

(For Private Circulation)



Fr. Louis Marie Léveillé



Fr. Pedro Arrupe

**APRIL-MAY 2020**

# MNL Madurai Jesuits' Newsletter

## Provincial's Programme

Given below is Fr. Provincial's Programme (March - April 2020) incorporating the changes that had to be made owing to the COVID-19 total lockdown. As and when there is greater clarity regarding the evolving Coronavirus situation, programme changes may be made and communicated to you.

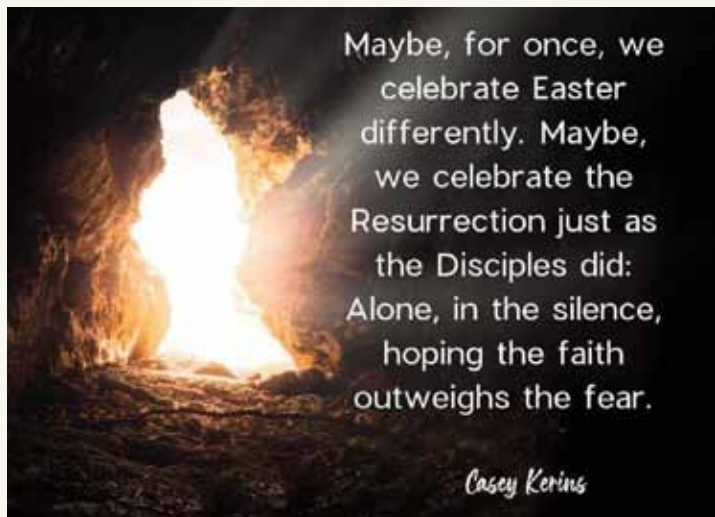
### MARCH 2020

02-05	Province Office
06	GBM: St. Xavier's College, Palayamkottai
08	Province Consult, Maduralaya
09-24	Province Office
25-31	Province Office (National Lockdown)
27	Skype Consult

### APRIL 2020

01-30	Province Office (National Lockdown)
02-03	Skype Consult
04	Skype CEN-MDU Joint Consult
10	Skype Consult

## ANNOUNCEMENTS



**Retreats:** COVID-19 is a "social emergency" and the countrywide lockdown may not be lifted in one go. As coming together, in groups large or small, for retreats was ruled out, ours and our lay collaborators were encouraged to sign up for the online retreat (5-12 April 2020) on the theme *LIFELINE, In Solidarity with...* organized at the Assistancy level and coordinated by Frs. George Pattery, Jossie D'Mello, Nithin Monteiro, and Siji Chacko. The MDU-CEN Province Retreat with Fr. Francis Pudhicherry as Director (2-10 May 2020 at SHC, Shembaganur) and MDU-CEN Young Priests' Retreat with Fr. Errol Fernandes as Director (13-21 May 2020 at JMJ Retreat Centre, Sirumalai) stand cancelled.

*The print edition of MNL April-May 2020 will be mailed to you whenever it is ready.*

**Formees Summer Programme:** The formees of both MDU and CEN Provinces were directed by Fr. PCF to join the *LIFE LINE – in solidarity with....* online retreat. They are very well engaged and guided by spiritual directors in their respective places. At the end of the online retreat, they will stay put wherever they are unless the government lifts the lockdown or does so maybe temporarily only to impose it again. In any case, in order to minimize the travels of scholastics, those who find themselves in the northern part of Tamil Nadu will be accommodated at Dhyana Ashram, Chennai, and those who are in the south will be asked to stay at Beschi Illam, Dindigul. After the online retreat, if the lockdown is extended, it is planned to engage them in online courses supported by LIBA and other online training institutes. The first-year theologians are working on a suitable study package.

If there is abatement of the global crisis, things get better, and freedom of movement is restored, then we may have the Formation Meet as usual in May at SHC, Shembag, followed by a three-day triduum and renewal of vows for all the formees.

**COVID-19 and CEN-MDU Jubilarians Day:** We do not know whether it is going to get better or get worse before getting better. Please stay tuned and you will be told whether or not the Jubilarians Day will be celebrated at Beschi, Dindigul, on 29 May 2020 as scheduled.

**Fr. General** will be visiting Chennai in February 2021 for the 125 anniversary celebrations of Satya Nilayam. He will arrive at Satya Nilayam on 20 February morning and be there for the Cultural Programme on 20 February evening and Mass, Public Function and Lunch on 21 February morning. He will spend the night of 20 February at Satya Nilayam.

On 21 February evening, Fr. General will address the Chennai Province Jesuits and have dinner with them and spend the night of 21 February at Loyola College. The talk could be from 5.30 p.m. to 7.00 p.m. followed by photo session and dinner. On 22 February morning, Fr. General and team will leave for Trivandrum to attend the JCSA meeting there.

### **Please Note New Mobile Numbers**

Fr. Maria Sigamani: +91 88703-15908.  
Sch. Hansel Arockiasamy: +91 82203-37161

**Arun Kumar T.**, a first year novice, left the novitiate on 13.03.2020.

## **Health Update**

I reached Kottayam on March 16th morning and started treatment for my back pain. From getting up at 5.00 a.m. to 8.00 p.m. I am having yoga, Mass, physiotherapy, ayurveda massage, mud bath etc. Italian sisters are running this hospital. It is 20km from Kottayam. Altogether 30 beds are available and at the moment six priests and ten sisters are undergoing treatment. Natural diet is given. It seems to be a good hospital for spinal cord and bone-related problems. I have to be here for 21 days by which time I hope to be alright. Kindly continue to pray for me.

*P.S. Arul*

### **Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network (PWPN) Freedom from Addiction**

In April 2020, we pray with Pope Francis that those suffering from addiction may be helped and accompanied.

## **NEWS DIGEST**

**Fr. Joseph Ignaci (Igni)**, pronounced his Final Vows in the Society of Jesus in the presence of Fr. Jebamalai Irudayaraj, Provincial (CEN), on 19 March 2020 in Christ the King Church, Loyola College, Chennai.

**Fr. Amalraj Amirtha Nathan** took his Final Vows on March 25th in St. John De Britto Shrine, Oriyur. Since total lockdown was in force in the whole country, the invited fellow Jesuits, family members and friends were not able to participate in his final profession. The Oriyur Jesuit community members concelebrated the Mass and the Superior, Fr. Joe Mike received his Vows. There was a short felicitation function after the Mass in the church itself.

## **APPOINTMENTS AND TRANSFERS**

### **Fr. General has appointed:**

**Fr. Ajit Kumar Xess:** Provincial of the Ranchi Province.

**Fr. Sebastian Jeerakassery (DEL):** Assistant General Treasurer, Rome.

**Fr. Jose Jacob Maruthukunnel (KER):**

Co-Instructor of Tertianship at Kandy.

**Frs. Francis Xavier Perianayagam, Marianathan Chinnasamy and Paul Benedict S.** as the CEN Province Consultants.

### **Fr. POSA has appointed:**

**Fr. Sathyabalan Arockiasamy (CEN)** to serve on the faculty of Satya Nilayam, Chennai.

**Fr. Antony Dias (Tony Dias)** of BOM as the new JESA Secretary. His official email address is: <jesa.secretary@gmail.com>.

## STATUS OF FATHERS AND BROTHERS 2020 APPOINTMENTS AND TRANSFERS: LIST I

NAME	FROM	TO
P Alex Yagoo	Tertianship, Shembag	Ph.D. Zoology, Berchmans Illam, Chennai
P Antony Inico I.	Sirumalai	Clive House, Tiruchi (Ph.D. Commerce, Minister & Treasurer)
F Arockiam Peter	Thozhamai Illam	Beschi Illam, Dindigul
P Arockiaraj G.	Vidyaniketan, Trivandrum	Beschi Illam, Dindigul
F Arokiaraj Irudayasamy	De Britto, Devakottai	St. Mary's, Madurai
P Baskar Yesumanickam	Loyola, Kuppayanallur	M.Sc. Maths, St. Xavier's, Palayamkottai
F Edward Brunoraj S.	St. Mary's, Madurai	Campus Treasurer, St. Mary's, Madurai
P Emmanuel Arockiam	LTI, Madurai	JESCO, SJC, Tiruchi
P Francis Sales A.	Loyola, Kuppayanallur	Xaveriana, Thoothukudi
P Francis Xavier Raj M.	SHC, Shembag	Kohima Region
P George Stephen Thayriam A.	Southall, London	Maduralaya (Minister & Secretary to the Provincial)
P Innaci John V.	AAC, Karumathur	Minister, AAC, Karumathur
F Irudayasamy Sebastian	SHC, Shembag	Beschi Illam, Dindigul
P Jesu Nesa Raju V.	St. Mary's, Madurai	Carmel HS School, Nagercoil (Minister & Staff)
P Jesu Raja Raju	SUPAM	Afghanistan Mission
P Jeyabaskaran Savariraj	SJIS, Ooty	Maduralaya (Ph.D., Social Work, Gandhigram & Dir: Amuthu)
F Joseph M. Arockiam	St. Mary's, Dindigul	Campus Treasurer, AAC, Karumathur
P Maria Annaraj K.	SUPAM	Director, VMI, Vilangudi
P Masillamani S. Pauliah	Oriyur	St. Xavier's College Farm, Irudayakulam
P Paul Pragash S.	AAC, Karumathur	SJC, Tiruchi
P Rajasekaran A.I.	SUPAM	PEAK (Asst. Director), SHC, Shembaganur
F Stephen Raj S.	St. Mary's, Madurai	Campus Treasurer, St. Mary's, Dindigul
P Vedha Stalin Joseph	SUPAM	Vocation Promoter, St. Mary's, Madurai
F Victor Paul Sengolraj A.	St. Mary's Estate, Manalur	Minister, De Britto, Devakottai
P Vincent Irudayaraj M.	SXC, Palayamkottai	Minister, SXC, Palayamkottai
P Xavier Antony Selvam M.	VMI, Vilangudi	Licentiate, Pontifical Biblical Institute, Rome



## WHAT IS NOVEL CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)?

***Be aware, prepare yourself but don't panic!***

**MICROBES** or microorganisms are tiny living things found all around us and cannot be seen by the naked eye. Human body is home to billions of microbes namely bacteria, fungi, protozoan and viruses. Many microbes are vital and essential for human health. However, some bacteria and viruses could be harmful to human beings.

**VIRUSES** are smaller than bacteria. The largest virus is smaller than the smallest bacterium. Viruses need other living organisms for their survival and multiplication. **CORONAVIRUSES** are a family of viruses that infect humans, animals and birds; they cause respiratory and gastrointestinal diseases. They cause illness starting from common cold to more severe diseases such as, Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and the Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS). However, the present infection worldwide is due to a novel coronavirus transmitted human-human. Currently Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus-2 (SARS-CoV-2) called as a novel virus causes Coronavirus Disease 2019 known as COVID-19. This virus was initially transmitted from bats / pangolins to humans in China. COVID-19 causes respiratory tract disease in people. Be aware, but do not panic. Individually and collectively we must take the necessary preventive and curative action to overcome this infection.

**GLOBAL IMPACT OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC:** As on April 11, 2020, there are 17,80,271 coronavirus cases (4,04,029 recovered and 1,08,822 deaths) at the global level. In India there are 6,634 coronavirus cases (652 recovered and 242 deaths). There are 911 confirmed cases (44 recovered and 8 deaths) in Tamil Nadu.

**DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ORDINARY COUGH AND COVID-19:** Cold and cough are generally due to an allergic reaction. A fever with cough and a runny nose is a symptom of the flu. When you have fever with dry cough and have breathing difficulty, these can be the symptoms of coronavirus infection. The symptoms of COVID-19 may start from the onset to clinical recovery for mild cases 2-3 weeks, but 4-6 weeks for severe cases. Some of the common symptoms are: Dry cough, high fever, sore throat, difficulty in breathing, headache and fatigue.

**WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU HAVE SYMPTOMS:** You should contact your doctor immediately and share your symptoms over the phone. Currently the only way to be tested for COVID-19 is to use national or state helpline numbers. Helplines: 1075 / 1800-112-545 / 011-23978046 (National); 044-29510500 (Tamil Nadu) and 104 (Puducherry).

**VULNERABLE TO COVID-19:** People of all age groups may be affected by COVID-19 but the elderly (above 65 years), alcoholics, diabetic patients, transplant patients, asthmatics, cardiac patients, persons with less immunity and children are at the highest risk of COVID-19 infection.

**PREVENTION:** While COVID-19 spreads through cough, sneeze, personal contact, contaminated objects and mass gatherings, the best ways to protect yourself and others are as follows: 1. Wash your hands often for 20 seconds with water and soap or use sanitizer (60% alcohol); 2. Drink plenty of water/liquids; 3. Avoid contact with sick people; 4. Cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze; 5. Stay home and self-isolate yourself, and 6. Do not touch your eyes, nose or mouth with unclean hands; 7. Eat nutritious food.

Twenty seconds are roughly the time it takes silently to recite two Hail Marys. Don't let the tap run while you wash your hands. Open it only to wet your hands and, after you have worked up a lather and cleaned hands thoroughly as shown in the picture, open the tap again to rinse your hands and wipe them dry.

**TREATMENT:** Currently there is no specific drug for curing the confirmed COVID-19 patients. Let your doctor prescribe drugs following the guidelines of the Union Health Ministry.

**CRY OF THE WORLD & OUR PROACTIVE RESPONSE:** As we know very well, the entire human community is collectively facing the serious coronavirus challenge. The poor, migrants, street children, refugees, beggars, differently-abled and the elderly people are suffering a lot every minute as our crucified Lord Jesus suffered. With innovative strategies and the mighty power of the Risen Lord, let us individually and collectively get involved fully in rebuilding the lives of our people.



***S. Maria Packiam***

## HOW DID MDU JESUITS RESPOND TO COVID-19?

As the COVID-19 crisis was unfolding, urgent communications started going from the Province Curia. With the threat of contagion becoming real, an email dated 11 March 2020, announced the indefinite postponement of the following scheduled meetings:

March

14 Meeting of LS/TL/Coord. of MDU-CEN, Maduralaya

15 Meeting of LS/TL, Maduralaya

16 CEN-MDU Joint Consult, Maduralaya

Visitations and out-of-Dindigul visits of Fr. Provincial were postponed indefinitely/cancelled. Province Consult proceedings were shifted from real face-to-face meetings to virtual face-to-face Skype online meetings.

In email communications, Fr. Provincial, emphasized our complementary response of social distancing and social outreach in this time of crisis. He emphasized the need to do whatever we could for the people most affected by the mounting economic crisis going hand in hand with the Coronavirus pandemic. Our domestic co-workers on a monthly salary would continue to get their salary whether or not they could report to work or be given temporary board and room facilities. Assistance in cash or kind (groceries, food items, soap, sanitizers, masks etc.) was encouraged to be given to the poor, particularly, daily wage labourers and piece-rate workers whose services we have been using in our communities, institutions, centres, parishes, farms and estates.

At the Province level, Fr. Provincial constituted a COVID-19 Disaster Management Committee (CDMC) with

- Fr. Michaelraj Lourdu Ratinam (Convener)
- Fr. Thomas Alexander (Coordinator of Higher Education Commission)
- Fr. Joseph Xavier P. (Coordinator of Secondary Education Commission)

whose primary task would be to network with the conveners of the community-level teams, compare notes regarding the best practices observed in our institutions /centres, share all this information and thus animate and coordinate various relief measures.

Seven of these relief measures have been uploaded so far in the Curia website in the *Ministries of consolation– catalogue* (Explore our local online initiatives for the time of the global health crisis).

**Arul Anandar College, Karumathur**, identified in its surrounding 15 ARISE villages 300 most needy families. A package of 10 kg rice was supplied to each family with the help of and supported by the government officials. Similarly, in an attempt to serve the poorest of the poor, AAC relief workers ventured out with provision kits of rice and groceries worth Rs. 1,000 each to 200 poor rural families, chiefly Dalits-Arundhadiars and Narikoravars in Usilampatty and three ARISE villages in the neighbouring areas of Karumathur .



**In its action taken report, Carmel HS School, Nagercoil, states:** We conducted a COVID-19 awareness programme for the staff and students on March 16th with the assistance Drs. Kinsal and Mary Latha, officials from the Corporation. At the initiative taken by our NCC cadets, we facilitated all our staff and students to take an oath to adhere to the orders given by the Central and State Governments with regard to self-isolation, social distancing and stay at home to protect our country from COVID-19.

We printed 5,000 COVID-19 awareness pamphlets and, with the help of our staff and students distributed the same to the primary school students and their parents in quite a few villages of Kanyakumari and Tirunelveli Districts. The same awareness pamphlets were distributed to 626 Class XI students and 576 Class XII students from four different schools that had Carmel as the centre for the Government Public Examinations. Besides, these students were also provided with soap and sanitizers.

Forty staff visited remote villages and distributed food packets to the poorest of the poor. Also, they



gave counselling to many on how to face COVID-19 fearlessly. We identified 10 students from Below Poverty Line families and distributed Rs 3,000 to each of those families. Similarly, we have identified 29 families in our neighbourhood – either widows or daily wage earners – and have planned to provide them with grocery items. Through JMAADD we are giving online counselling to patients and are planning to give one-on-one onsite counselling with due permission from the civil authorities. We are contemplating the formation of a committee with representatives from the management, staff, PTA and alumni to coordinate all these activities and we have set aside Rs. 70,000 from our funds so far for the COVID-19 relief work and many of our staff members also have been contributing generously to this cause.

**DACA, Madurai**, has accommodated within its campus eight of its co-workers from the start of the COVID-19 lockdown and provided them with masks and sanitizers. Moreover, DACA provided full salary to all its 14 co-workers for April 2020.

**De Britto HS School, Devakottai**, has supplied groceries to 30 families including our domestic co-workers and migrants.

**IDEAS-LAAS, Madurai**, has come up with a variety of services during the COVID-19 lockdown. Awareness about the pandemic was given through social media, mobile radio “namma kural” and over the mobile phone for:

- eight days to 670 conservancy workers in Madurai and Virudhunagar districts
- 15 days to 2,300 unorganised workers in Sivakasi, Sattur, Thirumangalam, Vadippatti, Kodaikanal, Oddanchathiram taluks, and
- eight days to 2,000 Dalit working women in Dindigul, Virudhunagar, Theni, Sivagangai, Ramnad, Thoothukudi, Madurai, Nellai districts.

Also, on March 20th, at Mattuthavani, Madurai, the team members gave a demonstration on hand wash to a crowd of 1,000 people and then distributed handbills on COVID-19 to 5,000 people. Besides, they have taken steps to ensure the availability of the full protective gear to conservancy workers with accompanying training on the need for using it. The team has also been bringing the difficulties of the scavengers to the attention of the authorities at the local and district levels through email and WhatsApp.

Our Jesuit companions of **Kalangarai, Nagapattinam**, have contacted nearly 1,000 rural poor widows and deserted women from 200 families in Sirkazhi, Nagai and Keelaiyur Panchayat Unions through phone and instructed them on how to avail themselves of both the State and Central Governments relief packages.

The Jesuit community of **LTI, Madurai**, provided rice and dhal packages, each costing Rs.1,000, to 50 poor

families, especially to those involved in scavenging work in and around Gnanaolivupuram. The Loyola Media team has come out with 20 professional 3-minute videos and has reached out to a few lakhs of people through social media. While some of these videos entertain and educate the public on COVID-19, the others promote Christian spirituality and responsibility during the Lenten season. For the past three weeks, personal counselling has been provided by Frs. Emmanuel and Richard to a minimum 12 persons per day from around the world through helpline calls.

Jesuits of **Xaveriana, Thoothukudi**, are awaiting the formal request from the district administration through the diocese to open our school premises to support the government and the people in the fight against the Coronavirus. In the meantime, they have provided a financial aid of Rs. 2,000 to some of their co-workers who needed it. Apart from this, 80 poor people who sought alms were given Rs. 50 to Rs. 100 each depending upon their condition.

In collaboration with the District Collectorate, the Chemistry Department of **St. Joseph's College, Tiruchi**, prepared hand sanitizers for the use of health workers. Earlier, the hand sanitizers were prepared only for the staff and the few hostellers in the campus. St. Joseph's community used the public address system in the parish and the sub-stations to spread COVID-19 awareness. Food materials were distributed to Mullaikudi Parish and its substations (120 families), Our Lady of Lourdes Parish (110 families), Devarayaneri Gypsy Village (250 Gypsy families) and some campus employees. RO Drinking Water was provided daily to 100 pavement dwellers and passers-by and financial assistance given to the African students, orphans and semi orphans. As a public welfare measure, the school playground has been converted into a vegetable market; 60 classrooms in the school, 63 classrooms in the college and 460 rooms in the college hostels have been transformed into isolation wards. St. Joseph's Disaster Management Committee headed by Fr. John Wilson



and guided by Frs. Rector, Principal and Parish Priests is planning further activities including appeals to donors to join St. Joseph's in this venture of assisting those most affected by the pandemic .

The Superior and community of **St. Mary's HS School, Dindigul**, have readily come forward to make available the school building to COVID-19 patients and are waiting for the word of acceptance from the district civil authorities. Also, they have provided financial assistance to 50 poor families and daily wage earners in Dindigul town.

The CDMC members of **St. Mary's HS School, Madurai**, are collecting data. They have planned to reach out to around 150 families of the needy and daily wage earners in their immediate neighbourhood. Generously the school has made available its grounds during the lockdown for locating a vegetable market and parking of vehicles. Thousands of people benefit from this arrangement. The community has also been taking care of the basic needs of 21 families of our domestic co-workers in and around the school campus.

Our Jesuit confreres of **St. Xavier's, Palayamkottai**, have been involved in several services during the Corona lockdown. They have planned to offer the District Collector the school and college hostels for the use of quarantined people. Besides, a team has been appointed to help the

government officials with logistics. Secondly, they have given their domestic workers special incentives. Thirdly, they have mobilised women students in NSS to give awareness on Corona to the villages around Palayamkottai. Fourthly, when the demand for sanitizers was exponentially increasing due to the Corona pandemic and the available sanitizers were beyond the reach of common people, with the help of its Xavier Research Foundation under the leadership Fr. Ignacimuthu, the college made an effective herbal and organic sanitizer (Xavier Sanitizer-XS சவேரியார் கிருமி விரட்டி) and distributed 300 bottles of it to police personnel and the STAND villages (STAND - Students' Training and Action for Neighbourhood Development). Fifthly, the technology has been transferred to a small local company 'Biomeitez' to manufacture and market it. Xavier Research Foundation will keep a check over the quality and pricing .

**Beschi Illam, Dindigul:** On March 18th, Sr. Smita PDDM gave an awareness talk to our 23 novices on the prevention of COVID-19. An urgent community meeting was called by Fr. Michael Doss, Superior, on March 25th for information sharing on the ways and means by which we could prevent the spread of COVID-19. Later that day, at 4:30 p.m., united in spirit with Pope Francis, community members recited the Lord's Prayer seeking deliverance from the Coronavirus menace.

From March 26th, while a few non-residential co-workers of Beschi Illam, Dindigul, have moved in, others have been given leave with salary during the lockdown. All co-workers now at work, formed Jesuits, novices, and scholastics relocated from Pune are provided with soap , sanitizers and face masks. Two domestic co-workers' families residing within Beschi campus, are provided with rice and groceries.

Substituting the co-workers not able to report to work, our novices have plunged into action. They are engaged in domestic, dairy and agri farm activities, and in caring for our senior Jesuits in Arrupe Bhavan. During their free time, they meet in small groups of 3 or 4 and have spiritual conversation, read and share on GC 35, and meet the Director of Novices once in three days to share and get helped in this time of change and challenge.

**Maduralaya, Dindigul**, continues to operate with skeleton resident staff. If absolutely necessary, essential staff drop in during curfew relaxation hours to complete urgent tasks. All get their normal salary and our estates, too, have been instructed to pay their registered workers and financially assist unregistered workers to buy provisions. They have also kept their vehicles ready at the service of the people in remote places. Soap, sanitizers and masks have been given. As per directives of the Government of India Ministry of Home Affairs





that have allowed resumption of farming operations by farmers and farm workers in the field, workers residing in and around our estates in Kodai Hills and Sirumalai have started reporting to work; rollcall is dispensed with and social distancing is insisted on. They are given masks to wear and soap and water are kept for their use.

**JRS-TN:** On March 23rd, it was announced that all JRS-TN programmes which would necessitate gathering a group of children/people would be suspended with immediate effect till further notice. JRS-TN Complementary Education Centres in the camps have been left open for the use of the administrative authorities and medical officers who visit the camps. Keeping in mind the precarious situation in the camps, the JRS-TN field staff, who are refugees themselves, have been urged to work in tandem with the camp authorities and the camp committee as well as the camp youth to carry out necessary and suitable preventive measures. In general, the camp inmates fenced the camps with sarees to discourage the entry of outsiders into the camp and to prevent contamination.



**Tiruchi Zone:** The youth along with JRS staff Mr. Mariyadoss have been spraying herbal sanitizer – made of salt, neem leaves, turmeric and water – to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Mrs. Mano Shanthi, teacher of Life Skills Training Centre, JRS-TN, along with the participants trained in the advance level training offered by JRS, stitched 500 masks and distributed to the camp inmates in Okkur and Kariyoor as preventive measures for COVID-19. Besides, 224 members of the Sri Lankan refugee camp at Okkur have been provided with groceries. In Thoopukollai, Pudukottai, the youth contacted the local health inspectors to spray chemical sanitizers in the camp.

**Nellai Zone:** The youth club members of Perumalpuram camp in Kanyakumari district created and circulated a video highlighting the need for sanitizing the camps. Under the able guidance of Ms. Indumathi, staff, JRS-TN, the adult volunteers in the camp made use of the

JRS Complementary Education Centre and prepared 1,000 masks for free distribution among camp inmates and among people of the host community in the neighbourhood on March 29th and 31st. With funds raised by themselves, the youth in Kolivizhai camp, Kanyakumari District, distributed groceries to the camp inmates on March 31st. JRS Complementary Education Centres in Kolivizhai and Pagode camps in Kanyakumari district were used by the government medical team to scan the camp inmates for possible Coronavirus infection on March 31st. In collaboration with the fire service personnel, Ms. Indumathi and some youth volunteers sanitized the Kangaikondam camp as a preventive measure to control the spread of COVID - 19.

*Swaminathan*

### **Sch. Raphael Alexander writes from Paris, France**

The real celebration of Hope is already and not-yet. France is fighting hard to overcome the havoc created in the hope that the Risen Lord offers to each one of us. As far as the Jesuits in Europe are concerned, it is the EOF (Europe Occidentale Francophone) Province that is worst affected by this monstrous pandemic. It is hard to digest and accept the continuous death announcements of senior Jesuits almost every day (so far 15). Some of these EOF Jesuits have been in one way or the other associated with Madurai Province, for example, Fr. Henri Madelin, former Provincial (1979-1985). At present, three homes of the aged EOF Jesuits and a few apostolic communities, too, have been combatting this dangerous virus. The community of Sèvres in Paris in which I reside and the community of the Immaculate Conception at Pau in which Fr. Arsène Annasse (MDU) resides are so far safe and we are keeping fine. My Diaconate Ordination that was initially planned to take place on 18 April 2020 is postponed to 20 June due to COVID-19. Let the Risen Lord restore all to health!

### **Kudiyurimai Manadu (Peoples' Citizenship Public Meeting), Palayamkottai**

JCERT, in collaboration with PCM (Peoples' Citizenship Movement), organized a massive public meeting on 7 March 2020 in Palayamkottai to affirm the citizenship rights of the people of India against the backdrop of the recently enacted CAA (Citizenship Amendment Act), NPR (National Population Register) and NRC (National Register of Citizens). Most of the major national and regional political parties participated in this meeting. The dignitaries who enlightened the gathering through their powerful speeches included Mr. V. Narayanasamy, CM, Pondy, Dr. Thol. Thirumavalavan MP and President of Viduthalai Chiruthaikal, Prof. Jawaharullah, President, Manitha Neya Makkal Katchi,





Maulana P.A. Kaja Muhaideen, President, Tamilnadu Jamma Adul Ulma Society, Most Rev. Antonysamy Savarimuthu, Bishop of Palayamkottai, Br. Ravi S.H.J., President, TN-CRI, and a few other prominent persons from political, religious and social organizations. Fr. S.M. John Kennedy, Director of JCERT and Coordinator of PCM and Mr. Britto, Lawyer, organized the entire programme. About 15,000 people including Muslims, Christians and Hindus participated in the meeting. Everyone was astonished to realize that it was a highly disciplined, purpose-driven gathering and meeting.

At the end of it, all took a pledge to protect the Indian Constitution in the context of the threat to it from the sectarian ruling forces. The important resolutions, presented and passed during the meeting were:

- the unconditional withdrawal of CAA, as it is discriminatory and against the fundamental rights enshrined in the Indian Constitution.
- stopping the process of NPR and NRC, as it might



result in the denial of Indian citizenship to religious and ethnic minorities.

- impartial inquiry into the recent riots in Delhi with stringent punishment for the instigators and adequate compensation for the victims and
- ensuring the protection of the Indian Constitution and constitutional and fundamental rights of the citizens of India.

This meeting was unique on several counts. It was the first of its kind in the whole of Tamil Nadu for Christians taking up the initiative to organize such a mega event against CAA, NPR and NRC, involving people from all major religions, major political parties, human rights, social and religious organizations and CRI units. It was the first such meeting where so many prominent political and religious leaders shared the dais and addressed the gathering. Thus it became a valuable model for others to emulate for the protection of our fundamental rights.

*John Kennedy S.M.*

## NEWS FROM OUR COMMUNITIES

### Dindigul: Beschi Illam

Thanks to the support, generosity and hospitality of the Jesuits of Kodai Hills, on March 1st, 7th and 8th, our 12 first year novices visited Sahayapuram, Palamalai and Savarikkadu in Kodai Hills and gave an hour-long cultural programme in each of these places highlighting the current socio-political problems in India. After fruitfully accomplishing their work, pastoral and hospital/hospice experiments, our second year novices returned to Beschi Illam on March 12th. From March 15th to 19th, Fr. Mariyadass, the would-be Novice Master of Sri Lanka visited our novitiate to get an experiential knowledge of our novitiate community.

On March 21st, Servant of God Fr. Louis Marie Léveil's birthday in heaven, Fr. Yagoo celebrated the Eucharist and preached on the man and his mission. Immediately after the Mass, all proceeded to the refurbished linen room block which was blessed and rechristened **Leveil Block** by Fr. Michael Doss, Superior of Beschi Illam.

**JRS-TN:** On March 11th and 12th, a two-day counselling session for the complementary education teachers was conducted by Sr. Regina PDDM, who currently pursues her postgraduate studies in Counselling and Psychotherapy at Anugraha College in Nochiyodaipatti, Dindigul. On March 14th and 15th, a two-day orientation on how to organize summer camps was given to our youth by Mr. Maran and Sr. Lisy from PASAM. On March 18th and 19th, Fr. Leo Pereira made a camp visit to Kovai zone and attended the valedictory function of the advanced level training offered by JRS-TN in Nagiyampatti camp. On March 21st, there was a valedictory function for the 36th batch of Grihini students at Madona Illam, Nilakottai. Fr. Arul SDB, Director, Don Bosco Language Institute, Malapatti, Dindigul, presided over the function and gave a meaningful speech to the graduates.

*Swaminathan*



## Karumathur: AAC

The 16th Rural Sports Meet conducted by the Department of Physical Education on February 27th drew a large number of school students to our college premises. The 41st Graduation Day held on February 29th saw AAC precincts enveloped in variegated robes adorning 550 neo-graduates. Justice M. S. Ramesh from the Madurai Bench of Madras High Court delivered a motivational graduation address. Ms. S. Devi, an orator from SFR College, Sivakasi, graced the Women's Day celebrations organized by Women's Centre on March 14th and enthused the gathering with her scintillating talk.

Fr. Paul Pragash delivered a special address on "An Overview of Contemporary Literary Theories" at a UGC-sponsored National Seminar at Sri Meenakshi Government Arts College, Madurai, on March 4th and the talk was much appreciated. Fr. Vincent Sekhar participated in JCSA Core Team meeting held between 14th and 16th March at ISI, Bengaluru, to take stock of the present situation in India and to propose viable alternatives to secure justice and to promote reconciliation. The team decided to circulate the JCSA statements to Province Coordinators and also establish core teams at the zonal levels.

*Paul Pragash S.*

## AAC Golden Jubilee (1970-2020) Celebrations

At a time when Coronavirus reigns supreme, we, the AAC Management, Staff and Students, feel relieved that we completed our Golden Jubilee celebrations ahead of the lockdown!

As the convener of the Golden Jubilee, I would say that the three-day celebration was a delight to our senses and a facelift to our college. The Golden Jubilee song, composed by Fr. Mani Valan and me, set the tone of our celebrations. The song was the daily treat in the college premises.



We were fortunate to be blessed by the presence and prayers of our Archbishop Most Rev. Dr. Antony Pappusamy, our Provincial Fr. Danis Ponniah, Chennai Provincial Fr. Jebamalai Raja, and De La Salle Provincial Br. T. Amalan during the inaugural function on July 17th. The Golden Jubilee Building and the Great Arch at the main gate will evoke memories of the past to the present generation.



At the beginning of the Golden Jubilee year, our Principal Fr. S. Basil Xavier formed the Core Committee and several other sub-committees to elicit the cooperation of the staff and students to ensure the success of our 3-day celebrations (5th to 7th of March 2020). All the main events of this academic year had a Golden Jubilee flavour. Dr. T. Kala and her team helped the departments to pull out of their archives and exhibit the laurels of the last 50 years. The indoor stadium that housed the Golden Jubilee Exhibition was flocked by students and teachers of the neighbouring schools who kept gazing at the tastefully arranged exhibits. Pongal was yet another event that delighted the students with the variety of "kai pakkuvam" of Pongal feeding! Fr. V. John Innaci, along with Dr. J. Vanitha and Dr. N. Veera Parameswari, succeeded in attracting over 25 colleges far and near for the Golden Jubilee tournaments and games. Fr. S. Paul Pragash and his team identified the best of talents among students through the Golden Jubilee Competitions. Nothing could concretely be actualized without financial support and the credit for mobilizing the needed resources goes to Fr. S. Maria Augustine, our Campus Treasurer, and his team.

The Golden Jubilee Campfest was spearheaded by Dr. S.P. Malar Kannan, Dept of RDS, and his team. The Golden Jubilee College Day was conducted with precision by Dr. S. Arul Prasad of the RDS Department and his team. On the third day morning, the Alumni went round the campus, treasuring their memories, narrating their naughty behaviours and the accompanying punishments! Fr. M. Anbarasu, our Alumni Director along with the Dept. Heads, made a concerted effort to bring the alumni together.

The Valedictory Civic Function was meticulously organized by Dr. K.S. Joseph Wilson, HoD, Physics, and his team. God's plan and providence brought on stage dignitaries on all the three days such as Mr. Mysskin, Mr. Sethu, Mr. Gana Bala, Mr. Snehan, Mr. P. Sujith Kumar, and Mr. Lourdu Manoharan, Honourable Justice Mrs. J. Nisha Banu.... They all shared with our students the needed values of our times: Gratitude, sacrifice, and living together in harmony.





To commemorate the Golden Jubilee AAC's Jesuit pioneers and retired staff made a nostalgic visit and it was nice seeing them greet on stage and honour one another with broad smiles! Indeed, Arul Anandar College couldn't have been a beacon of light to its neighbourhood without the hard work and sacrifice of these pioneers! Of course, tributes were paid to the deceased stalwarts of AAC whose continued blessings we enjoy from above!

It was heartening to see the many VVIPs off-stage, especially Karumathur and the 18 Patti people, the ones who stand by us, our well-wishers, our sympathisers, our critics, our enthusiasts, and our donors.

The whole support system starting with the benign guidance of our Superior Fr. John Pragasam, the ready cooperation of our Secretary, constant follow-up of our Principal, the unwavering commitment of our Deputy Principal, Vice-principals, affable Faculty, the much-appreciated practical arrangements that were made by Fr. S. Jeyaseelan and Br. Kulandairaj and the total involvement of our beloved students was a stunning experience! True to the Rig Vedic dictum "Samvo manamsi jaanathaam" (May our hearts be of one accord!), our celebrations brought us together. God bless Arul Anandar College!

*Vincent Sekhar*

### **Madurai: St. Mary's**

On February 28th, the first Friday of the Lenten Season, the Way of the Cross was meaningfully conducted by CIC and St. Joseph of Lyons Sisters bringing out the concerns of youth in this Year of Youth.

On March 1st, 250 parishioners, went on a Lenten Pilgrimage to Maha Acharya Annai Shrine in Suryanagar. They prayed the Rosary as they walked on the streets of Madurai and were warmly received by the Rector and Schoenstatt community.

The 166th Annual Day of St. Mary's Primary School was celebrated on March 4th, with a scintillating and spectacular manifestation of our students' creative



and histrionic talents. Fr. Stephen Lourdu Pragasam, Correspondent of St. Mary's HSS, was the chief guest. Fr. S. Marianathan, Rector and Correspondent of the Primary School, motivated the staff and students to strive for the *Magis* in teaching and learning.

The International Women's Day was celebrated in a fitting manner on March 8th by our Parish Women's Groups participating in a meeting headed by Mrs. Arockiyamary, a leading social activist advocating women's liberation.

On March 15th, a Lenten retreat for the catechism children of our parish was conducted by Fr. Xavier Antony and the Sisters who teach catechism.

*Manuel Savariar*

### **Madurai: DACA**

DACA's Evening Study Centers set the stage for our students to showcase their cultural talents. The Cultural Contest 2020 was organized in February in four zones. Four events were held namely, Thematic Play, Folk Dance, Group Singing and Public Speaking competitions. Altogether, 947 students actively participated in these events which creatively brought out their cultural skills. On March 9th, Women's Day was commemorated in the study centers and on that occasion, the top rankers in the half-yearly examinations were honored with an award and prize. To encourage the 184 rank holders, educational



awards were given in the name of Fr. Francis P. Xavier. Thirty-one students from our Vidivelli Home have written their 12th public examinations.

*P. Theophine*



## **Nagapattinam: Kalangarai**

Over 450 widows participated in the International Women's Day organized at Kalangarai on March 11th. Ms. Pushpa, President of Vidhavai Pengal Vazhvurimai Sangam, presided over the event. Ms. Kalaiselvi, the Vice-president of AIDWA organized a debate in which six budding orators were very articulate in expressing their views.



All the 28 widows who contested in the recent local body elections were honoured in the function. The enthusiastic participation of the community college students in the function was expressive of their solidarity with the widows in their fight for liberation.

*John Silvester*

## **Palayamkottai: St. Xavier's**

On 7 March 2020, the International Women's Day was celebrated at SXC. Ten working women excelling in the fields of agriculture, police department, government service, sports, service organizations, health work etc., were the guests of honour for the celebrations. Various competitions were conducted for the women followed by prize distribution.



The Society of St. Francis Xavier has been recognized as SIRO (Scientific Industrial Research Organization) by DSIR, New Delhi, which grants customs duty exemption on the import of equipment, instruments, spares etc., for research purposes. Thanks to Fr. Ignacimuthu for the trouble he took to personally go to Delhi to get this recognition. The International Institute of Education & Management, New Delhi, honoured Fr. Mariadoss with 'the Best Educationist Award' on February 27th.

Xavier Hostel celebrated its hostel day on March 3rd. Prof. Prince Joshua, an alumnus of our college and hostel was the chief guest. Parents-Hostel Director meeting was held in the morning and there was a cultural extravaganza in the evening. Similarly, Britto Hostel for Women and

Mother Teresa Hostel for Women celebrated their hostel days on March 4th and 5th, respectively. All the hostels had their Thanksgiving Mass prior to the hostel day celebrations.

*Maria Albin Raja*

## **Tiruchi: St. Joseph's**

On March 8th, JIM celebrated Women's Day. We invited four women who have taken up jobs traditionally associated with men, like auto driver, truck driver, wholesaler and railway coolie. They shared their experiences and their challenges. On March 12th, the first years and JIM staff bid farewell to the second years.

## **Chennai: Arul Kadal**

On March 8th, Arul Kadal organized a one-day Lonergan Seminar on the theme Youth and Their Political Involvement for the youth of 15 Parishes where the AK scholastics go for their weekend ministry. Around 120 youth participated and benefited from it.





Arul Kadal owes a great sense of gratitude to Fr. Yesumarian and his community for having helped us to conduct the seminar fruitfully at Paathai House. On March 18th, Arul Kadal had the solidarity Lenten visit to the elders and the suffering in Karunalaya run by the MC Brothers in Little Mount.

On March 25th, we had a Thanksgiving Eucharist at the tomb of Fr. Ignatius Hirudayam, the founder of Aikiya Alayam and a pioneer in interreligious dialogue, on his 25th death anniversary and thanked God for him.

AK scholastics prepared the homilies for the season of Lent, under the guidance of Fr. Baskar, as part



of his course on Homiletics for telecasting in Arputhar Yesu TV. These homilies are also available now on YouTube and the number of views/likes our homilies get is very encouraging. As part of the course on Mariology, we had a field visit to Thenpakkam to know more about the Marian devotion to Oonjal Matha. Special thanks goes to Fr. Philip for having arranged this fruitful field visit and for having hosted us at Paramankeni. Kudos to Fr. Baskar Antony for all his creative initiatives. Our six VJ scholastics returned to AK safely on March 21st and were immediately quarantined before they could join the mainstream of AK community.

*Edward Lenin*

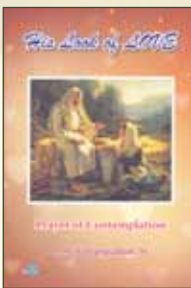
### **Vidyaniketan, Thiruvananthapuram**

After much preparation, we wrote the Assistancy level Proficiency Test in English. The next day we enjoyed the long outing to the city. Andhra scholastics took pains to prepare 'Ugadi', to make the Telugu New Year Day memorable. The Psycho-Spiritual Integration course by Fr. Sunny Kunnapallil (KER) was a timely help for our spiritual renewal. With special prayers we remain within the campus adhering to the norm of social distancing in the wake of "COVID-19". Our Academy Day 2020 can be viewed on YouTube under the title "Vidyaniketan Academy Day 2020".

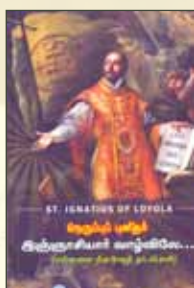
After the lockdown, train tickets booked and rebooked had to be cancelled. We plan to make our annual retreat here itself and pray for God's favour in the coming days. Easter wishes to one and all!

*Emmanuel Akilan*

# New Books



**A.M. Varaprasadam, S.J.**  
*His Look of Love*  
New Leader Publications  
Chennai  
2019



**Xavier Antony, S.J.**  
*Neruppu Punithar*  
LENS Media  
Madurai  
2019



**S. John Britto, S.J.**  
*Flora of Central and North Tamil Nadu Parts 1, 2 & 3*  
The Rapinat Herbarium  
Tiruchirappalli  
2019

## Abide with the Lord



Fr. Dominic Muthedath (85/63 PAT) passed away on 20.03.2020 in Patna.

Fr. Valentine De Souza (92/74 GUJ) passed away on 06.04. 2020 at Vadodara, Gujarat.

Fr. Henri Madelin (83/62 EOF) passed away on 08.04.2020 at Lille, France.

Fr. Jose Javier Aizpun (90/72 GUJ > ARU) passed away on 10.04. 2020 in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

He belonged to GUJ and was later transcribed to ARU. He had been Novice Master, Provincial, Tertian Instructor, Spiritual Director and one of the Directors at Sadhana.

Mrs. Mariapushpam (85), sister-in-law of Br. Irudaysamy Sebastian passed away on 26.03.2020 at Sathoor.

Mr. Jayaraj (78), brother-in-law of Br. Santiago Arockiam, passed away on 28.03.2020 at Dindigul.

Mrs. Mariammal (95) maternal grandmother of Fr. Richard Hiruthayaraj passed away on 03.04.2020 at Udhagamandalam.

Mr. Raphael (66) elder brother of Fr. Yagoo Y. Sandanam passed away on 06.04.2020 in Chennai.

Mrs. Rajammal (58) mother of Sch. Maria Albin Raja passed away on 12.04.2020 at Mariathaipuram, Tenkasi.

Mrs. Margaret France (86), our long-term supporter and Nevett Fund Treasurer, died on 13.04.20. She had been hospitalized and contracted CIVID-19 in the hospital. She had donated to many charities throughout her lifetime.



## WORKING FOR AND WITH FR. ARRUPÉ



Providence brought me into a close working relationship with Fr. Arrupe. The General's Curia was looking for a helper to assist Fr. General especially during the 32nd General Congregation. Fr. G. Casimir, who was then our Provincial, sent me to Rome.

After the General Congregation, Fr. Arrupe personally thanked me and told me that he would offer special prayers for my growth in knowledge and wisdom. Always he treated me with due respect and fraternal love that gave me a tremendous push to work with him cheerfully.

Every day, he used to offer the Holy Mass at 6:00 a.m. in his small chapel which he called his cathedral. I used to serve his Mass. His outspoken and frank approach to various issues and the creative, challenging and non-traditional positions he took on all issues often got him into trouble with the Vatican Curia officials. He faced very bravely their criticisms but he suffered a lot in silence and never wavered in his obedience to the Pope. Once he asked: "How can I celebrate the Bread of Life, without breaking my life?" He appreciated and encouraged me. Once I was 40 minutes late for Mass. He was patiently waiting for my arrival. After the Mass, he asked me whether I needed more time to take rest; he demonstrated such a fraternal concern about my health and well-being. I, for my part, said I would keep to the same time on a regular basis.

Fr. Arrupe was a man of prayer. Only after a long silence in prayer before the Lord, would he take any important decision.

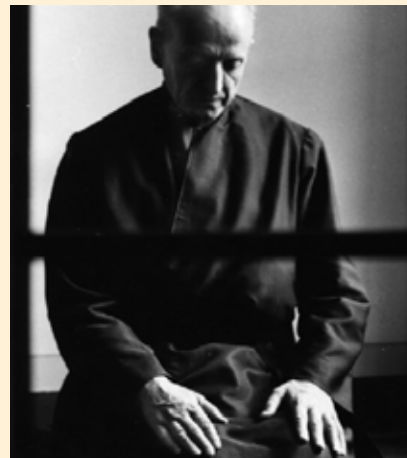
Fr. Pedro Arrupe was ever a cheerful and happy man. He used to crack jokes now and then and one could see him always with a smiling face. Anyone could meet him freely without prior appointment during the coffee time after lunch. He would attentively listen to his brothers. During my stay in the General Curia, Fr. Arrupe celebrated his Golden Jubilee in the Society. His love and services for the poor, downtrodden and needy people were highlighted. Also mentioned were his immediate and generous interventions after the bombing of Hiroshima on August 6, 1945, the Jesuit Refugee Service that he started and his cheerful administration of the Society of Jesus. Already then I used to consider him as a 'living, joyful and smiling Saint'.

Once after supper, I walked into Fr. Arrupe's room with a financial request for one of my seminary mates who left the seminary and got married to a Protestant widow in Tuticorin. He welcomed me with a smile and offered me a chair to sit and relax. Without a moment's hesitation, he took out the cheque book and signed a cheque for US\$ 500 and at the same time gave his blessings and prayers for my friend.

Once I noticed on our Curia noticeboard a request seeking volunteers who could drive the Sisters of Charity around Rome at night offering bread, milk and warm clothes to the abandoned and needy people. The sisters did not have their own chauffeur-driven vehicle and so they requested the Religious Superiors to take turns and offer a car with a driver once a week. I told Fr. Arrupe that I would willingly offer my services going round with the sisters to comfort the needy from 9:00 p.m. till 6:00 a.m. Immediately, Fr. Arrupe blessed me and gave me permission to go and render my services to the poor and needy with the Sisters of Charity. On my return, I used to narrate to him what happened the previous night; he would listen to me attentively and give his blessing saying that I should live for others and serve them cheerfully.

As Fr. Arrupe is now already a 'Servant of God', let us earnestly pray that he would soon be elevated to the rank of a 'Smiling Saint.' Laudetur Iesus Christus!

*Br. Aloysius Arulraj*



## POPE'S HOLY WEEK MESSAGE

### 'Creativity of love can overcome isolation'

Let us try, if we can, to make the best use of this time: let us be generous; let us help those in



need in our neighbourhood; let us look out for the loneliest people, perhaps by telephone or social networks; let us pray to the Lord for those who are in difficulty in Italy and in the world. Even if we are isolated, thought and spirit can go far with the creativity of love. This

is what we need today: the creativity of love. This is what is needed today: the creativity of love.

### FR. GENERAL - COVID-19: DISCERNING A PATH TO GOD (24 MARCH 2020)

The current experience of COVID - 19 is showing us many things about ourselves and our world. In particular, I want to focus on how it is lighting up various aspects of our path to God and how, even in difficult times, there is consolation to be found.

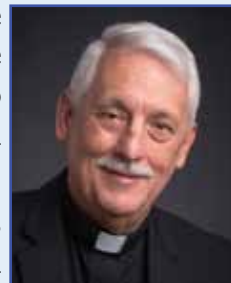
First of all, it is showing us that we are one humanity. Every human being, every people, each culture that contributes to human diversity is part of this one, varied, rich and interdependent humanity.

It is showing us how overcoming a crisis is possible. It is possible when we become aware of the importance of looking after the common good and taking seriously our own individual responsibility.

It is showing us that there is no difference in age, race, religion or social status within our one humanity. Each and every one of us is part of it, no one is left out, no one of us can do without the others.

It is showing us that we want to walk

together. We are all concerned, we help each other to overcome fears and anxieties.



It is showing us the competence and generosity of those who are in the frontline, caring for those affected. It is showing us the sensitivity of so many people or organizations and the enormous reserve of solidarity that exists.

It is showing us the power of faith, the strong bonds that unite believers, the love of Jesus Christ that impels us, reconciles us and unites us.

I have been receiving information about the many creative initiatives that have been taken both in the provinces, regions, communities and apostolic works of the Society of Jesus... as well as in collaboration with others. I thank the Lord for all of this. I encourage you to continue looking for the best ways to be close to those in need, in order to continue to walk the common path together.

I join in the prayer of the whole body of the Society of Jesus, of the Catholic Church, of all Christian Churches, of other religions or beliefs and of all those who, with their attitude of solidarity, are looking for and are finding appropriate ways to continue to lend a hand.

We do not know how long this stretch of the road is or what will follow after. So, let us ask for light to see the way forward.

May the Lord bless us and keep us as we walk this journey together. AMEN