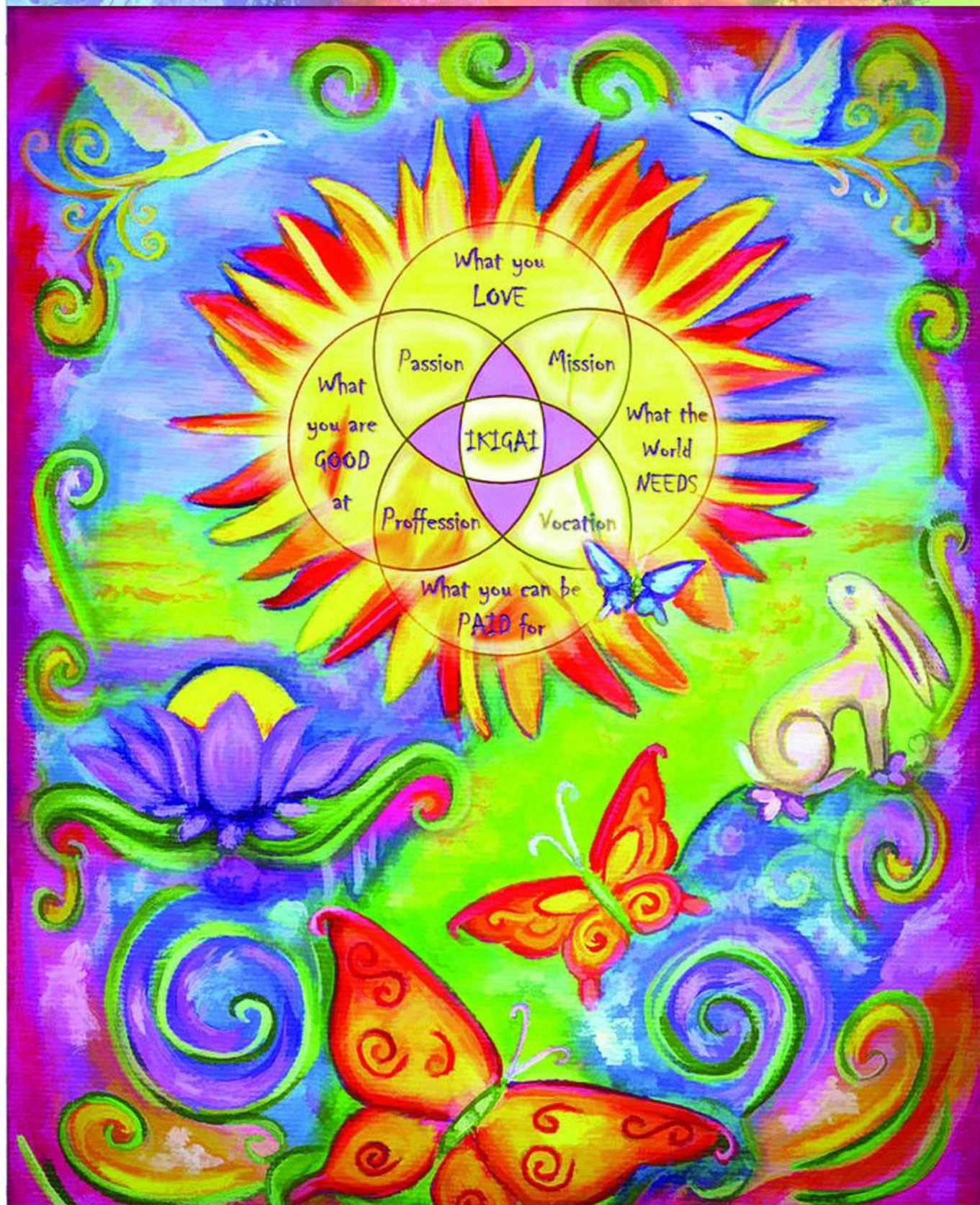


Sch. Alex G SJ



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IKIGAI IN JESUITNESS



LOVE

VOCATION

PASSION

MISSION

PROFESSION



Sch. Royster Monis SJ

IKIGAI

***Finding happiness
in all that we do
and spreading
that happiness
to all***

Our era has not remained the same over the last five centuries. Zealous Jesuits have been redefining what it is to be a true Jesuit. Indeed, the spark lit by the first Jesuit companions has spread worldwide. The then "School Masters" have left their homes and today are lovingly living and reaching out to those living in the peripheries. The service of faith that includes the promotion of justice is alive and active. In other words, Jesuits know the world not merely through books and newspapers, but also by engaging themselves in the uplift of the poor and the marginalized. Venturing into new missions and ministries, new lands, new cultures and, most importantly, readiness to step forward and respond to the need and suffering of the world, has become the hallmark of the Jesuits. This is indeed, the 'Ikigai in Jesuitness'.

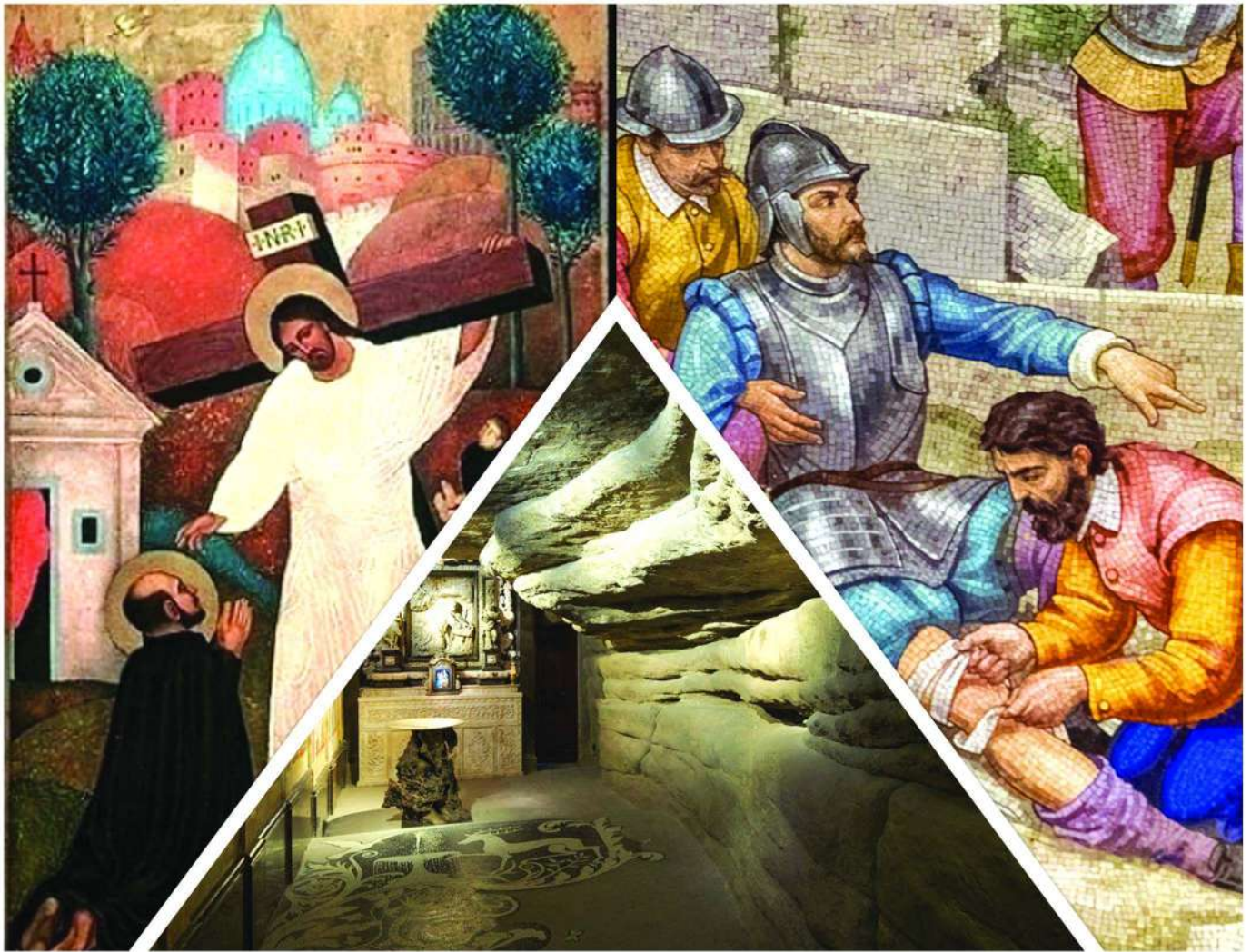
A Jesuit may simply define Jesuitness as a life on the move; one foot raised as depicted in some portraits of Ignatius. In other words, living a life of availability and of the Magis. On the other hand Ikigai stands as an energy booster. It is a Japanese term, which roughly translates as "the happiness of always being busy." I chose this term from the book Ikigai by Hector and Francesc not because it speaks about being involved in any work all the time but because it speaks about the happiness in any work we do or in any ministry that we undertake. I strongly believe that the Jesuit "contemplative in action" is nothing but finding happiness in all that we do and spreading that happiness to all whom we work with and to those we work for. In St Ignatius we have a prime example. He had that Ikigai (God and fulfilling God's will) in his heart. That Ikigai enabled him not to be embarrassed of sitting with children to learn Latin, to find spiritual happiness when he was imprisoned at Salamanca, to succeed in getting Francis Xavier into his band and, most of all, sharing his spiritual experiences with the world through the Spiritual Exercises. Have you come across any Ikigai moments in your life? St Ignatius, perhaps, had very many of those experiences. Let's check some of them.

The dream shattering cannonball

The turning point in the life of St Ignatius was the tragic incident of being hit by a cannonball, which shattered his dreams of glory. While recuperating, he read the lives of Saints and their master Jesus Christ. All these events transformed Ignatius. I am sure, any Jesuit who has undergone similar "cannonball experience" have committed themselves more radically for the mission. Fr. Stan Swami is an example. Being accused in the Bhima Koregaon case, he is imprisoned. Today he has become a symbol of those who struggle for justice in our country. He continues to inspire many more into this mission on behalf of the oppressed. The prison did not shatter Fr. Stan Swami's mission, instead strengthened it.

The Cave of Manresa

One more important place in the life of St Ignatius is the cave of Manresa. He discovered here not about himself but himself. He became aware of the movements of different spirits. He felt very close to God just like a child to his Father. He saw everything new in Christ. We all need some Manresa experience. Such experiences form the foundation of our lives. They make us realize that we belong to God and we are His children. They enable us to pursue our dreams of a transformed society.



La Storta Experience

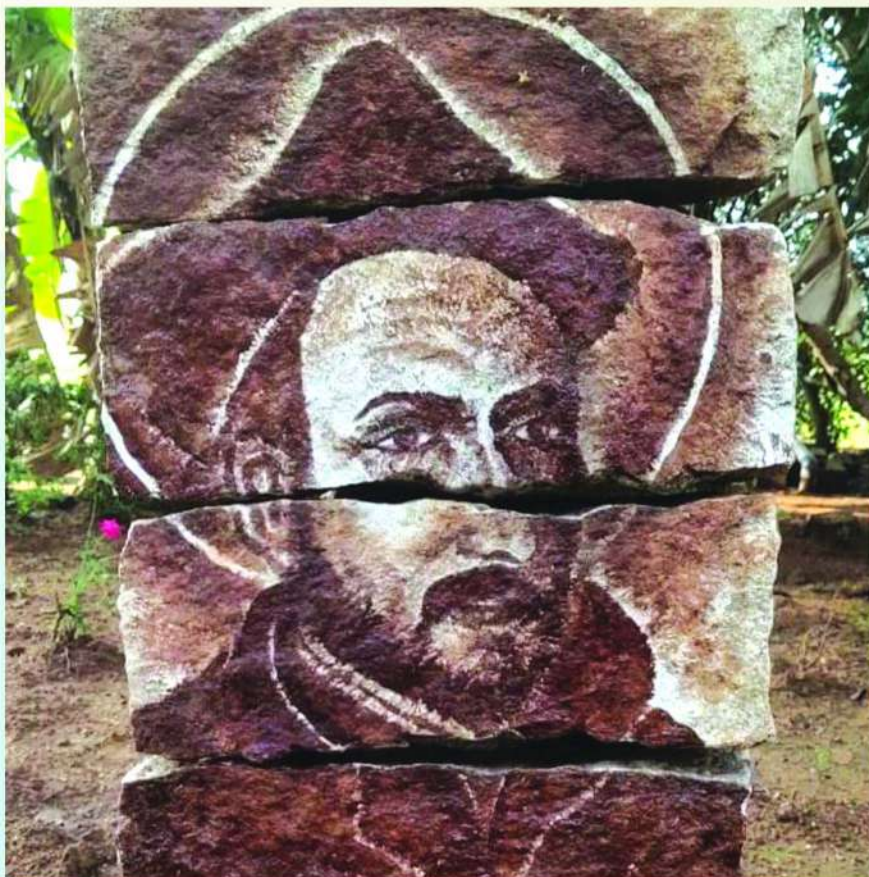
"I will be favourable to you in Rome." These words perhaps remained engraved in the mind of St Ignatius. It was not a pre-planned meeting for Ignatius. However, during the counter-Reformation time it turned out to be the assurance of God's mighty work in bringing humankind back to Him. In today's world, the limited knowledge of a human cannot easily meet the needs of humanity. Total dependence on God and utmost faith in Him would surely help the great human minds to cooperate in God's salvific plan. We need to realize that what is God's is God's and human beings cannot find ways to change it. Only the humble heart can hear God saying "I will be favourable to you."

St Ignatius has left behind not just his texts but his spirit which untiringly served God. His "Ikigai" decided his mornings, noons and evenings. That very spirit has been inspiring every Jesuit since his very first day. At the end, I would conclude quoting St. Pope Paul VI "Wherever in the Church, even in the most difficult and extreme fields, at the crossroads of ideologies, in the social trenches, where there has been and there is confrontation between the burning exigencies of man and the perennial message of the Gospel, here also there have been and there are Jesuits," (Address at the GC 32). When we aim high, let our effort be a bit higher than that. Let us not wait for success in life rather let's make our life itself a success. Let our Ikigai act.

Sch. Royster Monis SJ, belongs to Karnataka Province is pursuing his second year philosophy at Satya Nilayam, Chennai

"Whatever you are doing, that which makes you feel the most alive...that is where God is."

Ignatius of Loyola



Rock art by Mr. Bernald



S T O R Y

"Mr. Marcus, you are late! The countdown for take-off has begun", said the staff at the Boarding Gate.

"I paid for it my first space travel!"

"Sorry, Sir!"

Heartbroken, Marcus looks through the glass window and notices another spacecraft being prepared for take-off. His face glows again. He hastily rushes to find its boarding gate. It was too late to buy a ticket and there was only one way to sneak into the spacecraft. He quickly gets into action. Wearing a black cassock, he manages to squeeze through the crowd until he is stopped by the armed Security. "Sir, how may I help you?"

"I have been called to give the Sacrament to a passenger."

"Very well, Sir."

With the first obstacle cleared, he enters a large room packed with news reporters, cameramen and many more. Even this crowd didn't get him to enquire about the flight details. He manages to find the lone passenger, distinguished by a strange suit, talking to his family members. Marcus takes him to a private room for official transactions.

"I have come to give you the Sacrament."

"Well, thank you. But, I am an atheist."

"That's okay. I need to save your soul." Saying thus, Marcus takes out the water sprinkler and lands a blow on his head. The astronaut sees stars and collapses.

Marcus puts on the space suit and the helmet. He dresses the astronaut in cassock and gets him seated on a chair. Marcus moves out into the public forum. He greets the people and wishes them good health and God's blessings.

"But, why are you wearing the face mask and the helmet?" enquired a reporter.

"Just in case, there is coronavirus in space." There was a wave of laughter in the hall. Marcus triumphantly walks into the spacecraft amidst cheers and applause.

Once inside the cabin, Marcus takes his seat and is awestruck by the huge display and other control switches before him.

"Welcome on board, Alex. I will accompany you in our maiden journey to Mars", announces the computer.

Marcus' eyes pop out. He had just wanted a space ride and not a trip to another planet. Fear grips him as wild thoughts of the lonely red planet flashed before him.

"Alex, is everything okay? We are beginning the countdown. 10, 9"

"If I were to abort now, I would surely end up in jail for this adventure. It's better to end up in Mars. At least they will bring me back someday and by then I would have a name", he thought to himself.

"3, 2 1" and the rocket blasted off from the launching station.

Marcus had no clue how to survive in a spacecraft. Thankfully, there were manuals titled "How to Eat, Sleep, Survive etc." that kept him alive for the seven month-long journeys through the abyss. He had to survive on dehydrated freeze-dried food and not pizzas.

"3, 2, 1 ... we begin the descent on Mars".

After a brief turbulence and a few moments of fright, the spacecraft landed on the red land.

"Congratulations, Alex! You are the first man to land on Mars". Marcus was speechless in the face of this achievement.

"I want to contact earth".

"Surely".

He sends a voice message which takes four minutes to reach earth. Meanwhile the Roman Curia had been informed by NASA about the misadventure of their "missing priest". The first signals are received at Vatican observatory and decrypted.

"AMDG.... IHS ... Please respond".

"Fr. Marcus SJ, finally, we hear from you. You have made us proud by venturing into the frontiers of space."

"Thanks, Fr. General. Please get me back!"

"Oh, no! You've made it to Mars where no Jesuit has ever reached or set foot on. Now it's your mission to live there and tell us more about Mars and the cosmos."

Left with no option, he takes selfies against the background of rocks and craters.

"One Martian crater shall be named after me", sighs Marcus as he kept admiring the poster titled 'Jesuits on Moon' in the corridor of Vinayalaya.

"Stop dreaming and get into class". Marcus hears these words as he sees the Juniorate Dean through the corner of his eyes.

Ah! These Jesuits!



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IS THIS MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 2021!

And Jesus said to them, "Go into all the world and proclaim the Good News to the whole of creation."

– Mk16: 15.



Sch. Vivian Almeida SJ

These words from the Gospel of Mark is the foundation for evangelisation and cross-cultural mission work in Christian Theology. From March 2020, almost all of us have been under a national lockdown. And it has been nearly impossible to celebrate the Eucharist regularly in the Church. Another side effect is that it led as well to reduce interaction between people. Does this mean that we cannot 'go out into the world' to share our Christ experiences? Given the gloomy scenario we are in after the Second Wave of Covid-19, do we not have some 'good news' to share anymore? It makes us wonder whether these words are appropriate within the context of Covid-19 pandemic. Or given the context of the current pandemic, is the mission given by Jesus a 'mission impossible'?

When we are told to 'Go into all the world', does it imply that we need to go out physically and reach out to people in person? Today, with access to the internet, it is possible to reach out to people from the very comfort of our homes. Sharing our reflections and positivity through our blogs, through our videos or even through social media, could help us get in touch with people all around the globe. And, after a year of such interaction, many of us have become quite conversant with the use of such platforms.

Sharing our reflections and positivity through our blogs, through our videos or even through social media, could help us get in touch with people all around the globe.

While it is easy for us to 'go out' and connect with so many people, what exactly could be the 'good news' that we wish to convey? With the rising number of infections and large number of deaths, is there any news that could be good enough to convey? In fact, time and again, we hear people say that they are not very happy with celebrating the Eucharist online as they cannot partake in the sacramental Communion. Some others point out that while the online platform has in some way helped in shifting the emphasis on home -churches, the community aspect of the Eucharist was missed by many. Besides these, there are so many others out there who have either lost their loved ones or still others who haven't been able to even meet their loved ones. Many of us have been overwhelmed with fear and negativity; some of us are even on the verge of depression. So, is this really the right time to reach out and preach the Good News?

In fact, this is an ideal time where we need to follow the exemplary discipleship of Mary. She always had faith in Jesus; whether it was at the Wedding at Cana or the Post-Resurrection Apparitions. Her faith must inspire in us the same Christian Hope even when things are apparently hopeless. Can we instil a similar hope in people around us?

The mission today is the same as it was 2000 years ago i.e. to spread the Good News that we are all LOVED and SAVED by God.

We did it once during the first wave of COVID-19 pandemic, when the Church had to adhere to various legal restrictions on social gatherings. As a result, we had an online celebration of the Eucharist and emphasis was laid on the family as being a mini-Church. Like Mary, we need to keep these things in our heart and ponder over them from time to time.

Most importantly, we need to remember that the mission is not limited to only preaching the salvific nature of the Gospel. It is also meant to communicate Christ's Unconditional Love for us. In fact, he has commanded us to love one another selflessly. We could communicate this love by spreading positive messages (or even forwards), through regular video calls or chats with our loved ones or even relatives, friends and neighbours. The good news in this context would be to let people know that 'we care!'

Given the 21st Century that we live in, it is important to realise that our mission is no longer restricted to our parish or even geographical boundaries. The online content we make or share, are accessible to people all around the globe. To add to it, not only is there online content available now, but there is also a variety of content available. As part of our mission, it is our duty to responsibly share relevant and appropriate messages with others.

To sum it up, the mission today is the same as it was 2000 years ago i.e. to spread the Good News that we are all LOVED and SAVED by God. History has shown how the Church has time and again adapted itself to using various methodologies of communicating this message. It is now our responsibility to go out, yes, even virtually, and proclaim the Good News. Whether this love is communicated through the use of Scripture or personal reflections, through reaching out to those in need, through lending a listening ear or through long chats; it is important for the message to be communicated clearly and effectively. This is our mission, if we choose to accept it!



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Jesuit Mission to Mars and the Ingredients Required



Mr. Antony Jeevarajan

F E A T U R E A R T I C L E



The image shows the return vehicle from Moon's surface during the Apollo Mission.

Our organization is privileged to select astronauts for the Moon and Mars mission, train and rehabilitate after their return. Since I was brought up in Tuticorin, I was reminded of the 'Three Year' missionary work by Fr. Francis Xavier, S.J., in the coastal region of Tamil Nadu from 1542 to 1545 and he is credited in preaching the 'Good News' to the community with limited resources. The fruits of the labor can be seen even today in this region and I am one of the beneficiaries. The passionate and dedicated service of Jesuits in the past and present in the predominantly Hindu state with intrinsic impediments will bring significant returns manifold for now and a long time to come.

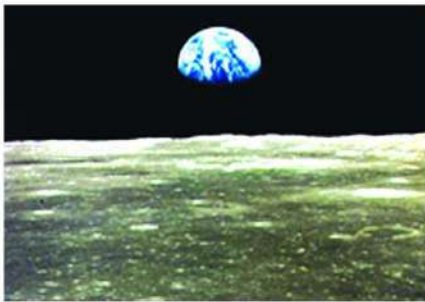
Let us look at 'Mission to Mars': Earth and Mars are in close proximity once in two years. If we want to land on Mars with minimum travel time, the starting time is an important factor. It takes six months to travel through 'Space' with the following hazards, namely, microgravity, exposure to ionizing radiation (solar and Galactic cosmic), isolated closed spacecraft environment, distance from earth preventing medical and technical support, harsh spacecraft environment (higher carbon dioxide levels, limited water and food supply etc.,). Before returning home with minimum travel time of six months, humans have to spend eighteen months on the surface of Mars. Assuming that there is no easy access to water and oxygen on the surface of Mars, we have to carry all the essentials with us. Once we are in the Mars' orbit, we need to descend and land on the location that is rich for exploration activities. Recently, we heard about the 'seven minutes of terror' video, when 'Perseverance' rover landed on the surface of Mars describes the degree of difficulty in precision landing.

The primary objective of Jesuit Mission is to preach the 'Good News' to the human race. The ultimate goal is to go back to the Father's home, eternal life. The vehicle designed for the latter should be ready at all times. In Mars mission, the return vehicle should be ready and careful attention and maintenance should be done at regular intervals.

Let us come back to the humans and technology needed to accomplish this mission. We may have a crew of four, consisting of a pilot, engineer, scientist and doctor along with all the tools including the 'return vehicle'. We could visualize as five fingers of our hand. All of them have multiple roles for a successful mission. Before the selection of the crew, they were nurtured and brought up in the world with a set of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) training along with optimism, self-regulation, and performance

under stress with leadership/followership skills. The team cohesion is very important and a number of training regiments were provided as a team ranging from Isolation studies in a closed environment for several weeks, Wilderness living and exploration, Antarctica exploration, Cave exploration, and a six month stay in International Space Station (ISS). For a successful mission, situational awareness, high-skill integration, open communication and mutual commitment are important ingredients.

I mentioned about the hazards of the mission and these have associated risks to the humans and the hardware and these risks have to be mitigated during the mission. Based on the experience that we had during all the ground and spaceflight studies, we have a set of mitigation strategies to minimize the risks to have a successful mission. While we are on the surface of Mars, we are completely autonomous with minimum medical and Mission Control support. One of the important risks is loneliness and associated mental health issues. The training and real-time monitoring and mitigation protocols will be an essential element to alleviate the risk.



The Earth and Moon picture taken from Apollo 8 spacecraft in 1968.

When we look at the Jesuits' mission, it is purely about saving souls, preaching the Good News and bringing the kingdom of God on earth. Their only motto is anything and everything for the greater glory of God.

Pope Francis said when it comes to interreligious dialogue, which nowadays is more and more urgent, scientific research on the universe can offer a unique perspective, shared by believers and non-believers, which helps us to reach a better religious understanding of creation.

The image of the Earth taken from Mars



The Mission undertaken by Jesuits in this world is challenging and dangerous and the benefits to the human race are unimaginable.

One of the astronauts mentioned during this journey that we came all the way to the moon to discover our own fragile world that we call home. During Apollo 11 mission, Mike Collins calls Mission Control "Hi Houston I got the World in my window". Upon his return, he is burdened with the responsibility and urgency to take care of the world in any and all possible ways to protect it for the current and future generation.

Even though the human mission to Mars is very arduous and challenging, the truth discovered during this journey will benefit our human race for many generations. The Mission undertaken by Jesuits in this world is challenging and dangerous and the benefits to the human race are unimaginable.

Like preparing humans for various mission to the space, the recruitment and preparation of Jesuits too is a life-long mission. The Novitiate is filled with aspiring Jesuits with diverse talent and deep spiritual commitment. They are trained under various circumstances with outstanding rigor. Ignatian discernment process plays a major role during the entire training process. Excellence in all dimensions is a unique characteristic of Jesuits. In addition, their laser-focused Jesuit Mission with unsurpassed high-skill integration, open communication and mutual commitment are essential ingredients for their success around the world. In every stage of formation each Jesuit is expected to be formed in virtues and values along with the expected outcome of any stage of formation.



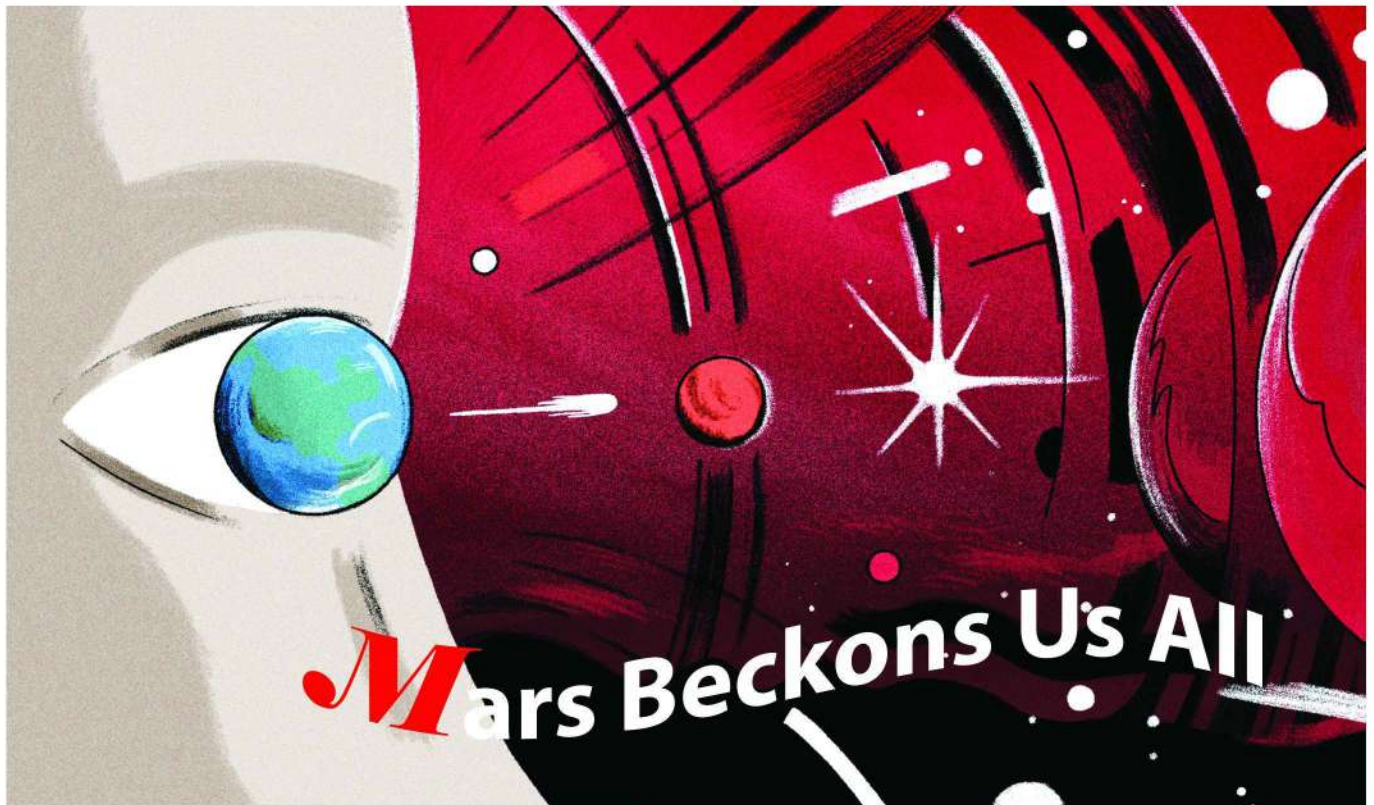
Finally, in any life-long mission effort,

- ☐ Passion,
- ☐ Perseverance and
- ☐ Patience

are the essential elements for a satisfactory outcome.



**Dr. Antony Jeevarajan Ph.D, Deputy Chief, Biomedical Research
and Environmental Science Division, NASA**



Mars Beckons Us All

The ancient Greeks called it Ares
 The Roman's, the God of War
 It is as red as blood
 During war that's shed.
 It's dust storms howl louder
 Beckoning us to do and dare!
 Mars we know is cold and dry
 Far, far from eco-friendly.
 This wasn't always the case
 Mars' a terrestrial place,
 Has planet earth's many features,
 Earth, mountains, caverns
 Yes, water on its surface !
 Lots and lots of place
 Yet sadly nary a human face!
 High above the earth's emerald green turf
 Her dust storms and reddish surface
 Indeed beckon us to make haste
 To discover, so much to explore
 To many, it may seem so much more
 To meet our expectation in a race against time,
 To give to all of good will thrills beyond their ken.
 Jesuits dream of mission to Mars
 Driven by an inner impulse to reach the frontier
 Not for acclaim or fortune but to heed
 The call of mission to Mars - the final frontier !



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 second year philosophy at JD, (DNC) Pune.**



Jesuits Mission on Mars



Sch. Denzil Fernandes SJ

Till recently, Mars did not excite many. No one thought of staying in Mars, not even exploring this planet. However, things have changed. Today this planet is the focus of scientific interest. The reason for this shift in interest is the discovery of water on this planet. According to Brother Robert Macke SJ, Mars provides one of the nearest, easiest and biggest laboratory to search for life. For many years there were speculations that Mars housed life forms, but with the discovery of water these speculations seem nearing reality. Many science enthusiasts today believe that the Mars may become a place of migration for humans. On Mars, the atmosphere does not show signs exactly like that of earth and people might have to get acclimatized. In spite of all these problems, science is keen on getting people on Mars.

When Mars opens the doors to welcome human beings, what will happen if the Jesuits happen to land on Mars? What role will they play then? And how can they be effective on such a planet?

As I see the following options will be important for the Jesuits on Mars: First, to make Mars a place where equality reigns, that is, people of all faith, race, and nationality experience equality and live in harmony. Second, to ensure that there is no poverty. Third, to maintain the planet free from pollution. Fourth, the Jesuits can contribute in terms of research as the planet will have a lot of new things to explore. This spirit of explorations stands in the tradition of our early fathers who traveled to unknown places and documented

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STORY

My Appointment to Mars



Sch. Mariyanus SJ

I began to surrender. It is not my mission but it is His mission. He knows what to do and how to do it and how to use me for His mission.

One fine morning I received an email on my mobile. It read "I am happy to appoint you to the new mission in Mars." There was no explanation. The appointment did not make any sense and I was totally confused. The more I thought about it, I became more confused and angry. However, there were also times when I began to wonder about the mission to Mars. Sometimes, I was lost dreaming about this new mission, though I did not have a clue of what that mission would be.

Then suddenly I was overcome with fear: what if I failed, what will happen to my reputation. In utter confusion and fear, I began to question God: "Why have you done this to me? Why not to others?" These questions did not help me. They did not yield any satisfying answers. So I began to surrender. It is not my mission but it is His mission. He knows what to do and how to do it and how to use me for His mission. Slowly and gradually, I became consoled and began to find meaning and to prepare myself for the new mission.

Even now things are not clear, but I trust that in due time everything will be revealed and I will receive the required grace for the new mission.

Every new appointment is like an appointment to Mars. One falls into the valley of deep confusion, not knowing how to react, whether to be sad or happy. We know clearly that there is no other way but to accept it. Our Jesuit constitution uses two beautiful metaphors for appointment or transfer and teaches us to be like a corpse or an old man's cane. At the point of receiving a new appointment, one needs



Thus new appointments such as one to Mars help us to revitalize our attitude to mission, handed down to us by our Father St. Ignatius, the Society and the constitution.

to allow oneself to be like a corpse or an old man's cane. This means that one has to forgo his own will and desires. The vow of Obedience teaches us to surrender to the will of God which comes through our superior. This entails sacrificing one's own will. Our early Fathers have left us the legacy of obedience. They were willing to go anywhere in the world at the command of the superior. And for Jesuits, obedience to the Pope is sacro sanctum, his mere wish is a command for the Jesuits.

There is a common saying 'seeing is believing.' The same is true with our appointments. We find it hard to believe till we see it in black and white. Since our entry into the Society to until we die, there will always be rumors and anxiety about appointments. In our stages of formation our appointments may be predictable. Though sometimes there are surprises. However, the surprises are much more once a Jesuit is in apostolic life some of us become more graceful in the practice of obedience. Others, unfortunately, try to surreptitiously find ways to circumvent the vow of Obedience. For the latter group, it looks, over years, their ego gets bloated. Thus, unfortunately, we come across bad examples in the Society.

It will be too naïve to think that I am not like that or that I will not be like that. If we are not careful, we can end up in the same camp. It all starts from the early stages of our formation. Perhaps one wanted to become beadle of the house but was made in-charge of the dog house. Are we humble enough to accept the disappointment instead of spreading the venom of discontent? We undergo so many experiments to grow in humility. But, nothing is going to change unless one wants to change. St. Ignatius says if one wants to practice obedience, when in kitchen, take and obey orders from the cook. It is easy to obey the Rector or Provincial but much harder to obey someone whom we consider as our friend, someone who is just a junior to us or a co-worker.

Mission to Mars calls for creativity. Every pristine mission or virgin soil calls for nothing less than innovation. One of the ways in which innovation comes is by relating everything to our mission. Whatever we see--tree, water, film, light, dust, animal, relate everything to mission. This will lead to passion and a dream, resulting in creativity and innovation. Sometimes enormous issues of the world make us frustrated and make us think that nothing can be done on this earth. Thus new appointments such as one to Mars help us to revitalize our attitude to mission, handed down to us by our Father St. Ignatius, the Society and the constitution. The Society is ready to undertake anything for the sake of mission. We are called to be at the frontiers. If Modi can think about spreading his kingdom to Mars, why we can't expand our vision and mission to Mars?

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Jesuit Mission to the Unknown: *Challenges and Possibilities*



Mission will seem impossible when vision is vague. Vision gives a clear cut strategy to accomplish any mission. Taking a leap in any field involves a certain amount of risk. Jesuit mission is risky and full of adventures; challenging one ever harder to pursue the goal. In undertaking their mission, Jesuits never bend down, but stand firm in storms of any forms.



Sch. Suranjan Baskey SJ

Jesuits came together as companions of Jesus approximately 500 years ago. Their mission and vision have been gradually changing according to the need of the hour. The first mission of the founding fathers was to protect the Church from heresy and to strengthen and direct people through the Spiritual Exercises. As they grew in number and spread out to different parts of the world, the ministry also underwent a certain amount of metamorphosis on the basis of arising needs. In the 21st Century, Jesuit presence is found almost in every field such as pastoral work, education, scientific research, youth ministry, social work, serving the refugees, , in digital field , in each area of the Universal Apostolic Preferences (UAP) and many others.

Ignatius' companions mostly focused on propagating faith and defending the Church. Mission broadened its horizons as days went by.

Jesuits have travelled to the corners of the world to evangelize people and impart Christian and moral values. They have achieved great glory over the centuries. Francis Xavier and De Nobili were the frontier missionaries to visit India and South Asian countries to lead people to Christianity. Ignatius' companions mostly focused on propagating faith and defending the Church. Mission broadened its horizons as days went by. They felt the need for venturing into new missions. Jesuits were called 'School Masters' in Europe during the 17th and 18th centuries. They established numerous educational institutions to educate people. Education is a tool to dispel the darkness of illiteracy. Jesuits understood that education provides the power of knowledge to rise against injustice and inequality and to eradicate discrimination in society. Transformation of the individuals and society is a key focus of Jesuit education today.

Fr. Pedro Arrupe introduced Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS), proven to be one of the fruitful and significant Jesuit ministries. JRS is existing worldwide and doing wonderful work among migrants and refugees.

UAP is a structure given to Jesuit Provinces and Regions. They can prioritize their mission according to the needs of the Province. In order to prioritize the ministry, every member has to be involved in the process of discernment. UAP has given a new direction to Jesuit ministries at the regional level.



Los Jesuitas aux islas de Nicobar
L. Gesuiti nelle Isole di Nicobax Los Jesuitas en las Islas de Nicobax

Jesuits need to creatively envision their mission in such a way to face challenges and to create a lasting impact.

The world today has gone online. Jesuits need to pay attention to this shift to the online. The world is going to be more digitalised than ever before. The pandemic has enhanced the usage of online platform in every sector. Educational institutions, the corporate world, the IT sector and even religious institutions are pushing for digitalisation. People never thought of attending virtual mass, recollection and religious seminars. It is true that Covid 19 has forced us to tread new paths. Hence, Jesuits need to think of adopting online services more effectively. The online platform is a modern weapon to communicate, influence, inspire and impart knowledge to people.

To carry on our mission in contemporary India is not easy due to the interference and oppression from the powers that be. Honest people inspired by the gospel values are trapped and imprisoned. Fr Stan Swami, who was working among Adivasis for their rights, was arrested under UAPA act and is still languishing in the prison. Jesuits need to creatively envision their mission in such a way to face challenges and to create a lasting impact. The online platform provides an avenue to propagate faith and proclaim justice for all who reel under various forms of injustice.



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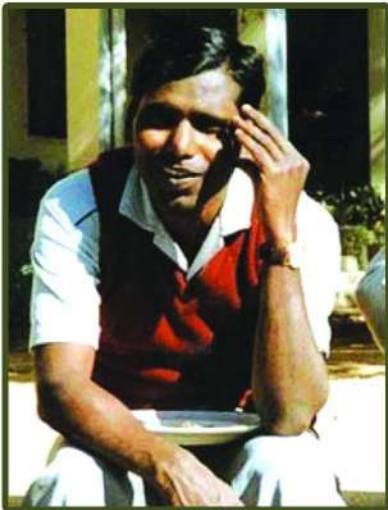
A T Thomas: A Daring Missionary



Sch. Sushil Bage SJ

Fr. AT Thomas SJ is popularly known as AT by all in Hazaribag province. According to Fr. George Thomas SJ, his companion has this to say – “A T was an angry young Jesuit – angry because he could not take a situation of oppression and exploitation; angry because he saw a lot of poor people suffering due to poverty, sicknesses, illiteracy, caste system and injustice; angry because the powerless people were violated and deprived of their basic human dignity.” Many of his companions remember him as fiery, passionate, committed, charismatic and revolutionary agent of God.

Fr. George SJ, in his article in JIVAN magazine of November, 2020 issue states that AT, during his theological studies in Pune started something called Praxis Oriented Theology (POT). As part of this new initiative, he along with his companions stayed outside De Nobili College on an experimental basis. They read books of liberation theologians like Gustavo Gutierrez, Leonardo Boff, Juan Louis Segundo, Jon Sobrino and others who had popularized the phrase ‘Preferential Option for the Poor.’ He was a young man with radical thinking, very enthusiastic in social action and highly influenced by Decree 4 of GC 32. He was always present to the joys and sufferings of people at the periphery.



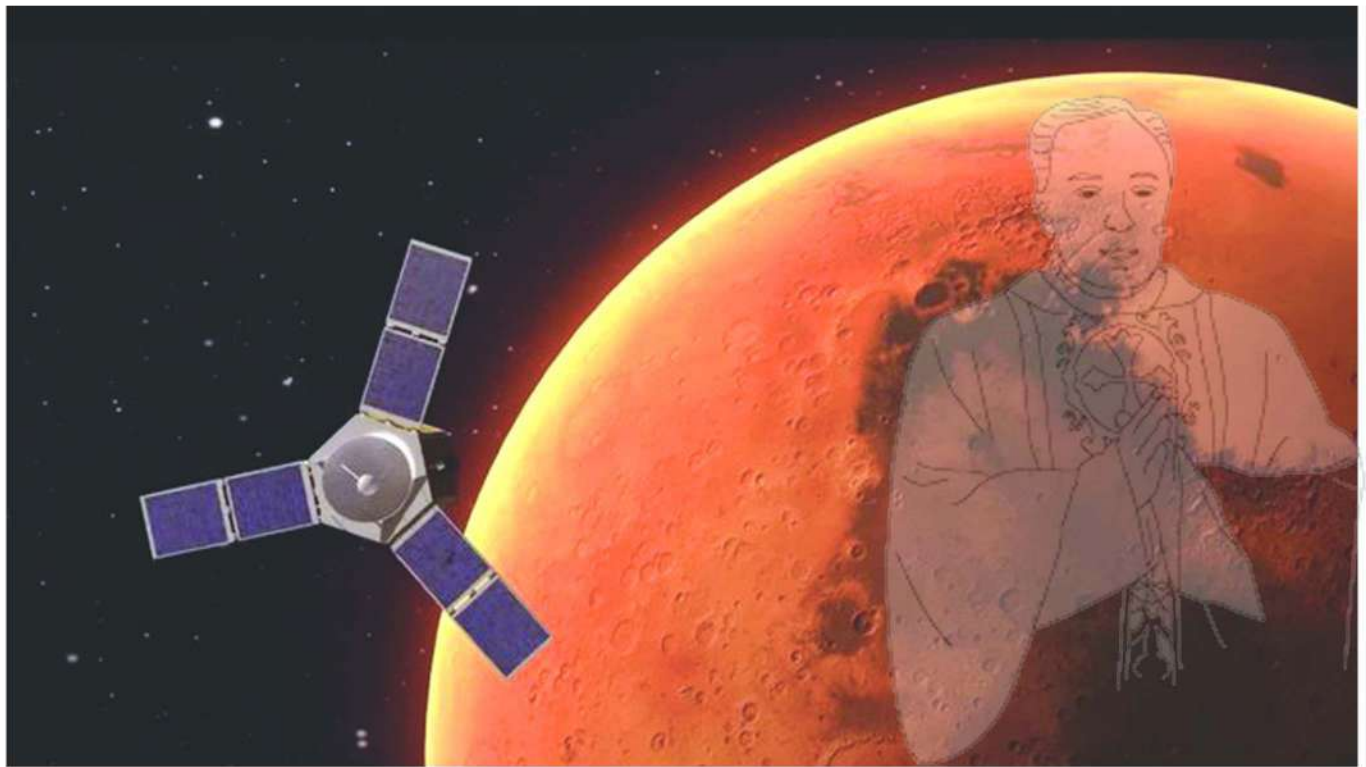
AT’s anger was transformed into a faith commitment promoting justice. He founded Dalit Vikas Samiti (DVS) at Patra, a centre for Dalit mission. He worked in areas such as formal and non-formal schools, adult literacy, women’s development through Self Help Groups (SHG) groups etc.

In the area where AT worked, members of the Dalit community was denied of their land rights and their dignity as human beings. Anyone who tried to oppose the prevailing practices, faced fierce opposition from landlords and the upper caste. AT filed a case against the oppressing group. Many from the village (Beltu) were jailed. After their release from the jail, they joined hands with Naxalites. Once, when AT was on his way via Sirka village, they caught him and bound him up. They took him into a deep dense jungle and mercilessly beheaded this companion of the poor.

Locals remember every year of 24th October, the day of AT’s martyrdom, as ‘Shahid Diwas’. The Dalits in this area celebrate him as their saviour and redeemer.

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A Story of Jesuits' Way of Proceeding

"One world is not enough for the love we have for Christ" was a sentence that inspired many Jesuits in search of an adventurous mission. They were seeking not their own glory but God's. They were seeking to live their lives meaningfully and fruitfully in Jesus Christ. We know how Ignatius, as a valiant warrior, wanted to win the whole world. This fire and zeal that Ignatius had were kept fully alive even after his cannonball moment and, much to say, it was continuously alive till his very death.

When Jesus spoke to the Emmaus disciples, they said, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?" (Lk 24:32). In the same way, while St. Ignatius was speaking to his companions, his companions too experienced the same fire. In one of Ignatius' conversation with the young Pedro Ribadeneira, the first biographer of the saint, Ribadeneira commented: "You speak Spanish with an Italian accent". St. Ignatius replied: "Pues, Pedro, que haremos á Dios?" translated as "Well Pedro, what are we to do for God?" For St. Ignatius, the love for Christ was the deciding factor. This is the love that has moved the Jesuits to go to the frontier missions where others dare not.



Sch. Joseph SJ

In 1581, when Pope Gregory XIII welcomed the General Congregation, he said, "Your order is spread throughout the entire world. Anywhere we look, you have colleges and houses. You direct kingdoms, provinces, indeed the whole world. In short, there is in the day no single instrument raised by God against heretics greater than your Holy Order". Though Pope Gregory XIII had made this statement nearly 450 years ago, still the Church and the world look up to us as Jesuits who are the instruments of God in this changing world.

When Pope Francis addressed the Jesuits, he said, "We are called to go to the frontier missions and live our love for Christ". This is our way of life. We are called to live our love for Christ not in a mediocre way but in a prophetic way. Hence, this one world will never be enough for the love we have for Christ. And this love for Christ is the mission to Mars experience!

The mission to Mars is not an every day endeavour nor everybody's cup of tea. It takes courage to go to Mars. I consider the mission to Mars as a mission of passion. A passion which Jesus underwent to show how much he loved us. A passion which Jesuits especially our martyrs underwent to show how much they loved Jesus. The mission to Mars is not a hypothetical dream but the lives that our forefathers have lived and this is the same call for us to live.

Let me cull out a few examples from the lives of our forefathers which enable and ennoble us in our way of living. In 1590-91, during the great Plague, St Aloysius Gonzaga saw a plague-stricken man lying in the street. He carried him on his shoulders to the hospital. This eventually led to Gonzaga's death. However, he called it 'the moment of paradise'.

In the early centuries after the approval of the Society of Jesus, many Jesuits sacrificed their lives to defend the faith. They lived out their unique and extraordinary love for Christ by giving up their own lives.

Peter Claver, the Patron of Slaves, when he worked in Colombia, had personally baptized around 300,000 people (in groups of 10) and heard confessions of over 5000 slaves per year.

When Francis Xavier and his followers entered India, they least bothered about their lives but wanted to convert as many as they could. Thus, they wanted to save as many souls as possible.

When Matteo Ricci came to China, he was threatened by Emperor Wan li. But Matteo Ricci, using his knowledge in the fields of Mathematics, Astronomy, and Geography attracted many and was able to become a friend of the Emperor. In 1602, he created a world map with Chinese captions, named 'Kunyu Wanguo Quantu', and gifted it to the Emperor. This map was circulated throughout the Ming Dynasty with the Emperor's seal on it. At present, there are six original copies of the map available in the Museum of Matteo Ricci in China.

When Pope Francis addressed the Jesuits, he said, "We are called to go to the frontier missions and live our love for Christ". This is our way of life.



All these Jesuits undertook the Mission to Mars during their lifetime. The Mission to Mars is a call for us to live our love for Christ in its fullest form. Hence, we may fulfill the call of GC 35, D2, No:1, "The Society of Jesus has carried a flame for nearly five hundred years through innumerable social and cultural circumstances that have challenged it intensely to keep that flame alive and burning. Things are no different today." The Mission to Mars is to be lived and we already have models to follow. For instance, the life of Fr Stan Swamy, in prison, is a "Mission to Mars experience". Let us keep the fire alive and burning.



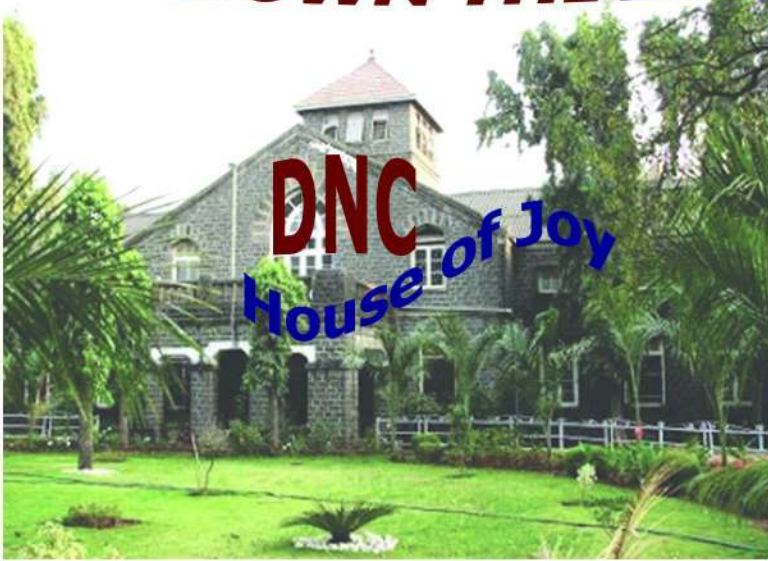
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MISSION QUIZ

1. In the context of Indian Mission, whose name is always linked with the question of acculturation/inculturation ?
2. Valignano was inclined in favour of which mission.
3. Who is the Jesuit Brother, who painted the chapel of St. Aloysius, Mangalore?
4. Saint Francis Xavier referred to India as
5. Former General Pedro Arrupe says that this is the guiding principle of inculturation.
6. The German Catholic missionary, John Baptist Hoffmann, was instrumental in the enactment of this Act in 1908.
7. St Francis Xavier died on a little known Island called
8. This is the first Religious Order to establish themselves in India
9. He is known as " Apostle of Missionary Journey"
10. Who was the Jesuit who fell ill so that Xavier took his place
11. From which place, Francis Xavier broadened the rim of his apostolic horizon
12. Which group of missionaries came to Bengal
13. Name the Jesuit worked in the court of Akbar
14. Name the friend of Edmund Campion who landed in Goa in October 1579
15. Pedro Estevan, a Portuguese, compiled a grammar book for which language
16. He is the grandnephew of St Francis Xavier who became a missionary to India
17. The first European, De Nobili, mastered which language?
18. Who was the first Indian Jesuit, to become a Malabar Brahmin
19. How many documents did Francis Xavier sign before he left for India?
20. Name the date, month and year Ignatius of Loyola was elected as General of the Society of Jesus
21. Who was the first Jesuit Missionary to don/wear the dress of a sanyasi as a sign of inculturation.
22. Who is known as the apostle of the fishery coast
23. Who was known in India as Veeramamunivar
24. Name the author of the book, "The Historical and Geographical Description of Hindustan"
25. Name the first two Portuguese Jesuit Missionaries who visited the North East
26. Name the Jesuit who was called "The Apostle of the Hos"
27. Who was the Belgian Jesuit who came to Chotanagpur like Moses saying " I have come down to free them"
28. Who was the first Adivasi Archbishop of Ranchi?
29. When is World Mission Sunday celebrated?

Answers will be published in the October month's DNC Times issue.

DOWN THE MEMORY LANE



**Discovered
Nurtured
&
Communicated**

Epicurus seems to have said, "A noble soul occupies itself with two things: wisdom and friendship, of which, the former is a mortal good and the latter an immortal one." In DNC, I found both wisdom and friendship in abundance. I recall the warmth and the welcoming spirit of my companions which had impressed me the most when I first arrived in DNC.

With so many different groups and associations, instead of being lost in such a vast house, I found my identity in friendship. The Living Group, Province Group, Ministry Group, like-minded groups and others left me convinced what the early Jesuits had said, that the Society is a 'Society of love.' With regard to this, the memories that I cherish the most have been that of the after-meal recreations, heart to heart sharing with companions, the outings and excursions, the cultural celebrations in the house, the community days, the team-effort in various activities, and the faith sharing. Therefore, the inter-cultural mingling, an exchange of ideas and views, exposures, the learning and unlearning, created in me, as well as in others, altogether a new way of being.

The DNC Staff, with their constant accompaniment in the crucial areas of our growth, has been an amazing experience as well. The monthly recollections and spiritual directions were a great help to sustain our spiritual life. The study guides also were very friendly and filled with, what we say in Greek philosophy, Sophia and Phronesis. Through their guidance and acumen we were able to arrive at what Gadamer termed 'the fusion of horizons.' It was through the group studies and the sharing of our thoughts that we grew in philosophizing rather than studying philosophy as yet another subject. The openness of the study guides and companions, their critical appreciation for the efforts applied, and their acceptance of differing views are what has proved most helpful in studying philosophy staying in DNC.



Sch. Prosenjit Gomes SJ

Thus, studying Philosophy became interesting when it was coupled with exposures, team work, and debates and dialogues. It helped me to better integrate the matter covered in the classes, apply them to my daily life, and form a working vision of life that I can take with me in my life. Today, I can gladly say that DNC helped me realize the three C's of my religious vocation: Conviction, Commitment and Companionship.

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Dilse

Nahi

Chodonge

It's true. Time flies. It's hard to believe that I have spent three years here at DNC. I feel as if I just arrived here a while ago. When I first entered the house, it felt like I was standing somewhere close to a railway platform. The lengthy corridors create those illusions not just for me. The huge quadrangles too make you feel like you are left alone, never to be found again. However, the same building makes you one with it, with its warmth and care in the course of time. Indeed, it has been a really wonderful, enriching and learning journey for me. Though, our lives here moved with the reminding 'dhong' and 'trinnnnnnnnng' (bell sounds) before various activities, they imprint in us the great value of time. I am indeed indebted to Fr. Edward, a man who teaches through his actions, for his special support and encouraging words. The staff members here are more than friends to us, always ready to share their knowledge and talents. The unforgettable memories that each one carries along are the moments spent together during the community days, celebration of the common festivals and gatherings. These occasions are occasions for us to display our great talents, creativity, and indomitable spirit. At a deeper level, one always imbibe the attitudes of loving, sharing, community building, and spiritual growth. One roof accommodates all and provides for all. A very special thanks to Fr. Jacob, who showed care beyond boundaries. His kind gestures, availability, and dedication made us feel at home, the home that teaches us everything like a mother. We learn to use our freedom and learn to give our best in everything that we do. And, when the time comes to leave, DNC does not remain something standing outside ourselves but a memory that will bring a smile on our faces and solace in our hearts. With a grateful heart I pray to the Almighty that this home of love and care continue to inspire and motivate the soldiers of Christ.

Dn. Francis SJ, belongs to Pune Province.



House Events

Farewell: A farewell is a glancing of the past stayed in a place to start anew. A short programme that summarizes the entire years stayed with full emotional nourishment and the experiential energy flows within the hearts and minds of the members, expressed in full positivity and gratitude. The pick shared experience unfolds the community to start a new with hope. On 7th of March, we had a memorable send off to the beloved Rev. Fr. Edward Mudavassery, S.J., second year philosophers and third year theologians with a short felicitation in the evening. The bonding experience that evening were cherishable as the sharing were filled with gratitude.

Installation of New Rector:

On March 25, 2021, the day of annunciation, we had a handing over ceremony of New Rector. It was a day of profound 'Yes' of Mary, as Fr. Francis Pudhicherry, S.J. took over the responsibility of Rector of DNC. We had solemn Eucharistic Celebration. Fr. Edward Mudavassery, S.J., the predecessor energized the audience with his beautiful homily, stating on the word 'Yes' of Mary and the contemplation on Incarnation, portraying to us the trinity looking down the terrible situation upon the earth with compassion which is the same today. Her complete trust in God and in His will, in taking up the grate responsibility by her yes to God, is what we are called to follow today. The story of every disciple and a person is, in his or her fully trust in the Lord. Christ was also fully yes to God until his final yes on the Cross. In our context, are we ready to say yes to God or make excuses? The feast of Announcing during this time of Corona days, is growing through in faith and experience. A time for experiencing God, and maturing in our understanding, faith, discerning and decision making. God may be wanting to change the word. When the world was in jumbled situation, Mary was called and now, when the word is suffering with Covid-19. We are too like Mary called to say fully yes to our given situation. This Covid-19 has highlighted the evils that are present in the world in the form of hatred, communalism, classism etc.

A big thank to Fr. Edward Mudavassery, S.J., a man of prayer and deep love for the society, concern for individuals, simplicity of life, honesty in communication, a discerning attitudes who stands on the value of the Kingdom. He has worked the talk.



In the same Eucharistic Celebration on March 25, 2021, the New Rector, Fr. Francis Pudhicherry, S.J. invited and called us all to be rooted in our mission. The running theme within the constitution, he stated; is 'escreta-caritas' "discerning love," with this called to live this same grace in our vocation.



The central elements of Jesuit formation should, makes us spiritually, intellectually, physically and emotionally strong and truly be contemplatives in action. Today world needs a person of depth and a person of courage and prayer. We are called to have an attitude of Mary our Mother, ready to say yes in our given situation.

We wish Fr. Francis Pudhicherry, S.J. God's blessings as he shoulders the dual-responsibility as Rector of DNC and Reader at JD.

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Partners in Mission



Thanks to

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Christy J Peter SJ

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