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No 11

Newsletter of Darjeeling Jesuits

December ~ 2020

### *From the Provincial's Desk*

Since the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic we have endured testing times with courage, resilience, and compassion. Individuals, communities and institutions have made great contributions towards protection of life, health and the Common Good. I sincerely thank our priests, religious and the many volunteers whose continued dedication has ensured that our Churches have remained very safe places to gather for Mass and the Sacraments. In spite of restrictive measures I see you encouraging people to persevere and not to lose heart. Faith and prayer in our personal life, in our homes, communities and churches can be a huge support in difficult times.

Advent and Christmas are likely to be very different this year. Advent, as a time of patient, hopeful waiting and longing, will have a particular resonance in these times, while the much-needed joy of Christmas may well be tempered by the impact of Covid-19. Let us continue to explore creative ways in which the hope of Advent and the joy of Christmas can be realized and safely celebrated.

The pandemic is a global phenomenon. It has impacted the seriously disadvantaged in terms of poverty and lack of access to healthcare. Although we are faced with difficult challenges in our own lives and our own land, let us not forget the need for solidarity with our brothers and sisters who are suffering throughout the world. Let us not 'pass by on the other side', but, following the example of Christ, open our hearts with Joy and peace and reach out our hands in response to their great need. Let us continue to live in a spirit of faith and trust in the presence of Jesus who promised to remain with us always.



### PROVINCIAL'S PROGRAM DECEMBER 2020

03	Province Consult
05-07	Visit to Sakyong
08	Governing Body Meeting – SJC
11	Governing Body Meeting – LCE
18	St Michael's School, North Point
21-22	St Peter's Higher Secondary School

### ST PAUL'S, KURSEONG

All Souls day was celebrated at the parish cemetery on 1 November. The Catholic Association members attended DDCA meeting in Kalimpong on 7 Nov. All the Jesuits of Kurseong went to Lalmati to celebrate **Fr Patrick Bhutia's** birthday on 14 Nov. The children of the parish won the singing and drawing competitions organized by ICYM at the diocesan level. **Fr Peter Jong** took fourteen youth to Sitong for a pilgrimage on 15 Nov. **Fr Henrick Immanuel** took great care of them. The Feast of Christ the king was celebrated on 22 November with a procession from the parish church to St Helen's ground where the Holy Mass was celebrated in which **Fr David Ekka, SJ** was the main celebrant.

An adult CLC formation program was conducted for the new and old members of the CLC of the parish on 28 Nov. **Fr Frank Subba, Fr Patrick Pradhan** and **Mr Michael Tamang** were the resource persons. **Fr John Tigga, SJ** came for a visit along with fourteen youth from Matigara. On Sunday, 29 November, after the second Mass, in which **Fr John Tigga** was the main celebrant, the youth of our parish put up a short PPT presentation of their work and faith.

*Fr Peter Jong*

### ST PETER'S GAYAGANGA

We had to rearrange some of the programs of the parish due to the increasing number of covid-19 cases. The parish priest increased the number of Sunday Masses to six, keeping the safety of the faithful in mind. All Souls Day was celebrated with Masses in the church and parish hall followed by blessings of the cemeteries. *vachandat* (prenuptial enquiry) is going on for the marriages to be blessed in the forthcoming months. **Fr**



**Simon** continues to beautify St Peter's High School campus. Admission forms are being distributed for class V. **Fr Cherian** recently received 'government-service

benefits' accumulated for twenty years. St Peter's Primary School is greatly indebted to the High School for printing study materials for students of the primary school.

**Br Robert** is busy harvesting paddy. He is also looking after the construction of boundary walls of





property behind the hostel. **Fr Xavier VC** and **Br Joachim VC** from Krishna Nagar made a five-day retreat under **Fr Cherian**.

*Fr Augustus Ekka*

### MANRESA JESUIT NOVITIATE, KALIMPONG

On 2 November, there was a short prayer service at the grave of **Fr Edward Maguire** in the Novitiate campus. The flow of renewed life is



experienced in the Novitiate campus after the first year novices completed their long retreat on 12 November. On 13 November, the occasion of the Feast day of St Stanislaus Kostka, the patron of novices, a Solemn Mass was presided over by **Fr Roshan Kiro**, the Socius. **Fr Shaji** took a short break after directing the long retreat. Two of the second year novices, **Ashish** and **Sanchilit** came back from their hospital experiment on 18 November.

On 26 November, Manresa Novitiate community went for a picnic to Sakyong. **Fr Benny Paul**, **Fr Binod Kerketta** and **Br Gilbert Lepcha** also joined in the celebrations. **Br Gabriel Gurung**, the minister, arranged everything meticulously.

*Novice Aatish Prabhu*

### ST VINCENT'S COMMUNITY, HATIGHISA

At month's end, the uppermost feeling of our Community is one of gratitude. We are grateful to **Mrs Patrizia Bianconi** La presidente e confondatrice del comitato di Iniziativa Umanitaria, the **SOS** family and **Caritas Italy** for their incessant support and commitment towards the development of St Vincent's. Presently, they have made it possible for the primary school to transition from rug mats and decrepit wooden benches & desks to commensurable pre-school furniture spread around in a mélange of colors. We are reminded of the missionary maxim that "some give by going to the missions while some go by giving to the missions, without both, there would be no missions". The tiny-tots, who stroll into the campus despite the lockdown, mirror the joy, and appreciation towards the donors and benefactors afar.

Their guardians who responded in good numbers for the parents teachers meeting held on the 9<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of November acknowledged the progress and preparedness to usher in the new academic year.

In an air of thanksgiving **Frs. Alvin, Daniel Bara** and **John Tigga** greeted each other on their ordination jubilee. On the 13<sup>th</sup> we had guests from Patna attending a marriage in the parish. Two priests from the Patna diocese **Fr Surendra** and **Fr Reuben Ekka**, the author *Introduction to catholic catechism* in Hindi, joined **Fr Alex** for the Eucharist and stayed with us for a few days. Apart from our daily Liturgy, **Fr Alex** celebrates a second Mass on Monday mornings to attend to the spiritual needs of those who are unable to join in the common assembly. The parish office has remained open throughout the month and "Vachanda" forms have been made available.

This month began in jubilation as seventy-nine first communicants received the Sacrament of Holy Communion and has ended in an equally jubilant note with the appointment of **Fr Lawrence Thanislaus SJ** as Diocesan Director of Education by His Eminence Rev. **Bp. Vincent Aind**. Father had to leave for Tamil Nadu on 23 November, to attend to his ailing mother and will assume the new responsibilities upon his return on 3 December 2020.

*Sch. Ruell Paul*

### JESU ASHRAM

All of us at Jesu Ashram, the staff, nursing students, FC Sisters and Jesuits were aware of the spread of covid-19 pandemic in the world. **Dr Louis Tirkey**, the associate Professor of North Bengal Medical College and hospital and **Dr Pankaj Chowdhary**, an Oncologist have been giving us inputs on covid-19. We succeeded in protecting one hundred and fifty



of our patients most of them in high risk categories.

However on 21 October, four of us, **Fr Julius**, **Fr**

**Vincent**, **Fr Jose**

and one nurse were diagnosed with covid-19.

Soon that number rose to twenty-one, three

Priests, two Sisters, one

Jesuit scholastic,

two Jesuit novices who had come for their hospital experiment and two



nursing staff, ten nursing students and three patients. An isolation ward was set up and all the infected were shifted there. **Dr Louis Tirkey** began a treatment plan for all. Providentially **Sr Gita FC**, one of the core members of the administration, was not infected. She assumed the charge of running Jesu Ashram. **Fr Anthony T Kollakkompil**, the director of Loyola Pastoral Centre, Matigara, came to our rescue in buying food provisions and medicines. The Provincial, **Fr John Wilfred Lobo** kept a close watch on the situation at Jesu Ashram, visiting the campus practically every day. At present there are seventeen of us out of isolation but recuperating, four continue to be in isolation. I would like to thank **Fr John Wilfred Lobo**, my Provincial, **Dr Louis Tirkey**, **Fr Anthony T Kollakkompil**, **Sr Antonia FC**, who guided all the nursing students how to take care of covid-19 patients, **Sr Gita FC**, and our staff for supporting all the covid-19 infected people.



It is unfortunate that even in the 21<sup>st</sup> century leprosy patients are rejected and despised by their near and dear ones. Many leprosy patients are forced to stay on railway platforms, footpaths and in inhuman conditions.



Their livelihood most of the time is begging in the streets. In Jesu Ashram, leprosy patients find that there are people who love and care. Through the help of **SOS India**, Jesu Ashram completed constructing two houses for rehabilitating twelve leprosy patients at Lenin colony adjacent to Jesu Ashram campus. **Novara Centre**, Italy, whose president is **Angela Beani** sponsored construction of a bore-well and water tanks. Beside the twelve mentioned above, other leprosy patients living in the village and school going students will be able to get safe drinking water from the project. **Novara Centre** also sponsored training for gardening for the leprosy patients currently under treatment at Jesu Ashram. Eighteen leprosy patients were taught to grow flowers. This gives them an opportunity to learn floriculture and the possibility of a livelihood. On behalf of the leprosy affected people, I would like to thank Novara Centre and SOS India.

The department of health, Govt. of West Bengal, provided fifty rapid antigen test kits and they have promised more if need be. Jesu Ashram is authorized to test all the tuberculosis patients for covid-19. Till date we have tested fifteen people.

I would like to thank each and every one of you, for your generous help in carrying forward the healing mission of Jesu Ashram.

*Fr Julius Kujur*

## HAYDEN HALL INSTITUTE

A team from Hayden Hall, Darjeeling actively participated in a jute fair organized by the National Jute Board, Kolkata, at City Centre Siliguri from 4-11 November. The face-masks made by Hayden Hall staff were well appreciated by everyone and got sold out like hot momos. The participants were impressed by the "INK SCREEN PRINTING" work at the fair. The Jute Board personnel have expressed their willingness in helping Hayden Hall to set up an ink screen printing unit. The team has already written a proposal to the National Jute Board, requesting them for the required



training.

The mushroom training program of Hayden Hall has taken off well. At the end of training mushroom seed beds (aka, cylinders) were given as certificates by the trainer. The painstaking efforts of **Mr Agnel Prem**

**Tshering Lepcha, Mr Mark Mukhia, Mr Dawa Lepcha and Mr Dechen Lepcha** in nurturing the seeds and making sure that nothing of the training went amiss, have really proven that with hard work and determination



everything is possible.

Bamboo is grown ubiquitously in North Eastern India. In recent years there's been a lot of research in bamboo products. It can be an extremely good alternative construction material because it is easy to grow, it is fibrous and tensile. Considering the above a ten-day bamboo training workshop is being organized at Hayden Hall from 23 November to 2 December. We began with a short orientation for the trainees conducted by **Ms Babita Biswakarma** and **Mr Cassian Dukpa**, two of our staff. There are 8 young trainees mostly from the tea gardens of Darjeeling. During these ten days, the trainer **Mr Titus Rai** from Liza Hill, Darjeeling,



will be trying to equip our youth with livelihood skills in indigenous craft with easily available material.

Hayden Hall is moving towards 'Earth Care and People Care'. In doing so, we have started making compost with the food waste. We have installed composters and our sustainable warriors have started their journey in this waste management.

*Ms Dipika Adhikari*

## ST XAVIER'S COLLEGE, RAJGANJ

The university registration of current first years came to an end, putting an end to the long process of admissions and withdrawals. The outgoing students have been coming to the college to collect their mark sheets, transfer certificates and other documents. Fortunately, despite late results, majority have received admissions in different universities for their higher studies. On 20 November, the department of English organized an international webinar wherein one speaker each from the United States and Kathmandu were the main resource persons. On 23 November, the entire teaching and non-teaching staff were called for a general meeting to discuss pending works and departmental planning for the future.

Xavier Hostel is happy to host six Darjeeling scholastics and four Nepal scholastics, majority of whom are attending online philosophy classes while residing in the hostel. They made the feast of Brothers (feast of St Alphonsus Rodrigues) and **Br Broney's** birthday special through their lively singing and dancing. However, the beginning of the month of November also brought certain gloom in the community. At one point in time, all, except **Deven**, had to visit doctors for health check-up. Towards the end of the month brought more bad news. **Fr Gabriel, Xavier and Broney** are diagnosed with covid-19 positive. They are staying at Senior home, Matigara for treatment. Kindly pray for the community.

*Fr Lalit*



## UTTAR SALBARI

**Fr Justin Bage** made his annual retreat at Loyola Niwas under **Fr Bijay Kindo** from 8-16 November. Loyola Niwas was privileged to gather under its wings nine Jesuits on 16 November for the combined birthday celebrations of **Fr Sebastian** and **Fr Siby**. **Fr Gabriel Tirkey** and **Fr Xavier Alangaram** from North Bengal St Xavier's College, Rajganj, and **Fr Justin Bage** joined us for the occasion.

The feast of Christ the King was celebrated on 22 November. We took out a procession from the primary school, passing through the High school and ending in the church. It was followed by adoration and the Mass.

The diocese level Bible quiz for the *Krusbeer* children was held online on 15 November. Fourteen children from our Parish took part in it. The results were declared on 21 November. The first and the second prizes were won by children from our Parish, Jayarani Minj from Kelabari and Ankita Oraon from Totapara. The *Krusbeer* animators **Miss Prisca Tirkey** and **Sr Bertha** had worked hard to train the children.

*Fr Basil Toppe*

## ST JOSEPH'S SCHOOL, NORTH POINT, DARJEELING

St Joseph's School, North Point continues to grieve the sudden demise of our senior Headmaster **Mr D N Pradhan**. The North Point family along with the Jesuits and the staff had a memorial service in remembrance of him. Mr DN's family members were present for this prayer service at Fraser Hall. **Mr Andre Lefevre**, the junior Headmaster gave a beautiful obituary summing up DN's life and his immeasurable contributions to North Point. The Jesuits along with the staff went to pay homage at the family ritual held at his house.



The community celebrated the Mass on 'All souls day' at the Jesuit cemetery to remember our departed brothers and their contributions. Some of the relatives of our departed brothers were present as well for the Mass. **Fr Stanley** visited Mungpoo and stayed overnight as part of his visit to the satellite units of our community. **Fr K L George** conducted a half-day online retreat for the staff and parents of Loreto School, Asansol. He gave a one-day recollection to ten Darjeeling seminarians and guided a five-day diaconate retreat to a deacon of the diocese of Darjeeling.

**Fr Xavier**, the PCF visited the community and the dispersed units, as part of his annual visit to the scholastics. It was a long awaited fruitful visit for the scholastics. **Schs. David D** and **Amit** are actively participating in taking catechism classes for the youth and the *Crusbir* children at Lepcha Busty.

The school had a short Diwali break for three days from online livestream classes. A meeting of the heads of the Anglo-Indian Schools in Darjeeling hills was held at NP to discuss the inter-school curricula for the next academic year.

*Fr Anuranjan*

## ST JOSEPH'S SCHOOL, MUNGPPOO

**Sch. Pankaj** made his annual retreat at Manresa under the guidance of **Fr Roshan Kiro SJ**. The school has got a new and shining look after the painting and inscription of monograms.

On 6 November **Fr Xavier SJ**, the PCF was here at Mungpoo for visitation. On 12 November **Fr Stanley SJ**, the Rector had come for his

visit to Mungpoo. It was his first official visit. He stayed overnight along with **Fr Henrik Immanuel**. On 18 November **Fr Provincial** met us at NP individually as well as in groups. We have successfully completed coaching classes for IX and X. After the completion of the coaching and online classes, we had a staff meeting. From 23 November we began the final exams, oral exams for the students of classes III to VIII and written exams for classes IX and X. **Fr Patel** is actively involved in pastoral work as well. He is helping **Fr Henrik Immanuel** in Sitong for Sunday Masses.

The long awaited road construction from the main road to school has already begun and soon we are going to have a brand new road for the students in the coming academic year.

*Sch. Pankaj*

## LOYOLA COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, NAMCHI

Online classes are on for the students of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Semester who attend from home. They are engaged in field based activities, under the able guidance of the faculty.

Loyola College of Education, Namchi was inspected by a team, constituted by the Hon'ble Vice Chancellor for the renewal of M.A. Education course on 19 November 2020. The team appreciated the infrastructure, library and the vast campus which are conducive for the holistic development of students and staff.

The fresh batch (First semester: 2020 – 2022 batch) was inaugurated and inducted on 19 November 2020. **Fr Cherian J. Padiyara**, Superior, in his inaugural address online stressed the importance of acquiring knowledge by reading books. He urged the students to make use of all the opportunities and facilities provided for them in the campus for their complete growth and development. Though we had started online classes, the Sikkim Government permitted the authorities of the college to start regular classes from 23 Nov. 2020. Keeping in mind the health guidelines of the UGC, the Department of Education and the Government of Sikkim, the campus is humming with activities. The enrolment of students, for the first time in the history of Loyola College, is two hundred B. Ed students.

*Fr Francis A/V*

## VINAYALAYA JUNIORATE, MUMBAI

We had a workshop on 'Heightening Awareness Concerning Gender Inclusiveness, Pedophilia, Trafficking and other Connected Issues' on 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> of October 2020. It was conducted by **Sr Sagaya Michael**. We had our first semester exams from 26 to 29 October. After the exams, we had an outing for about six days at Khandala. We had a workshop on 'Drama and Speech' from 11 to 14 November 2020 under the guidance of **Mr Conan Pereira**. We have gradually started going for our weekend ministries in places that are relatively safe.

*Schs. Samson and Binod*

## REST IN PEACE

<b>Br Jeyaraj Annaviar, SJ (MDU)</b>	78/57	03 Nov 2020
<b>Fr Gonzalez Valles Carlos SJ,</b>	95/79	09 Nov 2020
<b>Fr A. Antony Pappuraj, SJ (MDU)</b>	74/57	13 Nov 2020.
<b>Fr Rudolph Fernandez, SJ (BOM)</b>	86/69	16 Nov 2020
<b>Fr Lourdu Susai Irudayaraj, SJ (DUM)</b>	74/53	16 Nov 2020
<b>Br Lawrence Richard Saldanha, SJ (HAZ)</b>	83/58	17 Nov 2020
<b>Fr S. Paul Lourdusamy, SJ (PAT)</b>	65/43	22 Nov 2020

*Merry Christmas  
and  
a Happy New Year*