



From The Provincial's Desk

CHRISTMAS 2020



It's been a whirlwind year. When the first wave of corona virus arrived earlier this year, I got through by bracing myself and trusting that things would eventually return to normal. But now that we have experienced it for several months now we are facing the second wave in Sri Lanka, I know that life is not going to go back to the way it was.

What has changed? What have we learned? 1. We are all interconnected. This is not a cliché. From the first recorded cases in Wuhan in December 2019 to cases recorded in nearly every country in the world, it was just a matter of weeks. We are that closely connected. 2. We are all responsible for each other's well-being, whether we like it or not. This is a hard thing to wrap our heads around, and it may take some time to fully take it in. Our actions

affect other people in ways that we do not even know.

The people of God of course have experienced far more difficult situations in the past, but we are going through a transition, and transitions of any kind are hard to take. They are hard because when we are in the midst of a transition, we don't really know what is happening or how long it will last. It sometimes takes years for the reality to sink in, and for the implications to work themselves out.

As we prepare ourselves for the Christmas season, I am reminded that the coming of Christ into the world was also a hard transition. When we read the gospels, we can see that the people in the midst of the situation, did not fully realize at the time what was happening. It took years for people to figure it out. Even now, 2000 years later, we are still working out the implications.

The good news is: "For a child is born to us, a son is given us; upon his shoulder dominion rests." That means, our tradition and our experience as Catholics concerned to model our lives and to shape our world by Jesus' values do offer us some ways of finding a way through it. Our Christian tradition is specially designed for disasters. Its story is built around finding life in the midst of death. It encourages us to recognize the disorientation, loss and grief that the Coronavirus

crisis may bring us and to care for one another as we bear it. It also encourages us to stand helplessly with Mary by the Cross of Jesus like many in our society in the hope that no more people will have to hang there.

However, "in today's world" as Pope Francis notes, "the sense of belonging to a single human family is fading, and the dream of working together for justice and peace seems an outdated utopia. What reigns instead is a cool, comfortable and globalized indifference.

As a summary of St. Francis's mission to the Sultan, Pope Francis notes, "Francis did not wage a war of words aimed at imposing doctrines; he simply spread the love of God. He understood that 'God is love and those who abide in love abide in God' (1 John 4:16). In this way, he became a father to all and inspired the vision of a fraternal society. Indeed, 'only the man who approaches others, not to draw them into his own life, but to help them become ever more fully themselves, can truly be called a father.'" A kind of thesis statement for the whole encyclical: "It is my desire that, in this our time, by acknowledging the dignity of each human person, we can contribute to the rebirth of a universal aspiration to fraternity. Fraternity between all men and women (Fratelli Tutti #8).

Announcements

FIRST VOWS

Novice **Danish Khokhar** (PAK) will be pronouncing his First Vows on the 8th of Dec 2020 at 10.00 am at *Daham Sihila* Kelaniya.

LEFT THE SOCIETY

Bro. Ajith De Silva Left the Society on 5th of November 2020.

Fr. Leonard Michael was incardinated into the Diocese of East Anglia on the 22nd of November 2020. He has ceased to be a member of the Society of Jesus.

PRIESTLY ORDINATIONS

Deacon Rajitha Waas was ordained priest by Rt. Rev. Dr. Raymond Wickramasinghe, Bishop of Galle, on 3rd of December 2020, at 10.00 am at St. Cajetan's church, Welihena, Kochchikade.



Priestly Ordination of the Deacons **Jude Deluxion** and **Joseph Atputharaj** will be held on the 19th of December 2020, at 10:00 am at St. Ignatius Church, Kallady, Dutch Bar, Batticaloa. The ordaining prelate will be Rt. Rev. Dr. Joseph Ponniah, Bishop of Batticaloa.

Province Appointments

Fr. Rashmi Fernando: Coordinator for the Ignatian Year (May 2021 - July 2022)

Fr. Noel Ajanthan: Coordinator in the Pakistan mission for the Ignatian Year and will join the Province Apostolic Planning team representing the Pakistan Mission.

Fr. Gamini Perera: Jesuit Community Kaluwella, Galle, effective from 01st of January 2021

Fr. Rajitha Waas: Director of the Jesuit Academy and acting minister of Jesuit Community Kaluwella, Galle, effective from 10th of December 2020

Fr. Lakshman Pieris: Acting Superior of the Jesuit Community Galle, and Teacher and Student Counselor at Mt. Calvary High School, effective from 01st of January 2021

Fr. Stephen Perera: Spiritual and Pastoral Ministry at Fatima Retreat House Community, Lewella, Kandy, effective from 15th of December 2020

Fr. Anton Pratapraj: Assisting Fr. Roshan at the Jesuit Academy and Arrupe College, Batticaloa, residing at St. Michael's Jesuit Residence, Batticaloa, effective from 15th of December 2020

Fr. Chrysogonus Pieris: Awaiting assignment at Akkara Panaha Jesuit Community, effective from 15th of December 2020

Bros. Patrick Fernando and Francis Fernando: Theological studies at the National Seminary Ampitiya, residing at Fatima Retreat House Community Lewella, effective from 01st of November 2020

Fr. Stanley Philip: Parish Priest of the church of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Gantalawa with two substations (the church of Christ the King, and that of Sacred Heart, Kanthalai), effective from 01st of January 2021

Fr. Baylon Perera: Acting Local Superior for the Lewella Jesuit Community, effective from 01st of December 2020.

The New Novitiate at Heraliyawela. The Novitiate was shifted from Dalugama, Kelaniya to Heraliyawela, Kurunegala on the 25th of November 2020. The inauguration of the New Novitiate will be announced soon. The construction work in the final phase is in progress.

Pope's World Prayer Network



Colombo District

Fr. Theodore writes from 'Nirmala', Bambalapitiya

I'm happy to inform my fellow Jesuits that NASTEC (National Science and Technology Commission) has appointed me a Panel Member for the Annual Review of The National Science Foundation of Sri Lanka. I am a member appointed by the University Grants Commission of Sri Lanka to review the quality of many universities in Sri Lanka.

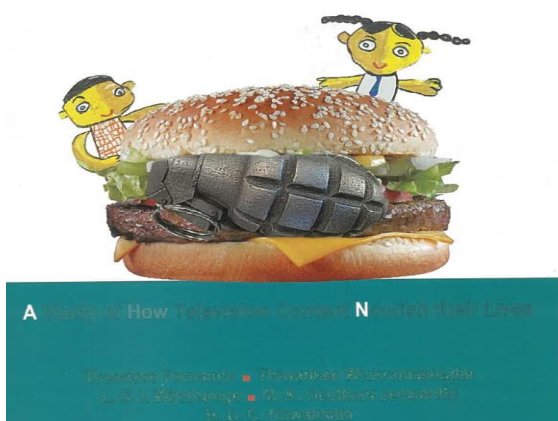
A bi-lingual book (English-Sinhala) titled "Media Socialization of Children on Eating Habits" with a sub-title "A Study of How Television content nourishes their Lives" published by the Open University Research fund, was launched recently. This research was done by me and some of my colleagues in the Department of social science. The Foreword to the book was written by the President of the Dietitian Association of Sri Lanka (DIASAL).

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We were also happy to get a foreword and introduction to the book by Dr. Renuka Jayatissa, Head of the Department of Nutrition Medical Research Institute in Sri Lanka. For the first time, we also discuss the food habits of school children belonging to the three main ethnic communities in Sri Lanka. Few copies are available for libraries free of charge.

Media Socialization of Children on Eating Habits



PASTORAL ACTIVITIES AT NIRMALA CHAPEL

After the Covid-19 lockdown was lifted, in keeping with the guidelines given by the Deanery, Nirmala chapel has resumed its normal activities. Many new creative liturgies are tried out, and the existing outreach programs and new ones are introduced to motivate the people who attend our masses. Neighboring parish priests have commended the upkeep and cleanliness of the chapel due to the support of the parishioners.

Curfew and lockdown have helped us to cultivate green chilies, and saffron and the two coconut trees planted five years ago give us coconuts we need for our daily consumption. Since we do not have a cook it is easy to manage and be economical. We are also grateful to nearby

families (Friends of Jesuits) who sent food occasionally during the complete lockdown. I also see some spiritual growth among our chapel goers, who are becoming more and more caring for others. They visit the old and ailing members of the community regularly and pray for them. They attend funerals of the people who come to our services. We try to be a basic Christian community. I also notice that the death anniversaries of the Jesuits who were at Nirmala are remembered and masses are offered for them by the people who knew them. I encourage one of the new altar boys who is studying O.L. at St. Peter's College nearby to consider of becoming a Jesuit someday. Fr. Stanley, one of the Juniorate directors, who came here for masses on weekends had spoken to the family about it and I hope we can get him to the society.

Our major repairs and re-painting of the chapel pews to their original brown color are done with the support of the chapel goers. The monthly income and expenses are displayed on the notice board and the balance is deposited in the chapel account at People's Bank.

The following outreach programs were initiated. Keeping with the philosophy "It is better to light a candle rather than cursing the darkness", we were able to help some families with dry rations worth Rs. 4000 for each family. Some generous people came forward to contribute to this charitable act. The dry rations were distributed to twenty deserving families in the Gampaha District. We also selected some deserving Christian families to help financially. The money donated by the members of this community in memory of their beloved departed, were given to those deserving families.

We are starting an advent reading club, encouraging our worshipers to feed their minds with advent readings. Articles from the Tablet and other Jesuit resources are printed and distributed so that even though we do not have our regular spiritual activities in the chapel, they could update their religious knowledge and be nourished spiritually.

FONLA (**FRIENDS OF NIRMALA**), and outreach program started by late Fr. Kuriakose is continued and a poor school in Bambalapitiya is helped regularly. Though we do not have much space, Jesuits who are willing to rough out, are always welcome.

These days all our teaching activities are done through zoom and even the viva of the MPhil candidates are done through zoom. I was the external supervisor for one candidate at the University of Visual and performing arts, and she got an A grade for her MPhil thesis from both examiners who were from the University of Kelaniya and that of Colombo.

JUNIORATE - DAHAM SIHILA

We Juniors concluded the month of October with a day of recollection guided by Fr. Thushara SJ. The theme of the recollection day was 'Life'. We realized the depth of the Proverbs 27:19 that "as the water reflects the face, so one's life reflects the heart".



The month of November was filled with several activities which kept us quite busy. We had a block

Batticaloa District

LOYOLA CANDIDATES HOUSE

At present, Loyola Candidate House (LOCH) has 3 Candidates, two Pre-novices and 4 Jesuits. Fr. Guy Rajendram is staying with us from the 5th of November for his medical treatment for lung infection.

Two pre-novices had intensive English Coaching from 16th to 30th of November. Thanks to Fr. Roshan and the Loyola Campus staff for their commitment and contribution.

The two Pre-novices are continuing their Pre-Novitiate programs at LOCH due to Covid-19 unpredictable situation in the country. They have registered their names in Loyola Campus to study English. In the evening hours and weekends, classes are conducted by Fr. James (on Jesuit Community life), Sch. Dinoshan (on Reading and Listening skills), Sr. Leidy (Teaching English Hymns) and Mr. Aloysius (Spoken English). On 30th of November, Fr. James conducted a one-day orientation program to begin their Pre-novitiate formation at LOCH. He took classes on community life and conducted a course on time management.

From 9th to 15th of November, Fr. James preached an online annual retreat to three Sisters, belonging to the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Lyon. They are working in the diocese of Jaffna.

LOYOLA CAMPUS

November has been a month full of uncertainties yet not lacking hope. The country's situation, due to the pandemic, regarding education is not at its best and repercussions are already being sensed specially among the poor.

course with an Indian Jesuit, Fr. Richard SJ on psycho-sexuality. As we learned we became aware of the wonders of God on how He created and formed us and how He showed his love by creating us in His own image. On the 7th the Daham Sihila Community celebrated the birthday of Fr. Tharanga. Fr. Tharanga has been taking classes on world religions. We are assigned different religions such as Islam, Taoism, Judaism, Sikhism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism to present in the class. Fr. Dean has been taking classes on literature and we are given an assignment to write a short story and poems on the theme of life, poverty and society at large. Since we are in lockdown, some of our teachers are unable to come to our place. Therefore we started having Zoom classes as well. On the 13th of November we joined the Novitiate Community to celebrate the feast of St. Stanislaus Kostka, the patron of the novices. In the evening we had a volleyball match with the Novices. On 15th Fr. Ahilraj left Daham Sihila Community to join the Kandy community as the director of the Fatima Retreat House. We, Juniors arranged a farewell for him. We thank God for the gift of Fr. Ahilraj and for the services he rendered to the community. On the 18th Fr. Ashley came to Daham Sihila Community to make his eight-day retreat. From 23rd to 27th Fr. Sanjeeva gave us juniors a block course on "public speaking". We learned the art of impromptu, extemporaneous and manuscript speeches. On 25th the novices moved to Kurunegala. On the eve of 24th we had a farewell gathering and wished them all a happy life.

On the 26th we celebrated the feast of our patron saint, John Berchmans. We had a festive mass celebrated by Fr. Sanjeeva. Our Dean, Fr. Aniston thought of not celebrating the feast because we should feel the pain and suffering that the people are going through due to covid-19. On the 27th we had a day of recollection given by Fr. Sanjeeva. The theme was "to be grateful to God". On the 28th we had a great opportunity to meet with the Jesuits of India through Zoom conference organized by the Digital Jesuits. We were edified to listen to the great works done by the Jesuits in other parts of the world and were inspired to commit ourselves in the service of God's people.



Our center has taken the same measures as most of the centers and schools in the country namely the use of “Zoom Classes” and WhatsApp calls. What we have noticed is that we fail to cater to those who are most in need. It is those who have low income, who have no internet connection and proper devices that we fail to reach during this pandemic. Several students have also dropped out due to the difficulty in following classes on zoom, because of their lack of experience studying through a device.



On 23rd of November the government schools reopened grades 6 and above but the private schools have no permission to function until January of 2021. Despite all the uncertainties and difficulties, currently we have 32 students taking zoom classes, 1 BA-SD student and there are 3 in the Learning Facilitators Course. At the same time there are two promising candidates for the new

batch of BA-SD. We are sure that the fog will pass soon and the sun will shine again upon our center, which sees each student as a blessing.

ST. IGNATIUS PARISH

The pandemic has continued to affect our parish drastically. We are still unable to gather the faithful for the Holy Eucharist. But our parish remains open most of the day and the parishioners come and spend time in personal prayer. A parish council meeting was held on 21st of November to discuss the preparations for the ordination. At the same time an alternative plan has been proposed to celebrate Christmas with the catechism children. They will be called by small groups and be given a gift. As every year there is a plan to award all the children within the parish area who have successfully passed the grade 5 scholarship exam. However the awarding ceremony will take place this time with necessary safety measures.

ST. SEBASTIAN PARISH

People of Sri Lanka day in day out earnestly cry and pray to God the father asking Him to deliver the nation from this deadly pandemic Covid-19 which has affected and killed over 90 people in the land. When the Israelites suffered in Egypt under the regime of Pharaoh and pleaded to God to send someone who could liberate them from the bondage of slavery, God sent Moses who liberated them and gave them hope and protection. Likewise we too pray to God our loving father and his son Jesus through the Holy Spirit that this threatening virus may vanish from our sight and people may experience the same hope and protection like the Israelites experienced. Churches have been closed, no Masses are celebrated with the faithful and no pastoral visits by the parish priest. All pastoral activities are halted, but the people are longing to go to church and other respective religious places for worship.

Fr. Anthony Pillai, the assistant Parish Priest has conducted two programmes, one for the Methodist community leaders at St. John's Church, Urany and the other a counseling programme for a couple of families at Chenkalady. This programme was organized by the EHED of Batticaloa.

Kandy District

NOVITIATE - DAHAM SEVANA

We Novices concluded the month of October by celebrating the vigil of all saints and the feast of the patron saint of Jesuit Brothers, St. Alphonsus Rodriguez in our creative mass and one of our novice companions, Pratheepan, who has joined the novitiate with the desire of becoming a Jesuit Brother, was given a chance to celebrate this special day. Due to COVID-19 restrictions we could not buy a cake and so for a creative change he cut a papaya.

We began the month of November by celebrating the feast of all saints. Fr. Master gave us a powerful and inspiring homily about saints and saintly life. The following day we commemorated all the faithful departed and prayed for our beloved parents, relatives and friends who have gone before us.



To benefit from the present COVID 19 situation in which we are forced to stay indoors as our Kelaniya area too was isolated, on the 5th of November we began an eight-day retreat with Father Master, on

Ecology. It was a preparation for our feast as well as a model retreat for the first years. It was a fruitful retreat that brought to us a profound awareness about our common home. We concluded our retreat with the Eucharistic celebration and offered our resolutions in the form of a prayer that insists on our caring for the loving creation of God.



The following day we celebrated our feast, of St. Stanislaus Kostka, patron saint of Jesuit novices, with a festive meal in an eco-style (eating outside the refectory, using banana leaves etc). The whole Daham Sihila community gathered together to celebrate the feast at the Novitiate. We also had a joyful celebration for the birthdays of Fr. Tharanga, our minister, and of Bilal, our companion, which fell on 7th and 10th of November respectively.

Our joy was multiplied when after lunch Fr. Master gave us the chance to speak to our parents for a short while. It was a precious moment for us all. We spent the evening playing volleyball matches between Novices and the juniors, including the staff members. After supper the Novitiate community had an enjoyable recreation with outstanding performances by the novices.

Due to COVID-19 second wave, we were not able to continue our ministry at Shanthi Nivasa, instead we used the time to watch spiritual movies followed by evaluations and personal inspirations.

After much prayer and prayerful discernment Fr. Master made the decision to move to the new novitiate in Kurunegala, although the building construction is not yet complete. On the 25th of November we made that adventurous move from

“Daham Sihila” of Dalugama, Kelaniya to “Daham Sevana” of Heraliyawala, Kurunegala, and started our work experiment. We, including Fr. Master and Sch. Sithum, our minister, are roughing out in this new place; using the workers’ toilets, bathing outside and using only a few bulbs to light up the nights. We are enjoying this poverty cum work experiment. On 26th, the very next day of our arrival, we celebrated the birthday of our beloved companion Vimukthi in the new Novitiate. On 27th Fr. Provincial visited us and bought us the necessary household items and had lunch with us. On 28th Frs. Anistan and Tharanga paid a friendly visit and spent some time with us. While we are on our work experiment, Fr. Master and Bro. Minister are busy moving up and down to provide us with essential needs.

CSC LOYOLA CAMPUS – HATTON

Discussion on project proposal for German Mission with CSC Staff:



On 5th November the staff brought out six issues that needed immediate attention of CSC: School dropouts, addiction to alcohol, violence against women and children, financial debt, ID card issues and malnutrition. They also went deep into the causes of the problems. Poverty, patriarchy, exploitation and ignorance of the community are the main causes of all these problems. Income generation programmes for women, scholarship for the students, formation of children’s clubs, sports clubs and women groups and awareness training were the suggestions that came up as solutions to the problems. On 30th of November,

they suggested practical programmes that would empower women and students.

Kalam: Discussion on Malaiyaga Tamils in the new constitution:



On 16th of November in spite of Corona lockdown restrictions, around 25 participants of civil societies, NGOs and political parties came together for a discussion. Six panelists including Professor Vijayachandren of Peradeniya University and Mr. Lawrence and Mr. Sridaran of Plantation political parties and Mr. Selvaraj, the advocate, presented the themes that needed to be included in the constitution. The fact is that Malaiyaga Tamils are the most underprivileged community in Sri Lanka due to historical negligence, minority status and poor representation in the governance. The panelists urged that the constitution needs to recognize the upcountry Tamils as separate ethnic group as Malaiyaga Tamils, makes provision to alleviate their sufferings through affirmative action or positive discrimination, respect their dignity as promulgated in the United Nations’ treaties and respect their minority status as the minorities enjoy in countries like Kosova, Switzerland and Canada. Finally they elected a nine member committee to draft the recommendation to the drafting committee of the new Constitution.

Formation of Self Help groups of women at Hallowella Estate:

On 17th of November, the women of Hallowella came together and formed themselves in two groups. One group was named women’s revival group and the other women’s liberation group. The revival group decided to get involved in home Poultry farming as their economic activity for income generation and the liberation group decided to involve themselves in home gardening.



They elected their leader, secretary and treasurer and planned their role and responsibilities. CSC assured them that they will give them loans to do their income generation activities when they save a certain sum of money and support the groups in their awareness education.

Certificate awarding ceremony at Dickoya Fine Arts College:



On 27th of November, sixteen students who studied PreGel A1 programme with the support of CSC Loyola Campus from February to December 2019 received their certificates. **Fr. Milroy**, the chief guest of the function appreciated this outreach programme that the students who studied at this school make the difference at the CSC Loyola Campus centre when they go there for higher level of English. Mrs. Jeyadharshini, the vice principal of the college, thanked CSC Loyola Campus for its free English education to the students. Fr. Premkumar thanked the school for providing the space and permission to conduct the English classes and Fr. Milroy for his support. Ms. Sahana and Ms. Sindhuja, our GEL teachers organized the whole event meticulously in spite of the uncertainties caused by the corona pandemic.

Farewell to the Batch of August – November, 2020



On 25th of November all the computer students sat for their exam and on 26th A1 and B1 students had their oral and written English exam. A2 students sat for their final exam on 27th. Immediately after their English exam, the students had a farewell function. They were asked to share their one positive memory, one challenging memory, one lesson learned, one advice to their colleagues and their aim in life. All of them shared in English with confidence. After the sharing, they gave short cultural items with songs and skits. And finally they interacted with Fr. Milroy in English each one asking him a question on a variety of topics both personal and professional. This interaction helped the students to grasp the life and mission of the Jesuits.

Certificate Awarding Ceremony at CSC Loyola Campus:



On 28th of November, the students of September – December 2019 batch received their certificates in the morning while those of the batch of January – July 2020 received theirs in the evening.

Dr. Sasikumar Balasundaram, Southern Illinois University, USA was the chief guest and Fr. Milroy SJ was the guest of honour. Dr. Sasikumar was born in a tea estate near Hatton and has achieved his

present status after a life long struggle with hard work and determination. His life was the message to the students and he shared his life story in his address. Fr. Milroy shared on the opportunities provided by JWL Loyola Campus and urged the students not to miss the opportunities offered them.

Trincomalee District

JESUIT RESIDENCE

Fr. Guy Rajendran has been diagnosed with fibrosis in the lungs. The chest specialist in Batticaloa Hospital is giving treatment to Fr. Guy. Kindly pray for his recovery.

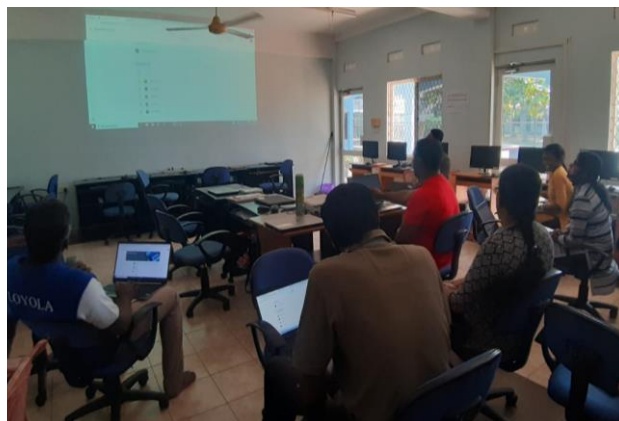
LOYOLA CAMPUS

We, the Staff of Loyola had a weekly workshop on how to use Technology in an effective way to teach the new batch of JWL students through zoom, Google classroom and WhatsApp. This workshop was really helpful for our staff and they enjoyed learning through these new ways of teaching. As every staff member was satisfied with this new method. We Loyola Campus Trincomalee family are ready for the new intakes.



To ensure safety in this pandemic situation, we've kept two washing areas at our entrance, and the campus cleaning is also done side by side to bring

back more freshness to our environment. As we were satisfied with all the arrangements, we opened our Loyola campus for the students.



We have conducted the final exams for the students who followed the three months of JWL courses in our center during the pandemic. We really appreciate them for their commitment and spirit of learning English during this difficult time. Meanwhile, we also had a couple of formal meetings with our staff members to prepare for the next batch. Fr. Robert SJ, the director of the center explained to the staff members their responsibilities in the Loyola campus and what they are supposed to do once we begin the classes for the new batches. We are hoping to enlist more students in the coming days.

PRE-NOVITIATE

We are having some renovation work in the pre-novitiate chapel. The floor is getting tiled, and the walls color-washed. The work is almost complete. We like to thank Fr. Provincial and his team for helping us financially in this important work. This is the month in which we celebrate our pre-novitiate feast with our pre-novices but due to the corona situation our pre-novices could not come to Trincomalee and we are waiting for their arrival. Meanwhile, as we are finding it difficult to travel from one district to another, especially our would-be Pre-novices, Fr. Provincial and his consultants have decided that the Pre-novitiate program would commence at the JYC Akkara Panaha, Negombo on the 1st of December. Studying the

Covid-19 situation in the country we will shift the pre-novitiate to Trincomalee after the 15th of January 2021.

Kakuma - Kenya

Fr. Lasantha writes from KAKUMA

‘STRENUOUS WORK’ the words symbolize the Mission of JRS Kakuma in the month of November



The month began with the visit of Fr. Tony O' Riordan from the Irish Province as the external evaluator of our JRS Projects in Kakuma with the task of reviewing our projects and planning for 2022-2024 with a clear assessment of needs for our Refugee brothers and sisters. Tony began his work saying, "If Fr. Arrupe was here in Kakuma what he would do and what he would not pursue" I had the responsibility to summarize and share information on our work at the different centres, to arrange various meetings and interviews to connect with UNHCR and other agencies our stakeholders, the incentive staff and some beneficiaries. Fr. Bill our Pastoral Coordinator and our colleagues from the National staff supported the evaluation process. With Tony's arrival, a vibrant Jesuit community was found in JRS Kakuma; laughing, discussing, arguing, enjoying delicious meals at Cairo Palace Hotel (Pizza, Naan Roti, Somali delicacies, Biryani and ice creams), praying (we had eight days of prayer and reflection in community discernment joined by our Country/Regional Director Andre, and celebrating mass together. St. Ignatius would have been very



happy to see three sons of his dispersed in a remote mission; where others dare not.

The most inspiring event in the month of November was the celebration of the 40th Birthday of JRS and the 114th Birth Anniversary of Fr. Arrupe. Due to covid prevention protocols, we had to organize a Centre Context celebration in our 5 centres joined by our National and Incentive staff ladies, young girls & boys and children from safe shelters. At the beginning of the celebration, Bill, Tony and I shared "the Vision of Arrupe and the Birth of JRS" prepared by Bill for the respective centres that we represented.

The voices of our Refugee brothers and sisters of Kakuma were echoed in the Eucharistic Celebration presided over by Fr. General in Rome. They sang a Thanksgiving Hymn in French conducted by Prosper, one of our Teachers from the Special Needs who was assisted by the choristers of St. Rita's Choir at John Bosco Church where we celebrate Mass regularly.

May JRS Kakuma accompany, serve and advocate our brothers and sisters with the same passion of Jesus and Fr. Arrupe. Pray for us.....



Later on the incentive staff shared spontaneously why they were working passionately at JRS. I was touched when Jamila, a Somali Teacher who said, “What I am today is because of JRS. JRS has done so much for me. Yes, JRS is a Catholic Institution run by Christian Leaders, and I am Muslim. Never have I felt that I am neglected nor discriminated at JRS. JRS dignifies us all, as brothers and sisters, JRS walks with us”. In conclusion, I thanked them all and expressed my sincere gratitude on behalf of JRS posing to them “Where is JRS? What is JRS? How is JRS? You are the heart, hands and feet of JRS, the people experience here and now”. With that I bowed before each of my staff, the Sri Lankan way of saying thank you. The gesture was emotional and touched them very much. Finally I gave each one a souvenir, a Letter from Fr. Arrupe in Heaven written by me. The whole celebration concluded with a delicious lunch.

The pandemic is round the corner even in the camp. The positive cases are increasing and most of them are asymptomatic. Therefore we too are on high alert ensuring that preventive protocols are adhered to. Amazingly the people in the camps do not care at all. Their simple answer is “God is there for us”.

JRS Kakuma was blessed with three post-graduate students from UN University of Peace from Costa Rica for their internship. Shamili & Kevin are from India, products of Loyola College Chennai and Ryan is from Washington DC. They were introduced to me by Sch. Rusasa Baraka (AOR) from Hekima College who himself had been a colleague of theirs

in Chennai. They will be working in our Departments of Special Needs, Psychosocial & Protection sharing their expertise. On behalf of JRS I welcomed them at the Lodwar Airstrip.

The greatest experience for me during the month of November:

I have been in Kakuma for nearly 2 years. I began as a pastoral coordinator and assumed responsibilities of Project Director. Charles, one of our Supervisors from Special Needs Department said the following during the 40th birthday celebrations of JRS:

“Fr. Lasantha is our Project Director (PD). I do not believe that he is our PD. He is not suitable to be a PD. Why? He walks with us. He visits us regularly. We see him very frequently. He enjoys our food. He sternly warns us within seconds he laughs with us. Yes, he is not a good PD because he is so close to us. I take him for a beneficiary of our Centre; a child with special needs. More precisely he is a hyperactive child. We love him. He too loves us as our child with special needs”.

Yes, I am becoming a tiny part of their lives.....
I thank God, JRS, Tom, Dexter, Joe Xavier, Endashaw who looped me into JRS. I thank God for Fr. Arrupe, and I thank God for giving me this passion from my novitiate days.

Szeged - Hungary

György writes from Szeged, Hungary

Dear Province - Companions,
I am greeting you from Szeged, a city in Hungary where I am serving as co-pastor at St. Joseph's Church residing at Bús Pater Jesuit Residence since 11 March 2020 while waiting for residence visa and re-entry into Sri Lanka. After the first wave of the pandemic, Hungary too is hit hard by the virus. I myself did not get the virus, but twice already I had to stay in quarantine at home because I was identified as a contact-person of infected people.



Last time the superior of the house himself was tested positive in his PCR test, but he is back again in good health. We have a third person in the community, who is an elderly priest with chronic health-deficiency. Because of him we are even more worried. Besides celebration of masses,

hearing confessions and having Eucharistic adoration, I am involved in spiritual guidance of people and preparing students for the sacrament of confirmation. I gave recollections to groups of people like CLC members and Christian students, and gave them some presentations on Sri Lanka several times. I continue to help neighbouring parish priests by celebrating masses and preaching at several church-feasts. Recently I gave an online recollection, first time in my life, to the seminarians of the diocese, who are not many though.

I hope you all are well; I am checking daily on the coronavirus-situation in Sri Lanka as well. I wish you all a blessed Advent season and preparation time for the coming of our Lord!

Yours in the Lord,
György

REMEMBRANCES

DECEMBER

| | | | | | |
|---------|----------------------|-------|---------|------------------------|-------|
| 03/1937 | Fr. Charles Piler | 54/33 | 19/1944 | Fr. John B. de la Haye | 56/37 |
| 03/2001 | Fr. Frederick Cooley | 80/59 | 21/2011 | Fr. Joseph Chianese | 95/79 |
| 04/1952 | Br. George Beau | 74/50 | 23/1980 | Fr. Armando de Burra | 67/48 |
| 05/1938 | Fr. Gabriel Moreel | 85/62 | 26/1983 | Fr. Cosmos Guida | 77/60 |
| 08/1971 | Fr. John Weaver | 78/57 | 23/1998 | Fr. Basil Silva | 66/47 |
| 15/1977 | Fr. Arthur Caprioli | 50/34 | | | |

MANY HAPPY RETURNS

DECEMBER

| | |
|---------|---------------------------|
| 10/1970 | Angelo Sujeewa Pathirana |
| 15/1991 | Priyan R. Fernando |
| 16/1983 | Rashmi Madusanka Fernando |
| 16/1996 | Petrus M. George |
| 24/1975 | Imran John |
| 26/1948 | Stephen Perera |
| 27/1980 | Suvakeen Roshan |
| 29/1981 | Noel A. Jayanathan |

JANUARY

| | | | |
|---------|-------------------------|---------|-----------------------|
| 01/1984 | Jude Deluxion | 23/1961 | Lasantha de Abrew |
| 03/1943 | Christlin P Rajendram | 26/1933 | Eustace Fernando |
| 03/1966 | Benedict Savarimuttu | 26/1955 | Gamini Perera |
| 04/1936 | John Joseph Mary | 26/1997 | Joseph Maxwell |
| 09/1971 | Lalith Fernandopulle | 31/1969 | Christian Perera |
| 11/1978 | Antonhas Morais James | 24/1991 | Krishnaraja Pradeepan |
| 14/1960 | Bernard Jayasinghe | 25/1998 | Shahzad Raheel |
| 19/1950 | Sebastian Maria Anthony | 29/1997 | Pervaiz Rizvan |

NEXT EDITING

Please send your reports/pictures/photographs on or before Saturday 26th, December 2020 to the Editor,
Sri Lanka Jesuits' NEWSLETTER
sociussrilanka@gmail.com