

“What is next, then?”

**The Future of . . .**



## **DNC TIMES**

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A single individual is enough for hope to exist, and that individual can be you. And then there will be another 'you,' and another 'you,' and it turns into an 'us.' And so, does hope begin when we have an 'us?' No. Hope began with one 'you.' When there is an 'us,' there begins a revolution.

*- Pope Francis*

# jcsa

## Jesuit Conference of South Asia

To the Participants of JCSA,  
We know it won't be easy, but we also know  
you're up to the challenge. Best of luck to you  
dear brothers !

- DNCTIMES



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**NEXT  
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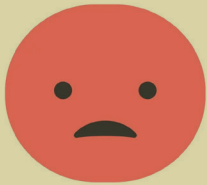
## Cultural



## Dialogue



Send your feedbacks to [dnctimes@gmail.com](mailto:dnctimes@gmail.com)



# Letters to the Editor

Some editors are failed writers, but so are most writers.

Dear Editorial Team,

Hearty congratulations for all the great planning and the execution of yet another fruit of the labour of love. The last issue indeed dwelled on the issue of consumerism in great detail. The layout and design too was outstanding. keep up the good work.

ARUL RAYAN SJ

Thanks for this excellent issue of DNC Times. It takes up a very relevant topic and involves recognized scholars as well as current students, both philosophers and theologians.

I'm glad to know that through DNC Times, a useful, intellectual activity is carried out. The future is bright!

FRANCIS PARMAR SJ

You are doing a wonderful job, a real face-lift for DNC times. I congratulate the Editorial board and the contributors for the very creative and meaningful presentation of precisely chosen themes coming up in every issue of DNC times. It gives us great hope for the future of the Society that the youngsters like you are more focused yet dynamic and open to the mission at universal level while the past generations are still struggling to patch for the loss induced by individualistic narrow mindedness. These types of global themes do make us reflect, time and again, the very meaning of life itself against the modern ideals of management of life and its success in an artificial mechanistic perspective of existence. Thank you and congratulations. Please continue your great effort.

ROY SEBASTIAN SJ

A very challenging issue. Congratulations and all good wishes.

JOSEPH MATTAM SJ

I am extremely happy to receive the online copy of DNCTimes. It is exburently superb, spectacular editing and relevant and timely contents.....Congratulations. I could sense your hard work. In spite of practical difficulties, you have done it excellently well. Continue to rock.

AMALAN SJ

# Editorial

DNCTimes | October 2020

**When we envision the future we are actually taking part in the creative act of God. We can justly consider that the future of humanity lies in the hands of those who are strong enough to provide coming generations with reasons for living and hoping.**

Isn't it a frivolous act envisioning the future, especially when we have become ever more conscious of the unpredictable nature of life? What is the point of speaking about the future when we have no clue what the life's basket holds for us? – These are some puzzling questions we had to face while choosing the theme of the current issue of *DNCTimes*.

Perhaps none of us would have imagined last year around this time that a catastrophe of this magnitude could be caused by an invisible tiny virus forcing a complete lockdown of the whole world. Many were taken by surprise; they did not know how to cope up with this situation and as a result they went into depression and even to the extent of committing suicide. Aren't these tragedies a result of the distorted thinking of the human mind?

First of all, our life is not an accident. Science has a brilliant insight to offer us. The second law of thermodynamics states that the tendency of the universe is towards chaos and disintegration. However, in order for you to be here and now, millions of atoms have come together in the most complex fashion in space and time. Moreover, you as a creature is so unique that the underlying gene patterns have so far never been replicated. They will exist only once. For several years [hopefully] these atoms will cling on to each other even when their ultimate tendency is to go apart. Indeed, our life is never an accident!

Thinking about the future is a strenuous activity. Often prospection comes with a tint of fear! However, we know that living in the present and then planning for the future enables us to take prudent decisions and in turn it helps us to be more adaptable. It gives us peace of mind as well. So mindfulness and prospection are defining features of human life and well-being. Having said that why thinking up can be fearsome at least for a few?

The problem is not with what we are imagining but how we are doing it. When we envision the future we are actually taking part in the creative act of God. Often we fail to see this dimension of human thinking. Many of us have experienced that there is a supernatural element working beyond our planning. Plans often can turn out to be for better or for worse. Be that as it may, if we envision a future according to the promptings of the Spirit then we can be open to accidents and chaos as well.

As Samuel Rayan points out in his book *Breath of Fire*, “When God's spirit brooded over the waters, chaos changed into cosmos. The Spirit can likewise effect this change in human hearts. The confusion and the chaos, the lack of beauty, can be transformed into a world of order, beauty and peace”.

**Nota Bene:** *We can justly consider that the future of humanity lies in the hands of those who are strong enough to provide coming generations with reasons for living and hoping.* - **Gaudium et Spes.**



*Rosan SJ*





## A Bolt From The Blue!

The Covid-19 global pandemic with its mandatory lockdowns and long list of protocols beginning with masks and social distancing certainly caught people all over the world off-guard. The Church was no exception. Nobody could imagine that an invisible virus could be so speedily and mortally infectious as to totally and globally disrupt the normal rhythm of life. And the virus would not respect any humanly made categories of nationality, power, position, class, caste and the like. It dealt a stunning blow to the world economy and rattled many a so called developed nations of the world.

# Church

**In the Post - Pandemic World**

**+ Anil Couto**

*Archbishop of Delhi*

This proves the precariousness of our life and the ephemeral nature of everything that we build here on earth unless we give heed to God's Word, his voice deep in us and the call of our Lord Jesus Christ to repent and believe in the Good News of God's Kingdom. The Church definitely has the prophetic responsibility to address this crisis situation from all angles and the theologians have an inalienable role to play in this area by directly confronting the powers that perpetuate injustice and evil in this world.

### Disruptions of the 'NORMAL' Church Life

As a community of believers the Church gathers together for congregational worship, celebration of sacraments, devotional practices, Sunday school, meetings of various church bodies and socio-religious-cultural activities of various kinds. With the lockdown all these 'normal' practices of the Church's life suddenly came to a halt and people were confined to their homes for four months and more. But the pastors and people discovered the use of information technology in a difficult situation offering people the opportunity of participating in the Eucharist and other devotions online from their homes, of course without the reception of Holy Communion. Reflections on the Word, homilies, counseling tips, catechetical instructions and many other helps were and are being offered online. Catholic pastors constantly kept in touch with their parish councils and found ways of reaching out to their people through church leaders and animators of the Small Christian Communities.

### An Emerging 'NEW NORMAL'

Has this become a new 'normal' for the community that they don't feel the need of coming to church and frequenting the sacraments anymore? Have the clergy become like 'fish out of water' not knowing what to do, because they have been deprived of their normal functions, as some critics allege? I don't think so. At least in the Archdiocese of Delhi people had expressed their longing to come back from day one and their joy knew no bounds when finally the parish churches were reopened on August 4 (some earlier also), of course with all the officially prescribed protocols. There may not be the usual practices and activities for quite some time but it doesn't mean they have lost their relevance. People are the holders of the *sensus fidei fidelium*, hence manifest deeper wisdom and better common sense than many armchair theologians. So many people voluntarily came forward to sustain their parishes with their regular contributions and to help the Archdiocese to take care of mission parishes.

### A Call To Leave Behind 'Complacency'

Nevertheless, the Covid-19 pandemic has definitely shaken the Church in India out of its complacency and made us all to pay serious attention to the way we want to shape the Church's future, of course with the guidance and light of the Holy Spirit. The humanitarian crisis unleashed by the lock down is too heart-rending and painful to be described in words. It needed an empathic response and I wouldn't hesitate to affirm that the Church in India joined hands with many other organizations and people of goodwill to reach out to the beleaguered people: poor migrant labourers trekking home to their villages or



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*Being the head of the church at the national capital, his voice is heard across various circles defending the positions of the church in various secular and spiritual matters.*

slum-dwellers jobless and starving in bastis or our own parishioners in need. Christian medical and para-medical professionals and other personnel all over the country showed great courage in their service to the Covid-19 patients; and some even succumbed to the deadly disease along with many other brave frontline warriors who laid down their lives in serving humanity. Likewise parish priests in different parts of our country have shown exceptional courage in ministering to Covid-19 patients and burying/cremating the dead along with all the pastoral care that such a situation demands.

### **Shining Examples of Gospel Witness**

I specifically mention here the great witness of the Missionaries of Charity Sisters who in different parts of the country have been in the forefront of providing basic necessities to the homeless poor and destitute; at least four Sisters have died of Covid-19 in their loving service to the poorest of the poor, the latest being Sr. Nicole MC the Regional Superior of the Ranchi Region who succumbed to the disease on July 27, 2020.

### **Towards A Radical Course Correction**

What does all this say about the future of the Church in India in the post-pandemic situation? There is a clear message to all Christians, irrespective of denominations, that henceforth our focus cannot be on putting up magnificent multi-crore churches and shrines or on increasing the numerical strength and enhancing the power base of individual denominations and churches but on utilizing the major part of our resources for the uplift of the poor and the downtrodden. This shift in priorities is essential for the authentic witness of the Church in India if we are to be faithful to Christ and his mandate to us to proclaim the Good News. Building the community - both Christian and human - is much more important from the evangelical point of view than putting up church buildings however splendid and marvelous they may be.

### **A Call To Become A Church Of And For The POOR**

The lockdown has resulted in a financial crunch across the table not sparing the Church which is very much part of human society. The self-financing educational institutions are badly affected as also self-financing hospitals. The contributions at parish level fell drastically during the four months of

the lockdown from March 25. The important lesson here is to live a simpler life-style, make do with fewer resources, cut down on extravagances and pool resources together for greater human causes. The pandemic has certainly taught the Church in India to share resources more generously at the parish and diocesan levels in a spirit of solidarity and she will have to move in this direction more and more in the years to come. What is more important to note is the fact that the pandemic has made the Church in India more self-reliant and less dependent on foreign contributions.

### **A Call To Greater Flexibility and Adaptability In The Church Practices**

Undoubtedly the social distancing protocol is adversely impacting all church meetings, large gatherings including marriages and funerals, Catechism classes, celebrations of feasts with their processions and socio-cultural events. This is an opportunity for the Church in India not to be attached to fixed ways of manifesting our faith but to look for other creative ways of doing it. The Holy Spirit will certainly guide us in the right direction if we sincerely ask for that grace.

### **Promoting Ecumenical And Inter-Faith Collaboration And Theological Reflection**

In sum, we have to be humble to admit that the future of the Church lies in God's hands. Let's take one day at a time. This calls us to be proactive day in and day out in serving humanity, caring for God's creation, strengthening the family which is the 'domestic church', focusing on the uplift of the poor and the downtrodden more than on grandiose projects which God does not ask for.

This vision of what the Church is called to be demands an ecumenical and inter-faith approach. The pandemic has made us conscious of the common ties that bind the people of all faiths and persuasions and the whole of humanity together as one family of humankind but in a diversity of cultures, languages, races and religions. The Spirit is calling the Church to a deeper reflection on her mission.

If all the energies of the Church in India are geared in this direction, I am certain, and I pray, that we will never be wanting in our witness to Christ and his Gospel in all circumstances.

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Why should we continue  
envisioning a bright  
future?

Just because the past  
didn't turn out the way  
we wanted, doesn't mean  
that our future can't be  
any better. Even the tiniest  
steps can have greater  
impact. And that is our  
Legacy.

*Ite, inflammate omnia.*

# UNFEARED FUTURE

Jesuit Perspectives on  
the future of Mission  
Dialogue, Education  
and Formation.

**FELIX RAJ SJ**

**STANY D'SOUZA SJ**

**MIDHUN J FRANCIS SJ**

**LAWRENCE FERNANDES SJ**



There have been always plagues, famines and wars, but the pandemic COVID 19, is the greatest challenge the humanity has faced after World War II. Like a storm, it has ushered in abrupt changes: the masks and physical distancing have engendered social distancing as well and the collapse of business has resulted in unstable economy; the closure of places of learning and worship has deprived people of their customary sources of strength; the suspension of vacations and family celebrations have also caused untold anguish and depression to many. What makes it still worse, is the uncertainty that is continuing.

By coincidence, we have celebrated the feast of the Pentecost amidst the lockdown. The context of the Pentecost was similar to that of the Covid 19. The apostles were huddled together in the upper room because of fear and insecurity. However, on the day of the Pentecost, something unbelievable happened, and they were totally transformed, and it made a huge difference for the future of the mission Jesus had begun.

It is the same spirit of Pentecost that seems to be prevailing during this time of the pandemic. There has been a sudden spurt of life among us. Humanity seems to have become aware of its primary concerns viz. life and survival. The human race seems to have got united regardless of all the boundaries: global discourses are held on health and hygiene, collective attempts are made to discover the vaccine, and many people have volunteered to be corona warriors in spite of the risks involved.

# let's define our future

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**STANY  
D'SOUZA SJ**

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POSA





I am happy to note that many Jesuits too became part of the corona warriors. By joining hands with many people of good will, the Jesuits too organized relief works; conducted awareness and accompaniment programmes, and undertook studies, especially on the migrants. I believe that these initiatives could be a good starting point to look towards our uncertain future.

Covid 19 invites us to read and discern the signs of the times, which seem apparently senseless. When I think about discernment, I remember the picture of the sleeping Joseph of the Gospels. Amidst all the difficulties, Joseph sleeps and dreams. He knows that the times are difficult, but they are not stronger than his God. I feel that Covid 19 invites us to be like Joseph, grow in deep trust in God who alone will show us the pathways to discern.

I am convinced that we need to promote intellectual and spiritual depth in our life and mission as the Covid 19 has revealed the superficiality and limits of our knowledge and achievements. Our formation, communities and ministries need to take this dimension seriously. We need to foster a habit of silence and prayer, reading and reflection in our communities and at the centres of learning, so that all, Jesuits, collaborators and all the beneficiaries will be equipped to discern and face the vicissitudes and vagaries of life.

The other important lesson that Covid has taught us, is about the primacy of life and adequate care of our health and happiness. Good health is ensured by nourishing and healthy food, exercise, rest and hygiene and happiness results when we live a disciplined and reconciled life.

However, our well-being largely depends on the well-being of others including that of nature. We need each other simply to survive. Still more, we need each other to love and find meaning in life. Our communities and

ministries must have a comprehensive plan of service to help others, regenerate the environment and renew ourselves. These are in sync with the mission of reconciliation and justice (RJ) given to us by GC 36 and the UAPs, which we must integrate into our life and mission.

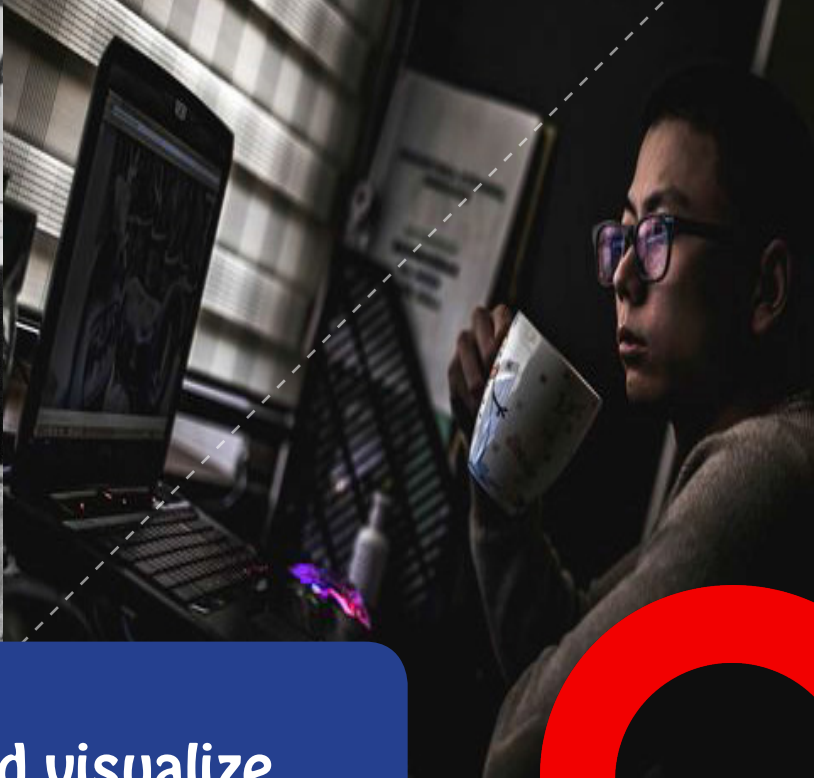
Covid 19 has forced humanity to be creative and innovative and adapt to the post-covid world: families will have to make major adaptations to their life and working conditions; new methods of teaching and learning, working and praying will have to be learned. People have already started to unlearn the irrelevant and re-learn the new ways. It is time we shed prejudices and make creativity an indispensable part of our lives and apostolates.

One of our significant partners in the relief works was our alumni/ae. It is high time the Jesuits reconnect with our alumni/ae in an unbreakable bond of common ideals and values, and together become a powerful force to face the challenges of the post Covid world.

The Jesuits were also able to co-partner with the government and non-government agencies and thus they were able to achieve much more. This was a great feat in Networking! It is my belief that collaboration and networking with all the people of good will, is a sure way forward, and therefore, we need to make it an integral part of our life and mission.

Therefore, the call of the Spirit is clear. We need to be men of depth and discernment, creativity and collaboration, newness and networking. This new way of being and doing must shine through our lives and actions so that our collaborators and beneficiaries too imbibe these characteristics. In order to realize these new perspectives and paradigms, we need Spirit-filled leaders who are relentless learners and who can inspire our collaborators to take up the daunting challenge to renew the face of the earth.

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Can we look at, plan and visualize our Jesuit formation from this new perspective Covid-19 has blessed us with?

# The Future of Jesuit Formation in India

*Dr Lawrence Fernandes SJ*

It is high time that our formation centers provided facilities and platforms for virtual learning and integrated these into our curriculum.



**T**he pandemic that inflicted enormous amount of suffering across the globe has impelled us to have a new outlook towards God, human beings and the cosmos. What was seen earlier as the most essential and unchangeable has to be changed; be in it liturgical life, social order or our day-to-day activities. The phrase 'new normal' has caught everyone's imagination, paving the way to look at the human society from a renewed perspective. The question now is; what would happen once the scars of corona virus is gone and the 'new normal' is not new any longer? Will we go back to the 'old normal' ways? The ways prior to corona were known, fixed, familiar, comfortable, predictable, calculated and concentrated and we were always in control of our life-situation. Will we go back to them or is there a call to think out of the box, exploring new ways of living having learned our lessons of life from this ever-relentless Covid-19?

Can we look at, plan and visualize our Jesuit formation from this new perspective Covid-19 has blessed us with? The former superior general of the Jesuits, Peter Hans Kolvenbach had spoken so well about the Jesuit formation that was in tune with the contemporary signs of the times saying, "*The aim of formation is a personal integration.....and in formation the personal, psychological, spiritual, communitarian, academic and apostolic aspects of the formees need to be integrated*[1]". Keeping this perspective in mind the Jesuit formation centers over the years have been trying to train the formees by providing all the facilities that are essential for integral and integrated formation .

Covid-19 seems to have changed or has affected what was so called structured way of life. The students are no more physically present in the formation centers, but are scattered across the globe. The formation work is in progress but on virtual platforms. The formators

now are mostly professors imparting knowledge via online classes assigned to them. The local superiors are now held responsible for the spiritual wellbeing of the scholastics across the world. The students can only be reached out during the lecture hours and for rest of the time, in consultation with the local superiors or work directors; they would be left to decide how they would be spending the time as qualitatively as possible.

God permitting soon the covid 19 situation would be over. What is next, then? Would there be a temptation to go back to former ways of life? The most poignant questions of our times remain the same. Will we be able to integrate and assimilate the benefits we have garnered via e- learning and through virtual platforms during this pandemic? How can we make our learning more creative, more proactive, more enterprising and relevant for our times? Will our formation suit the post pandemic purposes and needs of the universal Society, universal church and human society in general?

Students have now begun to be self-dependent as they have full access to the resources worldwide through the internet. Could our formation utilize these new skills of e-learning to enhance self-learning? We are used to in-house formation. Will our formation centers open up e- learning resources to the laity, especially those who desire to study but can't afford the luxury of spending three, four or five years in a formation center?

Even during the lockdown people continue to learn academic and professional courses and programs online. It is high time that our formation centers provided facilities and platforms for virtual learning and integrated these into our curriculum. The pandemic lock downs have thrown an open challenge to our houses of formation to make our learning more diverse and broad based. E-learning has opened up new possibilities beyond classrooms to acquire resources and learn from the global expertise that are available online. Can we continue to be the beneficiaries of such an enterprise?

This pandemic has brought to the fore the immense suffering of the migrants, the poor and the victims of Covid-19. I would like to imagine that post-Covid Jesuit formation could and should necessarily bring in the social dimension of life and service and make it more concentrated, focused and consolidated.

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[1] (Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, "*The Formation of Jesuits*", Rome: General Curia of the Society of Jesus, 2003, p.99.)



A photograph of De Nobili College in Pune, featuring a large, dark stone building with a prominent arched window and a cross on the roof, surrounded by lush greenery and palm trees.

**De Nobili College, Pune**

A photograph of Satya Nilayam in Chennai, showing a multi-story white building with a central entrance labeled 'ARRUPE HALL' and a statue above the doorway.

**Satya Nilayam, Chennai**

A photograph of Vidya Jyoti in Delhi, showing a red brick building with a sign that reads 'विद्याज्योति VIDYAJYOTI' and '4-A, RAJNIVAS MARG, DELHI-110054'. A gate with a sign '4A' is in the foreground.

**Vidya Jyoti, Delhi**

## Jesuit Higher Formation Centers in India

This concentration would help us to take a critical look at the reality around us, philosophize or theologize on the issues that affect human society in general and take concrete action to alleviate suffering.

If carefully observed, one would realize that the pandemic has made us realize the need to take care of our mother earth. In our formation set up and strategies, let there be intellectual inputs and practical measures to keep our planet earth clean, green and healthy. Covid-19 has taught us to be frugal in the use of our resources. We have learnt to live with lesser

resources at our disposal. Such an attitude I am sure, will promote cosmic wellbeing and an antidote to the temptations of consumerism.

We may soon combat and overcome the pandemic, corona virus, but there are other viruses that continue affect our human society like poverty, poor health care, malnutrition, violation of human rights, freedom of expression, perils of migrants and refugees, racial abuses, religious fundamentalism, wide spread corruption etc.. We need to get ourselves fully equipped to combat and overcome these viruses as well. The choice we have to make is either to go back to the old ways of formation or learning from the 'new normal' caused by Covid-19 develop a radically revised formation plan based on the fresh new perspectives we have gained during these lockdown days. Let us bite the bullet and make a wise choice that makes a real difference in our formation programs.

*Dr Lawrence Fernandes SJ is the principal of Satya Nilayam Jesuit Philosophy study center, Chennai and Head of the Department of Philosophy, Loyola College, Chennai. He is specialised in the Philosophy of Popular Religiosity and is the author of several books and articles.*





The old beliefs of the Jesuit institutions on influencing the rich and the powerful in order to bring about societal change, is no more valid.

**Dr. Felix Raj SJ**  
Vice-Chancellor, SXUK

## *The Legacy and Future of Jesuit* **EDUCATION**

Education is the most powerful mechanism; with which we can transform the world. The sustained economic development of any country is directly determined by its education system. Education is a nation's health and wealth. A progressive nation is inevitably an educated nation.

With a world population of 7.8 billion people today, we, as individuals and societies need to live together sustainably and harmoniously. We need to act responsibly based on the understanding that what we do today can have implications on the lives of people and the planet in future. Educational network empowers people to change the way they think and work towards a sustainable and harmonious future.

India has the world's largest youth population. It is one of the youngest countries in the world, with 65% of its population within the working age group of 18 to 60. Young people need to 'think differently, have the courage to invent, to travel the unexplored path, to discover the impossible and to conquer the problems and move on to succeed'.

### **Jesuit Legacy**

Educational apostolate has been synonymous with the mission of the Society of Jesus right from its inception. The origin of the Society itself was in 1535 in an academic milieu, at the University of Paris. At that time Europe was a web of kingdoms, and Paris was one of the great centres of learning. Instead of



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*There are six books and several articles to his credit. For more details: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Felix\\_Raj](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Felix_Raj)*



pursuing fame and fortune in the service of earthly kings, Ignatius of Loyola and his fellow students chose to be “Companions of Jesus” for the Greater Glory of God.

Jesuit involvement in education in India has a precious history and heritage. It is part of the larger global educational network. The Jesuits have been pioneers and vanguards in providing education to the rural poor, dalits and tribals. By opening the doors of their institutions to all, irrespective of caste, creed, language and gender, the Jesuits have exerted a healthy and harmonious influence on the educational system of India, and the mood resonates beyond its boundaries.

Perhaps the Jesuits impart the best-quality education in India. Their educational initiative is the largest private educational network in India today. They administer no less than 66 higher educational institutions (including two universities), 18 Institutes of Business Administration and 200 high schools spread throughout the country; almost all of them are among the most reputed institutions. In them, more than 4, 10,000 students belonging to every religious, linguistic and socio-economic groups, receive their education under the mentorship of around 12,200 teachers.

## Urgent Need for Effective Networks

In the existing global and regional contexts today, and particularly in the context of the Indian educational scenario, we are called to promote regional, national and apostolic networks for peace, harmony and justice. The existing networks need to be strengthened and we have various arguments for effective networking in the field of education and Alumni Associations in our Assisnancy:

- a) The education system in India is the third largest in the world, next to the United States and China. It is said, ‘Knowledge is power’. The more knowledge we promote, the more empowered we are as individuals and as a nation.
- b) As of today, even after 73 years of our independence, we have only 91 million graduates in India (8.6 % of the total population). There are 921 Universities and 59,480 Colleges of all types (including stand-alone institutions) with 36 million students.
- c) The 12th Plan Document had fixed targets of 25.2 % GER by 2017–18 and 30% GER by 2020–21. As per All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) 2017–18, the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in higher education is 25.6%.
- d) Some of the biggest highlights of the NEP 2020 are: 1) a single regulator for higher education institutions, 2) multiple entry and exit options in degree courses, 3) discontinuation of MPhil programmes, 4) low stakes board exams, 5) common entrance exams for universities. NEP 2020 envisages an increase in GER to at least 50% by 2035; at least 3.5 crore new seats will be added to higher educational institutions.
- e) As per NEP 2020, Higher Education Commission of India (HECI) will be set up as a single overarching umbrella body for the entire higher education, excluding medical and legal education. Public and private higher education institutions will



be governed by the same set of norms for regulation, accreditation and academic standards.

## Catholic and Jesuit Universities in India

There are 5 Catholic Universities in India: 1. Assam Don Bosco University, Guwahati; 2. Christ (Deemed to be) University, Bangalore; 3. Xavier University, Bhubaneswar; 4. St. Xavier's University, Kolkata; and 5. St Joseph's University, Dimapur.

Two are Jesuit Universities in India, namely, Xavier University, Bhubaneshwar (XUB) and St. Xavier's University, Kolkata (SXUK). SXUK is a concrete case study for new initiatives with the participation and support of our alumni. There are many initiatives by some Jesuit provinces to start Jesuit universities in different parts of our country. It is a welcome move and we must march forward to set the world on fire.

We belong to an extensive and the large educational network in the world and in India and so, it should be within our reach to play a constructive role with the governments and the regulatory bodies. It is a timely call to all of us to move forward and respond to the changing times and new demands. We believe that with the Divine providence and the wholehearted support of our stakeholders, we shall be able to achieve our Jesuit Vision for India.

## Conclusion

The COVID-19 pandemic, with its sudden upheavals has changed our routines and life styles globally. Our work, worship, homes, health-care, education and social life have all been changed. Lockdowns have jeopardized academic atmosphere. There is an overwhelming sense of emotional damage, anxiety and uncertainty among teachers, students and their parents about teaching and learning, examinations and academic process. We are forced to adapt to quarantine, physical distancing and mental stress. A new pattern, a new normal seems to be emerging. It is important in the process to identify and prioritize key issues and address them effectively.

Our schools and colleges have switched over to electronic/online modes of education to meet their academic demands of completing the syllabus and continuing education. Because the crisis was sudden, most of the institutions were not prepared with adequate infrastructure; they have tried their best to



**In the existing global and regional contexts today, and particularly in the context of the Indian educational scenario, we are called to promote regional, national and apostolic networks for peace, harmony and justice.**



convert these challenges into productive opportunities for the benefit of the stakeholders, primarily the students.

Technology-enabled teaching-learning is evolving fast and will play a major role in the education sector in the future. We cannot restrict ourselves to only one methodology. The challenges are global; and they should involve the whole of our being and our efforts in order to transform and uplift the content of teaching and learning. We need to adapt our approaches, attitudes and multiple-relationships to ensure the betterment of our education and transformation of our students. This is the mission of every teacher and every temple of learning.

In the context of glaring inequalities and widespread poverty, the old beliefs of the Jesuit institutions on influencing the rich and the powerful in order to bring about societal change, is no more valid as we see from its results. They have learned from their past experience that helping the common man to live a decent human life the first prerequisite for building a just and equitable society.

As we journey with dedication to enlighten the minds of many with enduring wisdom, the stage is set to carry forward the tradition of competence, commitment, compassion and conscience that have characterized the Jesuit endeavours for centuries.

What is needed today is an 'Ignatian contemplative sensitivity' on the part of all people of good will. We must overwhelm ourselves by the confluence of multi-cultural and multi-religious spirit that marks the Asian villages and towns, streets and highways. That will illumine us to witness the divine orchestra that is present everywhere in its diversity of forms.



# Dignity in Difference

Dialogue eliminates the fear and suspicion of the other.



**Midhun J  
Francis SJ**

**I**nter-religious dialogue enriches and enhances us to have a broader and enlightened outlook on one's vision and mission as well as common areas of collaboration. This involves mutual openness, admiration, appreciation, affection and respect. Dialogue is not possible when one considers himself/herself superior to the other. Interreligious dialogue clarifies many of the negative perspectives that do not enrich our society. Dialogue is also necessary because there are several positions that contradict each other, and therefore clarity is required. It means

communicating and listening, sharing and receiving, mutual growth and enrichment are involved in inter-religious dialogue. Inter-religious dialogue, therefore, expects one to regard the other as equal. One must appreciate that there is dignity in difference and unity in diversity.

The call of human vocation is to affirm the fullness of one's existence. Every religion encourages its members to be mindful of its fundamental call to be divine, which will allow one to achieve Nirvana,



**No religion is a hindrance to the fulfilment of one's vocation. This awareness of the divine in every person allows peace and harmony and space for every creature in the Cosmos.**



thus required to be unified within our humanity. Humanity is becoming closely connected day by day; and it helps to forge stronger relationships between different cultures, and the task of religions is to promote unity and harmony between human beings and between societies in order to establish a peaceful world. Therefore, interreligious dialogue and mutual relationships are an important way forward outside the rigid traditional boundaries.

Spiritual discernment is at the centre of inter-religious dialogue. Dialogue is not essential when everything goes smoothly. It is necessary only when there are several ideas that apparently contradict each other and require clarification. It is based on the testimony of one's faith as well as on the openness to another's religion. It is not a denial of one's own religion, nor is it a new method of conversion to another religion. The basic prerequisite for religious dialogue is the ability to see the world/faith of the other from his/her perspective, not from one's own stand point alone.

In conclusion, inter-religious dialogue can build social harmony where conflicts are longstanding. It does not imply that it is a perfect remedy, because such interactions between countries and religions still face difficulties. But it is an inspiring hope for the future. But the courage to understand those around us, with sincerity of intent, allows us to engage in mutual dialogue. The aim is not to solve the differences in our beliefs, but to appreciate the faith and beliefs of others. We may have different beliefs but we must continue to work together to bring about peace and reconciliation in the human society.

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*Midhun J Francis SJ is a Kerala Jesuit specializing in Dialogue. He focuses on the dialogue between Islam and Christianity. He has recently completed Master's in systematic theology and is now preparing for research.*

Moksha or Divinisation, or to enter Heaven. Inter-religious dialogue makes us understand that every human being is supposed to be part of this collective vocation. No religion is a hindrance to the fulfilment of one's vocation. This awareness of the divine in every person allows peace and harmony and space for every creature in the Cosmos. All religions recognize the creator as Father/Mother – And most of the religions profess that we have a common origin and common destiny. Thomas Aquinas, for example, talks of exitus and redivit. And each religion prescribes the path to go back to God, who is our common origin.

The first enemy of the interreligious dialogue is fear and suspicion of the other. The courage to understand people around us, paves the way to engage in dialogue with sincerity of intent. Pope Francis says with a hope, "Although sadly evil, hatred and division often make news, there is a hidden sea of goodness that is growing and leads us to hope in dialogue, reciprocal knowledge and the possibility of building, together with the followers of other religions and all men and women of goodwill, a world of fraternity and peace." Dialogue eliminates the fear and suspicion of the other. There is active listening and sharing that builds a peaceful society where everyone regards the other as one's brother or sister. There is openness to clarify one's doubts, misgivings, distorted views and prejudices in order to make our understanding meaningful.

As never before, we have learned that, having given up the old cultural differences and prejudices, we have become part of one human family, and are





"What is next, then?"

# THE FUTURE

of . . . .

**Mission**

Pingal Lakra SJ



Tribal Culture



Emmanuel Akilan SJ



**Formation**



Francis Lobo SJ



JINS  
SEBASTIAN

Vivian Lopes SJ

**Social Action**



Allwin Macwan SJ



Prakash M Toppo SJ



go Corona go!



# Future of Food



Who could ever forget the magnetic fragrance of the food wafting through the air while walking on the road or just ambling through?

**F**ood has a very unique and a special place in human lives. It connects us across culture and generations. Invariably, all enjoy different, delicious and varieties of food. Moreover, after any hectic day of work, a good meal with family members, friends or loved ones, not only nourishes our body but also our soul. With the coming of the Virus everything seems to be topsy-turvy. Sharing fellowship meals with the loved ones has practically come to a standstill. Pre covid-19 human life and life during the covid-19, there is a marked difference, life has completely changed. It has forced everyone not only to change one's life style but also food habits. Because of the pandemic there is a shift towards adapting to different life style.

## Restaurants, Dhabas and Petty Shops:

Who could ever forget the magnetic fragrance of the food wafting through the air while walking on the road or just ambling through? Such aromas have been the appetite satisfiers. Because of the pandemic a huge impact can be seen on hotels, restaurants. Even if they are opened after the situation

**PRAKASH M.  
TOPPO SJ**



has become normal, things may not be easy to fall back on to the beaten track. However, when it comes to street food vendors things are different. Lately, the small vendors are back on the streets and people are flocking to them again without any social distancing.

## Value of Food:

Our country is one of the largest food producers in the world yet 194 million go hungry every day. According to one of the reports by the department of agriculture (Feb 23, 2019) approximately 50 thousand crore worth food is wasted in India every year and 244 corers worth daily (The Economic Times - 8 Jan, 2018). This Pandemic has broken the back bone of everyone. The pandemic has taught us to know the value and need of food in our life.

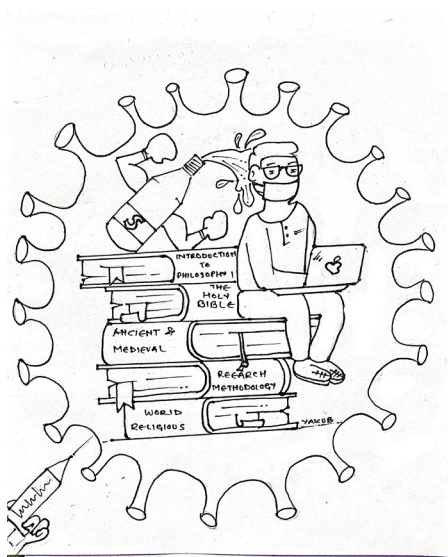
## Food Habits:

The WHO has been suggesting having fresh and unprocessed foods from the beginning of the pandemic in order to boost the immunity power. People also started having kashyam, lemon hot water, kadha and home-made food and etc; Will people continue to have this kind of food even after the pandemic leaves us for good? There is no doubt that the future of food culture is

going to change to some extent. A few months ago, people were not willing to eat from anywhere outside. But now either they have started eating or they would have their takeaways. Busy life styles and lack of time for cooking pressurizes them to think first for survival then for the virus.

Food is one of the most satisfying pleasures of life. However, with the onset of this deadly pandemic, it has become scarce for many. Besides, to fight this virus all are trying to have food containing immunity booster. In the process of protecting themselves from the Virus, people have discovered joy relishing home food. This change brought in by the pandemic has taught us all and widened our thinking to see both the sides of the coin of our life. However, people hope for nothing but for getting back into normal and fresh life.

**Prakash M Toppo is a third year philosophy student at JDV, Pune. He belongs to Delhi Jesuit Province.**



*Illustration by Yakub Macwana SJ from Culcutta Jesuit Province.*



# The Future of Tribal Culture



**AMIT XALXO SJ**

**T**ribals have travelled long way in the history of their existence. Now the time has changed. Culture has undergone to many changes. There is a lot of impact of modern culture. The values which were upheld in their own community are seen as drawback in the fast growing modern world. Tribals have been the victims of many social changes in their lives. Though the tribals have adopted the dominant and popular life style but they still maintain their identity as distinct social limit. Social and cultural distinctiveness are maintained. Tribal society is growing as vibrant society. They achieved a tremendous spirit of mobility, the openness to change and transformation.

The most important factor that has changed the social status is their conversion to Christianity. For the tribals, embracing Christianity not only meant salvation for their souls but also – socio-economic stability, education and religious freedom – freedom from the fear of evil spirits. Education has fostered within them healthy attitude towards change of economic and social growth. There is socio-political awareness among the tribals. Their lives have become dynamic. Transformation is taking place in their daily lives. The life value system is undergoing gradual transformation. Material implements, food habits and dress code are changing. There is progress in socio-political awareness. The tribals are focusing not only self advancement but positive contribution to nation's growth.

Tribals once a people with no identity are growing now into a community which is a significant social force. They are trying to save their cultural identity. Local tribal religious priests are trying promote tribals languages through print media and electronic media. Though there are both internal and external challenges to save the culture. There is inter-tribal co-operation and communal disability. Widening gap between the educated and uneducated tribal is increasing. The rural tribal communities are left without able guide and animators. Those who have made mark, who have achieved socio-economic success, have failed to show much concern for those they left in the villages. Their interests are confined to their family. Apart from these there are some modern threats to tribal life, culture and religion e.g. Identity Crisis of the Adivasis. Identity is essential for their survival as a distinctive, geographical, ethnic group with the larger pluralistic Indian society. Displacement is taking place in the name of development. Many tribals in the past have become the victim of land alienation. Certainly there are many issues which are affecting the tribal culture. Now tribals are well educated and know their rights. Now they are proud of the cultural heritage of their tribe.

**Amit Xalxo is a second year B. Th student at JDV, Pune. He is a Jesuit belonging to Madhya Pradesh Jesuit Province.**



# The Future of Jesuit Social Apostolate

VIVIAN LOPES SJ

“**W**herever in the Church, even in the most difficult and extreme fields, in the crossroads of ideologies, in the front line of social conflict, there has been and there is confrontation between the deepest desires of the human person and the perennial message of the Gospel, there too, there have been, and there are, Jesuits.” Pope Paul VI

While addressing the Jesuits at the 35<sup>th</sup> general Congregation Pope Benedict XVI used these prophetic word invoking in us a new vigor and spirit and asking us to stand to promote and protect faith which Jesus Himself gave us. These words of Pope Benedict serve as the basic premise of our future of Jesuit social apostolate. Looking at the present pandemic, by which the entire world is torn apart and baffled with a new understanding of faith and even made people doubt the existence of God. This pandemic of COVID 19 is yet another opportunity thrown open in front of the Society to restore the faith of humanity in Jesus Christ.

## Jesuit Social Apostolate in India

I feel volumes can be written on the immense contribution of our Jesuits missionaries have made to our nation. The Jesuit social apostolate has played a big role in the development of marginalized

people by being at the service of faith and the humanity., Our Fore fathers like Francis Xavier, Mateo Ricchi, Beschi, and many other Jesuits have worked tirelessly for taking the true meaning of Gospel to the most in need. Their ways and methods, have set models to follow and many of us have been following them diligently. But I strongly feel, though fueled by the love of Christ, and a desire to give voice to the voiceless, the path taken by these Jesuits needs a rethinking and needs to be seen in a new light as the context of our mission has changed extensively.

## Change in the Context

It is very important to understand that the context in which we work has changed rapidly. People and their world views have changed. The present pandemic has been one of the major contributors to this change, and many unforeseen changes are yet to happen. But, are we really prepared for this?

The youth of today are at a loss, trying to create an identity for themselves which is full of stardom. They are jeopardized by their own dreams and reality. The voice of the voiceless is silenced and any voice of dissent is killed. The concept of ‘new normal’ is taking over our country where, whatever the ruling party does is normal and justified. The deification of our leaders has killed democracy. And not many of us are disturbed by this change in the context. A Mint analysis of the consumption expenditure numbers reported by the National Statistical Office (NSO) in a report suggests that rural poverty rose nearly 4 percentage points between 2011-12 and 2017-18 to 30 percent. A lot more data analysis has been already been published by a number of social scientists all over but our approach towards the issue has not changed.

## Perspective from Within

Today's scenario is calling us to have a perspective from within. We need to listen to voices which have been remaining silent for generations and have always been asked to keep quiet. We need to make a shift in our approaches where we listen to the context, learn from the context and then frame our plan and policies rather than doing the vice versa. If some of our works and institutions have become irrelevant it is only because



**We need to listen to voices which have been remaining silent for generations and have always been asked to keep quiet.**

Vivian Lopes is Jesuit belonging to Bombay Jesuit Province. He holds a Master's degree in Dalit and Tribal Studies from TISS, Mumbai. He is a second year theology student at VJ, Delhi.



the TOP- DOWN approach that we followed in policy implantations and actions. We have no option but to collaborate and start networking with our neighboring provinces, sister institutions, other congregations and most importantly the laity. Today's generation if taken into confidence will be our best collaborators. We have to invent new methods and strategies to deal with the new dilemmas and crisis which the world is facing today. I strongly feel the time has come to wake up from our basking in our past glory and create a new history.

### From Knowledge Givers to Knowledge Creators

It is essential to live up to our charism of the society of Jesus, which not only engages in spreading the knowledge but also in creating knowledge for tomorrow's world leaders. I feel it is our prime duty to create true knowledge which is devoid of any discrimination, injustice or favoritism. Such knowledge will empower today's generation to rise above the falsity of this world and fight for a better tomorrow. It is our duty to take them out of the shackles of untruth and obscurity.

All our actions and activities without a vision will fall apart or never take off at all. Therefore, let us keep the spirit of GC35 alive and active in all our social actions and with this spirit we shall establish the Kingdom of God on earth.

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## My Dad Went on a Date... FRANCIS LOBO SJ

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Things don't stop to amaze us. Lately I was stunned to hear that one of my friend's dad went on a date at the age of 76. Quite strange isn't it? Actually, he dated himself. On further inquiry I was told that his dad had never given himself sufficient time. He always kept himself busy with lot of responsibilities towards his households. He remained like a pendulum between house and the office. Few years ago, his wife passed away leaving him alone. Though, by then he had already retired from his job, he somehow remained engrossed in other activities. No one knows how and from where, very recently he got an awesome idea of treating himself with quality time. And so, he took himself on a date. He watched one of his favourite movies, had his all-time favourite lunch, spent hours in a park, had a long walk and concluded with blueberry ice-cream. Then on he has been dating himself very often in variant styles.

**Francis Lobo is a final year B. Th student at JDV, Pune. He is a Jesuit belonging to Pune Jesuit Province.**

Indeed, a wonderful message he has left for all of us, especially during these difficult times of Lockdown and Pandemic. How many of us have really given time for ourselves? How many times have we smoothly soared over our inner self? For many, the solitude is quite a lot painful. But certainly not for those who have learnt the art of living and enjoying the solitude. Sadly, many suicidal cases are the victims of aloofness. They fail to know their own passions, their abilities, inner talents and most importantly who they are. They forget to accompany themselves. It is not new to us that from ages it has been a custom to immerse oneself into deep silence to find true meaning of life, to find answers to the fundamental questions of life, to search for real love. It is through this silence sprouts the long-lasting happiness. Depression, despair, misery, hopelessness, dejection won't last long if we allow this inner confidence to grow. There has been a constant complaint of isolation on social media during this lock down. The whole country had shutdown itself under a fearful cloud hovering above. The emotional, financial, relational, career related crisis bombarded people one after the other. Few found the forum to express themselves while some ended up unexpressed. Life is a free gift, without the manual how to live. So, invest in yourself. Go on a date. Give wings to your dreams. Treat yourself in an exceptional way that you have ever imagined. Fall in love with yourself and live to the fullest.



**It is through the silence sprouts the long lasting happiness! Life is a common gift, without the manual how to live.**



# The Future of Technology

PINGAL LAKRA SJ

In the yesteryears, civilization was centered around the rivers because at the bank of river, human beings prospered. In the present scenario life, work and career are centered on the technological hub because it promises life in fullness. The Post COVID-19 technological world provides a platform for new and renewed vision with the concept of new normal. The contactless interfaces and interactions have increased to a great extent. During this pandemic, the contributions made by technology across the length and breadth of the world have indeed changed not only the environment of industry, education, and mode of governance but also the ethos and values of human beings.

With the advent of technology, we are in a global village with greater mobility and adaptability. The tech power is overlapping manpower with ever-increasing scalability. The specialty of technology is its ability to replace the existing techniques and machinery with the next level of innovation and creativity. For instance, Repetitive jobs are replaced by Artificial intelligence because today technology has progressed and intertwined with brain biology and computer science. Prominent men like Vivek Bindra, Yuval Noah Harari, and Elon Musk promote the idea of relevance as the biggest strength of technology. It has indeed shown its relevance to the contemporary world by promising error-free society, proving itself for fast decision making, and faster delivery of projects. Therefore technology becomes a need.



*Illustration by Prosenjith Gomes SJ from Culcutta Jesuit Province.*

Though promises made by tech power are countless yet there are grey lines that need to be considered. Because the original human imaginations, choices, and decisions are fading away with the involvement of technology. It is creating enormous space for inequality by giving most of the power and position in the hands of few. Nowadays for almost every work inevitably devices are used. As a result, it has developed to the verge of taking control over human Free will, consciousness, and intelligence. Unfortunately, we are telling our secrets because the



Pingal Lakra is currently doing his second year philosophy in Satya Nilayam, Chennai. He belongs to Madhya Pradesh Jesuit Province.



devices we possess can access personal data. USA and China have already established the surveillance regime. This panoptic view on its citizens is indirectly giving rise to the technological dictatorship. Technology combined with Machine learning and Artificial intelligence is making massive inequality in the knowledge-based society. By the applications of robots and electric drones, repetitive jobs like manufacturing, mining, finance, real state, agriculture, construction are highly under risk. Thus Tech power is affecting not only day to day life and work but also making manpower irrelevant.

Now the question is - who will survive in the future? Technological disruption has created the existential problem of feeling irrelevant. Therefore, in the tech-dominated world, human beings have to develop the attitude of critical thinking, analysis, research-based works, and specialization to secure jobs. In the Edu-tech world, persons with science, technology, engineering, and mathematics will be the game-changers. Persons with the aptitude of strategy, leadership development, managerial skills, knowledge management, and execution ability would certainly survive in the tech world.

**During this pandemic, the Contributions made by technology across the length and breadth of the world have indeed changed not only the environment of industry, education, and mode of governance but also the ethos and values of human beings.**

## The Future of Developments in India

**JINS SEBASTIAN**



**Jins Sebastian is a second year theology student at JDV, Pune. He belongs to Ernakulam-Angamaly Archdiocese.**

India is the nation which has the potency to become a Super Power in the world. Since 1990, India as a country moved from a centrally planned economy to private ownership of business and trade liberalisation. Within years India could develop a diversified and strong financial base in its Economy. The Republic of India is considered as one of the fastest developing country in the world. India has shown its progress in Economic, Banking, Infrastructure, Tourism realms and so on. The demographic and a rapidly expanding economy help India to be one of the top three economic powers in the world over the next two decades. India has kept its position as the third largest start-up hub country in the world, according to a report of The National Association of Software and Service Companies (NASSCOM). Many foreign companies are setting up their facilities in India on account of various government initiatives like Make in India and Digital India. Through the Make in India plan we can increase the contribution made by the manufacturing sector which will lead to a good growth in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) rate. Besides, Digital India initiative helps to focus on three core components: Creation of digital infrastructure, delivering services digitally and to increase the digital literacy. With the support of the governments a remarkable development can be incurred in agriculture, health care, space research, nuclear power and so on. For, instance, India is gradually becoming a self-reliant in nuclear technology. The advancements in health care added the goodwill of India among other nations. The procurement of Rafale Jets strengthened the defence system of India. But government has to take necessary steps to maintain and achieve these developments. India won't be able to improve or develop its economy unless; it reduces gender and income inequality in the society. It is true that India is on the path of development. But on the other hand, we have to consider our ecosystem too. Our ecosystems are under stress and decline in many parts of the country. If we don't give attention to ecosystem along with the developments, then ecological problems will go beyond recovery stage. Climate change and coastal crisis

affects many people across the country. Due to over concentrating of the governments to the economic and developmental parts, the environmental protects are fast disappearing. While people and states all over are raising issues of environment and survival through movements, the governments and political parties are engage in discussions regarding growth of our technologies and economy. The exploitation of natural resources and giving lack of attention to the eco-system will definitely lead India to a great ecological crisis. We need both, development and a good ecosystem.

For this governments have to take necessary steps which, integrates development and environment. For this, the concept of sustainable development would be advisable. It is the development that meets the needs of the present generation without reducing the ability of future generation to meet their needs. These kinds of developments will surely protect the natural resources and nature to an extent. Unless, India will become a developed country within next decades but the condition of ecosystem will become worse and our existence on this earth will be questioned.

## The Future of Knowledge

**ALIWIN MACWAN SJ**

**T**he future is really unpredictable. One can not even predict what will take place in the next moment. We as humans can only assume or guess the future. The same goes with COVID-19. Coronavirus outbreak was first reported towards the end of 2019 and now has been declared a pandemic by WHO. All the nations are responding to the pandemic differently. A delay in detection and in respond has been recorded in many countries, which have led to an overburdening of the local health system. This has also affected the economic and social lives of all. Which leads one to ponder on the future of everything including the future of education.

As we know that due to coronavirus pandemic the state government across country temporarily started shutting down schools and colleges. As per the present situation, there is an uncertainty when and how campuses will reopen. There is a lot of thinking, planning and execution happening in all the countries. Online lectures have begun so as not to waste time of students and also to keep them engaged in education. In some places, school students are given mass promotion. In colleges too, students got promoted based on the merit based promotion except for the final year students. Right now, there is no plan to conduct exams in offline mode. It would not be easy if all the students go for offline exams with all the government guidelines. In some colleges, online exams have been conducted successfully. Some colleges could not make it. Some colleges have not even taken the risk of an online exams, they are still in the pondering mode. All these thoughts pose a question, what would be the future of education if the situation persists?

Allwin Macwan is a second year philosophy student at JDV, Pune. He belongs to Gujarat Jesuit Province.



Now, as per the survey taken by a non-government organization, 'scenario amidst covid-19 on-ground situation and possible solution' has said that there are 56.01 % of students who do not have the facility of smartphones. There are 12.02 % of students who cannot even afford have basic phones. Today, smartphones have become a basic necessity for all. Because all the academic/research work is happening through phones/laptops only. Industries are also affected badly. They are relieving their employees as industries are also in economic crises. Many companies even question the quality of online education. So, students seeking jobs as a newcomer is still a question mark.

Stress, anxiety, frustration, depression and many such issues have been found in today's youth. Suicide cases are increasing day by day. The devices which are supposed to be used for learning purpose are also the devices which are a big cause of suicide. The future of education seems dark to some. It may look bleak but every individual is responsible for his/her future. If one wants to achieve something than any mode of education would be fine. It all narrows down to the attitude one has for learning. There are many who have found different hobbies like reading, writing, painting, cooking and many more staying at home. So, by channelizing their hobbies in the right direction, they have been very productive in their life. And learning is never a waste of time, no matter what you learn. And if not today, then tomorrow but yes, that is definitely going to help in life. Again, how a person reacts to future boils down to individuals.





EMMANUEL AKILAN SJ

# The Future of Religions

When I pen down this article, thoughts about religion flood my mind. Religion is a very important aspect in the life of many. Religion has been in the world as long as humans in one form or the other. Religions have continually evolved throughout history. It brings people together as one community. It helps them to be united and bonded. For some, it is a set of rituals, for some it's a set of beliefs, for some it's a way to God and only for a very few it is an experience of the Divine. It depends on how we look at it.

In the past, in the name of religion many great things have happened but we can never forget the darker side. It has built up kingdoms and palaces and has been the reason for their ruin too. Karl Marx used to say, *"Religion is the opium of the people"*. It can make us or break us!

Today, religion has a very different understanding among people. Some are still bound by their own understanding which was passed down to them through generations which are still dogmatic, conservative and traditional. But, the understanding of many have undergone tremendous transformation. It should not be forgotten that many have become secular at the end of the day too. According to Phil Zuckerman, professor of sociology and secular studies at Pitzer College in California, *"There's absolutely more atheists around today than ever before, both in sheer numbers and as a percentage of humanity."*

At this juncture, we need to look back and reflect and look forward and hope that religion may be a glue that

sticks people together and not divides.

Religious understanding of the world is rapidly changing, some moving to atheism from faith, others to religion from secularism, and many still undecided. Many say that religion does not have a future at all! If at all there is, it would be very grim and hopeless.

The future of religion depends on its followers. Every religion has its own highs and lows. The ways to the destination may be different, but the destination is the same. The destination is God and the ways used to reach Him are very diverse. Mahatma Gandhi had said, *"God has no religion"*.

Religion has to undergo a lot of changes and transformation if it wants to stand strong against the storms of the world. No wonder, many religions have been wiped out of the face of the earth in the process of evolution.

Many religions have become extinct, some have very few followers and only a handful of religions have plenty of followers. The question that pricks me is, *"What is more important, the quantity or the quality?"* The religions with huge number of followers can never feel proud if it does not preach peace, equality, harmony, and love.

Finally it is not important what we believed in but how we lived and lead our lives on the basis of what we believed in!

**Emmanuel Akilan is a second year philosophy student belonging to Madurai Jesuit Province.**

# Artistry



- Poem by Arun Lobo SJ

## *The Future of Present Techno*



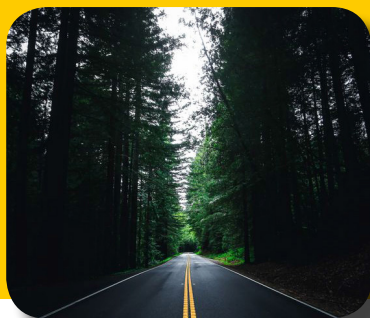
- Poem by Sujin Wilson SJ

## *A Man in the Future*



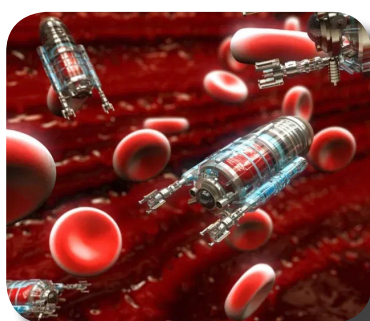
- Story by Praveen Kumar SJ

## *What is My Pride?*



- Story by Arockia Anand SJ

## *Nature Nurtures the Future*



- Story by Seby Varghese SJ

## *Nanobots*





*I looked around, to see what?  
People almost breathing technology  
I see them carry gadgets  
I see them work with machine  
I see them befriend robots  
Finally, I see them very much digital*

*I looked around, to hear what?  
Someone asking why chat in person,  
When you can chat online?  
Why hang around with same old friends,  
When you can have new friends on Facebook?  
Yes, I see them living smart*

But,

**I cannot look around, kids on sand or water,  
Birds chirping and leaves rustling,  
We look into window, converse through apple  
Instead of looking out of window and share apple  
Because I look around and understand  
We have forgotten what it feels to live offline....**

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# Future of Present Techno

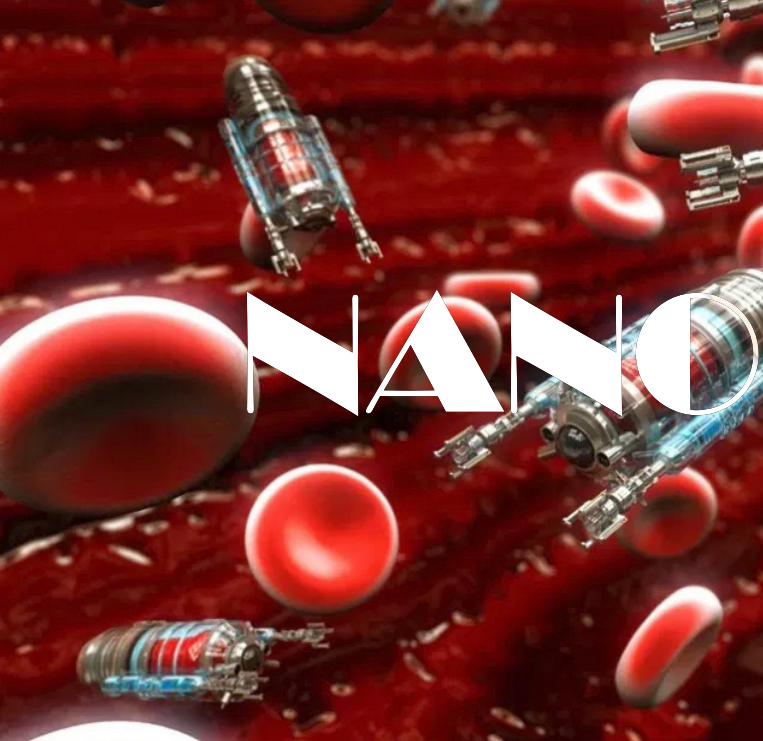
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Arun Lobo SJ

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ARUN LOBO IS A JESUIT SCHOLASTIC BELONGING TO KARNATAKA JESUIT PROVINCE. HE IS A SECOND YEAR PHILOSOPHY STUDENT AT JDV, PUNE.



# BOTS

The Future of Medical Practice

Seby Varghese SJ

“All vital parameters stable”, displayed the virtual screen in the sprawling office of MedTek, the company managing public health.

In its spacious campus, each building monitors specific parameters related to public health for each region of the country. With a vast network of input centres and advanced technology, data is transmitted across the distance in seconds. The company employs the latest AI interfaces with satellite monitored real time monitoring, to deliver patient specific health solutions even to the remotest areas, where a doctor's reach is impossible. A select percentage of the population who have been implanted with nanochips help to keep a tap on the general health of the public.

“Sir, there is something strange happening in Laso. Some individuals are reporting DNA in their blood”, said Sally, a medical officer.

“Well, isn't that normal?” replied Dr. Bob.

“No. Free DNA indicates cell death. Nanobot's analysis shows it to be the DNA of the same person.”

“What about the SGPT and SGOT levels? Any other abnormalities?”

“All other parameters are normal.”

“That's strange. How many cases have you found?”

“Ten. But as per our statistical projection this could be more.”

“Sir, our self-service clinics from Laso are

reporting some neurological symptoms like severe headache, imbalance and memory loss. But their medical reports are normal”, said another officer.

“What about the serum DNA level? Do you have any info?”, replied Sally.

Testing commands were relayed through his mobile phone. At the other end, in the clinics, patients are seated on robotic chairs with probes and sensors gathering data from body. Robots and drones are sent to homes of other patients to get their testing done. Back at the control room, reports are tabulated, analyzed and inferred by computers.

“This is strange. Abnormal DNA level is indicative of cell damage, but no other reports indicate any infection in the body”, said Dr. Bob.

“Then, what about the neurological symptoms? Could it be a new kind of infection?” replied Sally.

“Yes. We need to do more testing. I'm afraid, some pathogen has escaped our eyes and entered the brain. Get the nanobots to check the BBB (Blood Brain Barrier) of those patients.”

Another round of tests and images pop up on the screen. With puzzled face they look at each other.

“The BBB has become porous”, sighed Sally. “The brain is no more protected and hence those symptoms.”

“I want a complete protein analysis of the



patients by afternoon”, replied Dr. Bob.

Within an hour graphs in all possible colors were before them as they tried to figure out any abnormality.

“Sir, look at this. There is a new protein sequence, XXRC, seen in all these patients.”

“What’s its structure? Do the sequencing immediately.”

Just a click and the protein chain opened up before their eyes.

“It’s a prion”, replied Dr. Bob. “Time for action. Copy this sequence to K-nanobots (K - killer) and start producing them immediately. Send out the alert about prion outbreak. Warn the people against consumption of raw or uncooked meat, as that is the source of prion.”

Meanwhile, those who already had inbuilt nanobot surveillance system the sequence was transmitted to their nanochips. The master robot copies this sequence on the memory of every K-nanobot. The K-nanobots are activated to search for the prion. An army of K-nanobots is launched into the blood stream. Within no time it stimulates the T-cells by exposing the target antigen. Chemicals are released to activate the B-cells and the macrophages. The stage is now set for the fight. The fully armed K-nanobots and the immune cells traces and neutralizes every prion as they kept approaching the BBB. The H-nanobots (H-healer) are now in action to repair the damaged cells. They form a new sheath of protection over the BBB aiding the body’s healing process.

By evening, situation was under control and the infection was brought to a standstill. Now that a new source of infection was found, this information was copied and transmitted to all the nanobots. Until the next enemy rises, nanobots are keeping a watch over many other things including XXRC.

The next day was Arun’s joining date in one of the leading software companies – Accenture in Mumbai. But he was already frustrated for he was in a hurry and was delayed to report at the airport. He caught a taxi and reached the airport just in time.

It was his first time and he was kind of little nervous. He stood in a queue as he entered and took the printed online boarding pass with him. With little uneasiness on his face he was looking here and there, trying to read every instruction written anywhere.

“Yes sir, show me your boarding pass,” asked an airport security guard with absolutely no expression.

“Here, it is”. Arun handed it confidently and he was sure that he had everything in control.

“Your luggage doesn’t have the label, go get one,” said the guard.

“Ok sir, but from where?” asked Arun.

“From there,” the guard pointed his finger towards a large hall and said, “next please.”

He was out of the queue and was looking with blank expression.

It was a large hall with counters of all the airlines. Arun was trying to find his airline - Spice Jet. As it was getting delayed, he was more worried and depressed.

“First time? Let me help you,” a sweet voice spoke from behind.

He turned and got hit, it was a cupid’s arrow. A cute girl in dazzling white chudidhar. First thought that came to his mind was that God exists. He has sent an angel for him, probably the most beautiful one and the second thought that popped up was that how the hell did she know that it was his first time.

“Yes. Can you tell me where is the Spicejet counter?” he asked with all decency and politeness.

“Yeah, it is just behind the Go Air counter and next to Indian Airlines”, she beacons. Her innocent finger was also waving in the air and her eyes were beautiful.

“Thank You.” He gave the biggest smile of his lifetime.

He started walking there but he looked back and she also hadn’t taken her eyes off. She was smiling and he too was advertising for Colgate.

He got the label for his bag. He cleared the security check and went towards the waiting area. Just then he heard the announcement that his flight had got delayed by half an hour due to some technical issue.

He wasn’t looking for a seat to rest but for that angel.



SEBY VARGHESE IS  
A BOMBAY JESUIT  
DOING HIS SECOND  
YEAR PHILOSOPHY AT  
JDV, PUNE.

# Nature Nurtures the Future

Arockia Anand SJ

He checked almost every nook and corner to find her and he was caught red-handed. There was the angel. There was a seat vacant next to her. Thousands of moral and ethical rules to sit on a vacant seat next to a girl crossed his mind.

He went forward into that line. She consciously moved back to give him way to the next seat beside her.

“Thanks”, he said, this time with little shorter version of his big smile.

“It’s ok, this happens. By the way your flight is Spice Jet, right??”

It took him 10 seconds to collect all the words she had said, he was lost, and her eyes were the culprit.

“Yes, why anything wrong.”

“No not much, it is Indian Airlines gate and the next flight is for Kolkata in about forty five minutes. Where are you going??” she inquired.

“Mumbai. It’s my first job and I’m joining Accenture as a software engineer” he shrugged and gave a tiny smile. He didn’t know what to say or do.

“It’s ok you can wait here and when is your flight?” she asked or rather consoled. She was an angel and that was an affirmation.

He was about to say Okay, then an announcement was made and it was from Spicejet. They were calling up all the passengers. “I hate Spicejet. I love Indian Airlines,” whispered his inner voice.

“My call, have to go”, he said as he began picking up his bag and novel and suddenly, he asked. He really did. He didn’t know from where he had gathered that courage.

“Can I have your number, maybe we can talk sometime in future when I don’t have a flight and where this Spicejet can’t interrupt us in between?”

To his surprise, she said nothing, just took out a pen in nanoseconds from her handbag and wrote the mobile number.....

He just beat his own record of the biggest smile and said, “thank you”. He knew then, how people feel after climbing Mount Everest.

With this hope Arun left the place. He entered the plane and it looked like an air-conditioned bus, but he didn’t care. He sat on his seat, kept his bag in the cabin above the seat and carrying the novel with him. He had to, for it had her number. He had literally hugged it. He thought of saving the number in his mobile but then there was another announcement to switch off the cell phones and like an ideal flight passenger, he did it.

It was a two hours long journey and he didn’t know when he had fallen asleep. He even missed the adventure of the flight’s landing.

The airhostess woke him up. He opened his eyes as if he had just come out from a coma. Everybody was on their feet and moving towards the exit. He removed his bag from the locker and started having a zombie walk. He was still half asleep.

He went out of the airport, called a taxi and was about to sit and he realized that he didn’t have the novel with him. He didn’t have her number with him. It must have fallen while he was asleep and, in a hurry, he lost it.

He couldn’t curse himself more. He ran towards the airport counter once again, contacted the staff and told her that he had forgotten a novel in the last Spicejet flight. She took her details and mobile number and told him that she would contact him if they found one.

For two years, Arun checked every day, picked and returned every unknown phone call but it wasn’t them, they had never contacted. He had lost his hope and was once again frustrated in life. After a few months, he got transferred to Chennai. Accidently, he met the girl again and both fell in love and got married happily.

To most people, it may come as a surprise if they find Nature to be the only important factor in one’s healing journey.

AROCKIA ANAND IS  
A CHENNAI JESUIT  
DOING HIS THIRD  
YEAR PHILOSOPHY AT  
JDV, PUNE.





# A man in the Future . . .

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The Social Animal is what they called him.  
Reason made him top the food order. Yet,  
the emotion are just digital conditions now.  
Living is survival and loving a duty.  
He blinds himself from the future and nature,  
And finds himself always in a dilemma.

He lives where he does not want.  
Morality and ethics are outdated words now,  
Heard in old churches.  
The digital reality is the common religion now.  
Faith is rare, reason is barred.

He always dreams of good old days.  
And he remembered all the holidays lived,  
and the working days skipped.  
Upholding a poster, he is just a number in the Society.  
With his life he searches a corner in a circle,  
And reasons it as square.

The human now hardly enjoys  
The smooth of the inward life!  
He knows everything except himself.  
And the flowers blossom accordingly.



Sujin Wilson SJ



SUJIN WILSON IS A JESUIT SCHOLASTIC BELONGING TO MADHURAI JESUIT PROVINCE. HE IS A THIRD YEAR PHILOSOPHY STUDENT AT JDV, PUNE.

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## My Pride ?

Praveen kumar I SJ

**I**t was a pleasant morning. Everything was silent and calm. On a sea shore, there were two creatures walking along the shore, a Dog and a Calf, on the opposite sides. Calf was shocked to see the beach very quiet. When it enquired the Dog it said, 'It is lockdown on the town'. 'Lockdown! What does it mean and what it is for?' asked the Calf. 'A new creature has entered the town it seems. It is very dangerous' said the Dog. 'Can there be a dangerous creature than a human being!' exclaimed the Calf and both moved on their way.

A few days later, the situation in the town remained the same, but there was a lot of changes in the environment. All the creatures wondered that what happened to these human beings. However they did not get any answer what happened to these human beings. Hence they started living their life. They moved around everywhere they could. No road and no traffic stopped them. No one on the wild path to harm them. No demon to hunt the life of the birds on the air. Slowly the nature began to breath. All the animals

drank pure water from the rivers and water reservoirs.

Once again when the Dog and the Calf met on a road, the latter asked, 'What is this strange thing, people are on parade even children and women, but they are very tired and weary?' 'I think it's the second Exodus in the history of the universe after the Old Testament' sarcastically replied the Dog. Observing their conversation from the top of a tree a crow intervened saying, 'They are migrants, who walk back to their native as there is neither transport nor the livelihood available.' 'Then who are those, distributing something?' asked the Dog. 'They are people of good will, distributing food and water to them as they are walking thousands of miles,' explained the Crow. 'Oh, still the human beings are humane!' laughed the Dog.

Diverting the conversation, the Calf asked, 'What about the new creature? Can't this human race threaten it as they do to us?' 'You are right. These human beings thought that they are the Almighty with all their Technology, but a tiny invisible creature taught them a lesson that they are very small and humble on the earth' replied the Crow. 'Then what about us, will the new creature affect us?' with a soft voice the Calf asked. 'Surely, it will, when we too begin to think that we are the Almighty' the Crow whispered. With a curiosity the Dog asked, 'Then, will the human race shut inside for ever?' 'I don't think so. It may be freed totally, when it realises that the Humanness & the Merciful heart is the Pride of human being, not something else' wisely replied the Crow. 'Well said. Whether we learn anything else from the human being or not, we must realise that we need to keep the essence of our being alive always' concluded the Dog with a deep breath.



PRAVEEN KUMAR IS  
A CHENNAI JESUIT  
DOING HIS THIRD  
YEAR PHILOSOPHY  
AT JDV, PUNE.



# Reports

**DNC Times** | October | 2020

## Life at DNC During the Lockdown

(March 15 to  
September 08, 2020)

Let me begin by saying that we are all fine so far by the grace of God and your prayers! We have been homebound as most people are all these days, going out only for the essential business and for the rest we were using online services.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> half of March and well into the month of April our concern was to send the scholastics back home safely by any available means of transport. During this time twenty 4<sup>th</sup> year theologians settled down to their studies in preparation for the comprehensive exams in



*Edward Mudavassery SJ*

**- Rector**





the 1<sup>st</sup> week of June. Most of them passed with flying colors. The migrant crisis exploded in the month of April and into the month of May. DNC community response was led by Fr. Jacob supported by 4th years in preparing dry ration packets and distributing them to the worst affected people.

As soon as the government allowed workers' movement, we started renovation of the top floor of the philosophers from June and having completed that, the workers have moved down to the ground floor. Soon we will have a fully renovated philosophers' block waiting only for their return to DNC! Fr. Jacob was able to get a lot of free mud from the builders and he has developed two new fields below the carpentry.

DNC will see a new outreach in the form of a small Office Facility for Human Formation with Safeguarding as the main focus. Fr. Konrad will be the director and will collaborate with the Global Alliance for Safeguarding. He also conducted a 10-day online training program in Safeguarding for teachers under the certification of St. Xavier's College, Mumbai.

The professors got busy with the online teaching from June. They had training programs at JDV before that. Now they have become quasi experts in this new mode of teaching. Fr. John Karu, the beadle of DNC Staff introduced Dominos, Scrabble and 'Oh Hell' for the post supper recreation. Our 3 young turks and the veterans Ted Bowling (96) and George Beck are great enthusiasts of this evening event. The staff has regular prayers of the Church in the evenings. We all have access to UNIVERSALIS App for this purpose. We also have been enriching ourselves by participating in webinars of one's choice and the other online programs.

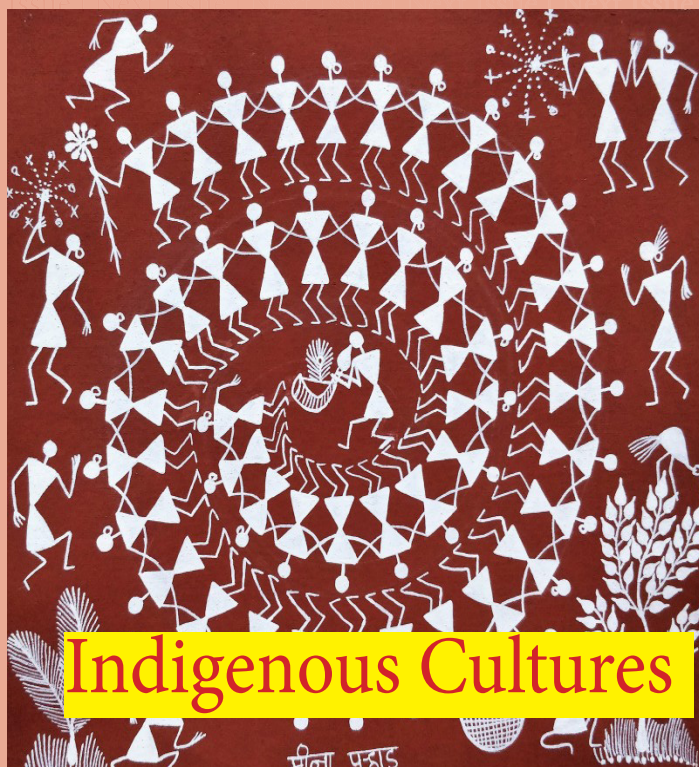
Fr. Henry has undertaken a massive clearing and reorganizing of the house library with the help of Fr. Martin and Ms. Isprace. He is discarding duplicates and irrelevant books. We are also providing in a restricted way spiritual ministries. Fr. Francis Pudhicherry is going to try out a full retreat via ZOOM for about 25. They will be staying in their own communities in different parts of India. The pandemic is forcing us to look for creative ways of doing our ministries. However, we have to ensure ways and means to protect the identity and confidentiality of our clients.

In Pune the number of covid patients seems to be still on the increase. It is not clear how the infection is spreading. It has come to our neighbourhood. We try to keep the basic protocols and trust in God and carry on with our duties and responsibilities. Now we all are looking forward to the return of the students in November. A decision to this effect is still to be announced by JDV. In the meantime let us pray for each other.

Happy Feast of Mother Mary!

Edward Mudavassery SJ  
08-09-2020

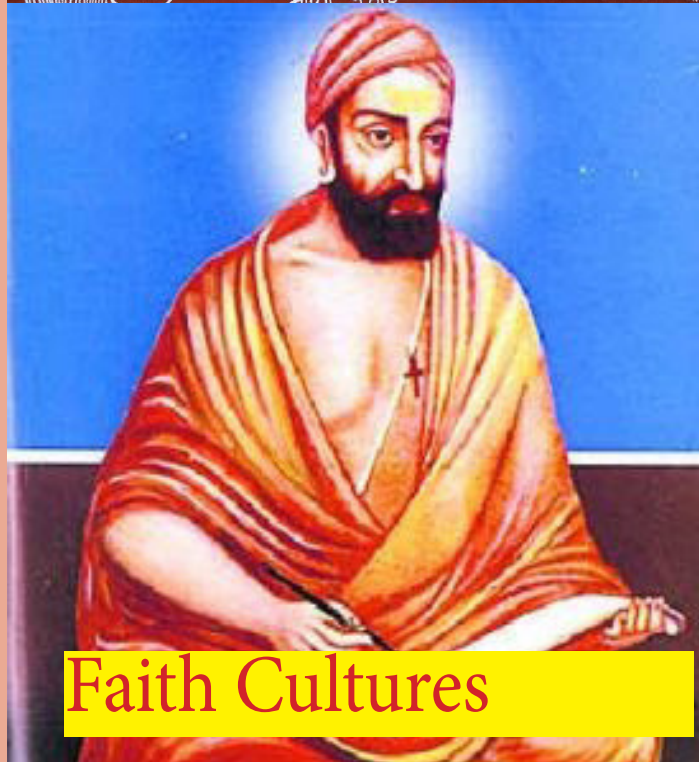




Indigenous Cultures



Classical Cultures



Faith Cultures



Modern Cultures

# Cultural Dialogue

What is culture? How do we respond to the inter-culturality of our nation? Do we appreciate diversity and promote the dying cultures? Are we involved in the "High Culture"- dance, music and poet-ry? How do we preserve indigenous cultures? Does our faith get cultural rootedness? And most important-ly are we able to critically look at the modern culture and appreciate it?

Send your write-ups to [dncetimes@gmail.com](mailto:dncetimes@gmail.com). Don't forget to critically appreciate our efforts. Your words mean a lot to us. Send your feedbacks as well.