



MADHYA PRADESH JESUIT Newsletter



St. Xavier's School, Ambikapur

LOYOLA NIKETAN, BILASPUR, C.G., India

February, 2021

Year 42, No. 02

From Provincial's Desk



Whither Are We Going?

"Whither am I going?" was the question raised in the mid-18th century by Francis Asbury, an American clergyman. This question was raised in the context of a search of a new world for the proclamation of the Kingdom of God. The purpose of Asbury's journey was "not to gain honour or earn money but to live to God and to bring others to do so."

Today, we are invited to question ourselves, "Whether am I going?" "Whether are we going as a Province?" The Universal Apostolic Preferences 2019-2029 were promulgated on 19th February, 2019. We completed the draft of Province Apostolic Planning (PAP) in November 2020 and started the process of interiorization in the First Week of Advent in December 2020. We were instructed by the UAP-PAP Core Committee to complete the entire process of interiorization in 8 weeks. The first quarter of February 2021 is gone and more than 50 per cent of our communities haven't completed the process. Some communities have not even started. Whither are we going? Where is our priority and commitment?

Soon we will begin the Lenten Season, a time of reflection, self-examination, personal and communal transformation. Lenten Season 2021 is an opportunity and an invitation for us to reflect individually and collectively on the interiorization, ownership and productive implementation of all action plans proposed in the Province Apostolic Planning.

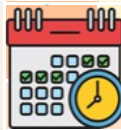
I wish you all a blessed and fruitful Lenten Season 2021 and invite you to own up the UAPs and PAPs and "resolve to concentrate and concretize our vital apostolic energies" during the next ten years.

Fr. Ranjit Tigga, S.J.



ANNOUNCEMENT

- ◆ Fr. General appointed **Fr Sean O. Carroll, SJ** Provincial of the United States West Province. This Province was created in 2017 when the former Provinces of Oregon and California were united.
- ◆ **Sch. Cyril Becks, S.J.** and **Sch. Tobias Tigga, S.J.** will be ordained Deacons by Archbishop Felix Toppo SJ together with other Jesuit Scholastics on 13 February 2021 at Kanke Parish, Ranchi.
- ◆ **Sch. Rakesh Kumar Bara, S.J.** will be ordained a deacon by Rev. Thomas Dabre, Bishop of Pune on 14 February 2021 at de Nobili College, Pune.



PROVINCIAL'S PROGRAMME

February

01-03	Loyola Niketan, Bilaspur
05-05	Central Zone meeting, Bagaicha, Ranchi
08-13	Loyola Niketan, Bilaspur
13	Ignatian Year Core Committee Meeting
15	Bhopal Campion School Society GB Meeting, Bhopal
16	Province Consult, Campion, Bhopal
18	UAP-PAP Core Committee Meeting, XISA, Raipur
19-28	Loyola Niketan, Bilaspur
22-26	JCSA meeting (online)

Priestly Ordination of Fr. Dino Toppo

The parishioners of Manendragarh showed good unity among all Fathers, Sisters and the faithful during the preparation and decoration for the Ordination of Fr. Dino Toppo. The stage was decorated



superbly. People were well informed to observe the norms of Covid-19. There was sanitization at the gate. The ladies escorted the Ordinandi, Bishop, Provincial and all the Deacons and Priests and Religious with their beautiful entrance dance all wrapped in red saris. The ceremony of the Ordination was filled with devotion and solemnity. The Norms of Covid-19 were observed as there was neither kissing or embracing of the Ordinandi. The Father of the Ordinandi had served the church as a



catechist for a long period of time. So it was an honour to the parents to dedicate their son Fr. Dino to the Lord. The singing was very sweet and melodious. All the faithful maintained perfect discipline during the ceremony of Ordination. There was a short programme of felicitation after the Ordination. There was very good arrangement for a festive meal for all the participants after the programme of felicitation. Fr. Dino expressed his gratitude and joy to the Lord, Society of Jesus, Bishop of Ambikapur and to the faithful for being ordained. He wished to be fruitful for the Lord and His people.

-Fr. Herman Joe, S.J.

Jeevandhara Ashram, Mauhapali

Jeevandhara School has been running offline classes despite the COVID-19 lockdown in the country since October 2020. The suggested online classes as well as *para* classes were not feasible at all here. Parents were getting impatient to send their children to schools and on the other hand, students were eager to come to the



school. The school management decided to take a middle path of conducting classes in the school campus but; classes are held under trees with required physical distance. Once classes are on, the sight of the campus gives a feeling of an ancient ashram school. About 80% of students turn up for classes every day. The school has thus given students some learning opportunities with this approach during the lockdown. Even the prescribed assignments for students are written down like examinations. Students are given questions beforehand for preparation and they have to write assignments like any other examination in the school campus. This approach motivates them to study rather than just copying the answer from books.

The school upgraded and added some basic infrastructural facilities for students. Long-awaited separate toilets for boys and girls were inaugurated on January 11, 2021, by Shri Kheersagar Sawra, Sarpanch, Karpi Panchayat, an alumna of the school, in the



presence of students and a few parents. It was blessed by Fr. Ajay Kumar Kujur, S.J., Superior, Mauhapali-Barmakela Community. In the absence of these facilities, boys went to the forest for their natural calls, and girls managed with a single toilet in the campus. Along with the above inaugurations, the school also inaugurated

drinking water stand for students. Now all students take water from the water stand. All these small projects were made possible due to the hard work of Fr. Blacius Kerketta, S.J., Fr. Eligius Kandulna, S.J., Fr. Sandeep Tigga, S.J, Fr. William Beck, S.J. and Fr. Alfred Toppo, S.J. The school also is grateful to all well-wishers and donors for actualizing these projects for students.

-Fr. Alfred Toppo, S.J.

Campion Community, Bhopal

The New Year was welcomed with the Eucharistic Celebration followed by Adivasi dance and best wishes at the parish quadrangle. On the first day of the year, the Jesuit community and the Apostolic Carmel Sisters gathered close to the campus pond to share the happiness. This was an enriching occasion to strengthen our community spirit as we shared our life and played and entertained ourselves with games. We are grateful to Mr. Shrivastava, who generously arranged and sponsored the lunch for this picnic. All the units came together on Saturdays to involve ourselves in the process of the Interiorization of UAP-Province Apostolic Planning 2020-2025. To do justice to all units of their travelling, we decided to go to different units, Mariado and Bhouri for our reflection, prayer and sharing. On 17th of January, we the community members had an outing to a farmhouse in an interior village on Vidisha road. We spent our time admiring the beautiful creatures in nature. On 20th of January, the Primary and the Secondary staff celebrated the birthday of Fr. Athnas as the Principal's Day. On 22nd of January, we gathered together for a thanksgiving Mass and dinner to have a combined birthday celebration of Fr. Athnas, Fr. Blacius and Sch. Naveen. Under the care of Fr. Blacius and all other Fathers the chicken farm, with *Kadakhnath* and *Kakrel* are flourishing. We have nearly 200 chickens



waiting to make our various occasions delicious. On 10th of January, the parish youth and children along with the Fathers went for a picnic to Halali Dam. It was an opportunity for them to cherish the beauty of nature, to feel the companionship and to learn to join hands together to carry out different works. A variety of games were arranged for the children to enhance their confidence and strengthen their unity. Though the effect

of the pandemic is not yet finished the faithful come to the church on Sundays with required precautions. Under the leadership of Fr. Alok Kujur, the AICUF played a vital role in raising a fund and to help the poor during the COVID-19 pandemic. For all those who had worked hard and contributed much for this cause, a picnic was arranged on 31st of January at Jhiri on the Kolar road. Some Fathers accompanied AICUFers with a community bus as in our UAP-PAP a special accompaniment of the youth is emphasized. The picnic was yet another occasion to strengthen the bond among the AICUFers and motivate them.

-Sch. Naveen Kerketta, S.J.

Vidya Sadan, Bhopal

The New Year brought much excitement and joy to us as we all renewed our commitment of giving ourselves all the more for the learning of the language. Fr. Athnas always challenged and motivated us by his pep talks during the breakfast whenever he celebrated the Eucharist with us. On 9th of January, Mr Sylvester Kispotta addressed the pre-novices and made them aware of the contribution of the Church in the upliftment of the tribals of Chhotanagpur. On 20th of January, Vidya Sadan family joined the primary staff in celebrating the birthday of Fr. Athnas. This was the first exposure for the Brothers in the school programme this year. The Brothers had great learn



ing as they attended and observed the cultural programme performed by the teachers and the students. In the evening the Brothers wished Fr. Athnas and received his blessings. On 21st of January, all the Pre-novices were taken to Asha Niketan Hospital for the medical test. This is one of the essential tests required of them as we come closer towards the end of their academic session. All of them were reported physically fit. Only a few of them were prescribed for medicines to boost their platelet count. On 24th of January Fr. Blacius Kullu celebrated his birthday with us as he offered a thanksgiving mass at Vidya Sadan chapel. There was a joyous atmosphere created after the Mass as we wished him. The Republic day celebration made the ambience incredibly colourful and patriotic. On this day we celebrated the birthday of Sch. Naveen and Bro. Rohit. There was a flag hoisting ceremony after the Eucharistic

celebration. Fr. Panka was the chief guest for the occasion. He motivated us to read and acquire familiarity with our rich constitution and challenged us to protect it. There were speech, patriotic singing and slogans to remember the contribution of Dr. Bheem Rao Ambedkar. On this day Brothers inaugurated the newly made ground in front of Loyola Niwas with a cricket match. The day was concluded with a cultural programme, consisting of a song, skit, speeches and dance.

-Sch. Naveen Kerketta, S.J.

AICUF Ashram, Bhopal

English is a universal language, and also the third most widely spoken language in the world after Chinese and Spanish. English language not only adds value to personality but also makes human life and communication easier with other community, country and culture. AICUF began a spoken English course on 4th January 2012, for all the interested students who consider language as an essential element for a bright future.

Someone has rightly said working whether paid or unpaid, is good for our health and well-being. Work contributes to human happiness. COVID-19 threw a wrench in the works by taking life and by creating fear among the common people. On 14th January 2021 AICUFers came together and there was a common manualia by present AICUFers and Ex-AICUFers including would be young AICUFers. A pretty good number turned up for the cause. They cleaned and levelled the ground and made the ground ready for the 'YOUTH MEET' which will be held in February 2021 at Loyola Niwas, Campion Campus Bhopal. Working together is a



common platform where youngsters prove their commitment to a better society. At the end, AICUFers had a fellowship meal together. Thanks to able AICUF president Miss Vandana Barwa and other committee members- Deepak, Meena and Suchita for taking a lead.

On 24th January 2021, there was a 'CHUNAUTI' an interactive Seminar on *Career Guidance* at St. Joseph the worker church Barkhera. Fr. Alok Kujur S.J., was the resource person. For about 42 young students availed

themselves for the programme. Thanks to Sr. Stella, Holy Cross Sisters of Amravati for the care plan.

On 31st January 2021 there was a picnic organized by AICUFers and Ex-AICUFers Thanks to Fr. Christy S.J., Fr. Julias Kullu from Barkhera parish, Sr. Cersencia, Sr. Pushpa and Superior Sr Anjali from CMC, Fr. Amrit Toppo, S.J. Indeed their presence made difference among the young people. At the end Fr. Alok gave a vote of thanks and expressed gratitude for the work and initiatives taken by both AICUFers and Ex- AICUFers during the COVID-19 fundraising programme for low-income families. Almost one lakh fifteen thousand was the collection and credit went to AICUFers and Ex-AICUFers. Thank you, father Christy, for providing a bus for the picnic. Thanks to Mrs Priyanka Soreng and Dr. Akriti for their meticulous plan and creative games.

-Fr. Alok Kujur, S.J.

Campion School, Bhouri, Bhopal

Campion School, Bhouri, continued online classes in its full swings in the New Year. Teachers and students both were well-tuned with the online classes. Recently we had the II & III periodic tests for the class IX and XI and Pre – Board Examinations for Class X & XII. The examinations were held from 5th to 16th January. There was an option for the students to appear the examinations online or offline. Students from K.G. to Class VIII had their examinations online. Teachers were busy correcting papers while they continued the classes. On 30th January onwards students of Classes IX to XII are coming to the school for consultation with the subject teachers. Teachers are preparing students for the final examinations.

All teaching and nonteaching staff came for the 72nd Republic day celebration. It was simple due to COVID - 19. Fr. Zacharias Kerketta, Principal unfurled the flag and Sir Lokesh Bhargava delivered an inspiring speech. In his speech, he said that the Republic Day celebration was not purely an intellectual celebration or an occasion just to distribute sweets but it was a celebration of



brotherhood and awakening our conscience for the growth and development of the country. A band of school choir performed a national melody on this occasion under the efficient and able guidance of Sir

Sourabh Ahirwar, the music teacher of the school. The stage was conducted by Mrs. Shalini Shrivastava, the Maths teacher of middle school. Sports teachers of the school made all necessary arrangements to make the programme successful under the supervision of Fr. Casimir Ekka. All the guidelines of COVID - 19 were strictly followed by all on this occasion.

UAP and PAP reflection and interiorization continued in Campion Community, Bhopal. The community arranged meetings in different units. On 30th January one of the meetings was held in Campion School, Bhouri. We had a beautiful reflection and faith sharing on Dialogue and Higher Education apostolates. After the spiritual conversation, we had a fellowship meal to foster our spirit of companionship. It was much appreciated by all the members.

-Fr. Casimir Ekka (7), S.J.

Loyola Niketan, Bilaspur

All members of the community stood together to welcome the New Year 2021. It was the moment to be grateful to the Lord for the blessings of the last year and welcome the New Year with joy.

Frs. Herman Joe, Arvind Vinay and Pancratius joined Fr. Ranjit Tigga, Provincial for the Ordination (Jan 4) of the Deacon Dino Toppo at his native parish Manendragarh. They stayed at the community of Baikunthpur on the previous night of the Ordination.

All the consultants had gathered at Bilaspur for one day consult meeting. They left the place according to their convenience.

Fr. Provincial left for his home on 17 Jan to celebrate Gami on 18 January of his mother on her first death anniversary. Frs. Herman Joe, Pancratius and Mahant Ekka too had gone for the Holy Mass from Bilaspur.

Fr. Emilius Ekka made a trip to his village to bid farewell and funeral Mass for one of his aunts on 18 Jan. He returned on the same day.

Fr. Henry's Birthday was an occasion to come together for all the campus people- Jesuits, supporting staff and Sister's community to pray together and have the dinner together. Fr. Socius unfurled the national flag on the Republic Day at the community.

Fr. Henry and Fr. Pradeep paid a visit to Mauhapali and Baramkela to see and discuss the updates of construction on the places on 28 Jan. They returned on the following day.

There was a community meeting on 30 Jan. The community has decided to celebrate Holy Eucharist three days in English, three days in Hindi and one day in Kurukh. The community had the UAP meetings in intervals.

Fr. Herman Joseph Minj, S.J.

St. Joseph Niwas, Kerakachhar

January was a grace-filled month for St. Joseph Community Kerakachhar. We all began the new year with great zeal and enthusiasm. All the members looked refreshed and rejuvenated to begin life here in the community anew. The number of faithful during the Sunday mass has begun to increase like many other parishes, which is a good sign because the faithful feel the need for spiritual nourishment. This has boosted our strength and energy for the spiritual ministry. This month was also a month of many marriages in the parish. Fr. Gyan and Fr. Rajesh are fully occupied in blessing the marriages on different occasions.

Life at the RVTC also has begun to come back with new students joining the training of different trades. Not many have joined the training but students have started joining the training as a positive thing. We are all hoping that many more new students will come to be trained here and to make use of the remaining months of this academic year. We as the community here wish them good luck and give them best wishes.

On the 1st of February, newly ordained priest Fr. Dino was invited to St. Joseph Community Kerakachhar for the felicitation. It was a great honour and pleasure for us here to welcome him and wish him good luck for the future priestly ministry in his assigned parish. A humble dinner was organized by Br. Ignas the minister of the house, to celebrate the new life of Fr. Dino. On the following day at 6:30 am. he celebrated the thanksgiving Mass for all the students and the community members which was a great joy for all of us. The students were all excited to meet the newly ordained priest. Many shared later that they saw a newly ordained priest for the first time in their lives. His humble introduction and thoughtful homily were a great inspiration for the students of RVTC. After the Mass, the students welcomed him with a melodious song and a fresh flower bouquet. Later, we all as a community thanked him for his availability and wished him all success and fruitfulness in his future ministry.

Dn. Alok Toppo, S.J.

Campion Community, Raipur

Scholastic Antony Palhe went to Wadrafnagar on December 16 to see his ailing father. Campion community, Raipur went for new year lunch out with Fr. Vijay Minj, S.J., Hasda, Parish priest. Four Scholastics Abhay Kispotta, Antony Palhe, Amarddep Ekka, and Naveen Tigga finished their Triduum guided by Fr. Stanislaus Tirkey, S.J., Superior on January 4 on the birthday of Fr. Lalit Ekka, S.J.

Catholic Ashram, Boirdadar

1- New life in the New Year: St. Joseph year

The joy of New Year wrapped the spirit of St. Joseph Year (inaugurated on 27th December) and the enthused



thrill of the blessing of marriages (on 31st December) dawned new hope and enthusiasm among the faithful. The number of the blessing of houses along with the couples and families and the celebration of anniversaries and jubilees of marriages graced the moments of life in Parish. All experienced that the suffering (undergoing pandemic) was the mother of a new beginning and new life. St. Joseph the head and model of families is steering the vehicle in a life journey.

2- Republic day celebration in the schools.

The celebration of Republic Day in both the schools poured out patriotism. The online flash and preparation of the day for reporting on the eve continued in the unfurling of the National flag, taking a pledge, blurring slogans, and saluting the national heroes, knights, and countless Indians. The speeches were delivered and patriotic songs were sung together. The day was marked as Constitution Day along with the Voters Day.

3- The Catholic Sabha and graveyard Committee-

The election of the Executive members of Catholic Sabha and Graveyard Committee was held on 10 and 17th January and handed over the documents with responsibilities on the following Sunday but the process of forming the Parish Council and Finance Commission (Canonical) is on. The apprehension is what will Catholic Sabha do when Parish Council is formed?. The Diocese has promulgated and mandated in 2008 but since then all the attempts were watered down. The process of forming it continues along with settling down some of the problems and issues of the Parish.

4- Jesuit picnic-

The Jesuits working in Raigarh Diocese gathered as an outing to finalize the forthcoming UAP-PAP sharing and planning. Accordingly, the weekly sharing and monthly recollection will be at a community level and quarterly reflection cum sharing and recollection will be in all the communities in turn. Birthdays and other celebrations will be less but in common. It was also resolved to work

38 boys and girls from Byron Bazar, Imlidih, Kapa, Abhanpur, Mahadevghat, with 3 priests as resource persons participated in the youth meeting at Byron bazaar Cathedral Parish on 10.01.2021. Fr. Ajay Bara, Diocesan Youth Director, Raipur introduced Father Alexander Ekka, S.J. (AICUF), the participants and the theme of the meeting. Thereafter, the participants were divided into parish-wise groups to discuss the topics given to them. Participants took an active part in the meeting. Alexander Ekka, S.J. explained the historical background, development, aims, and objectives of AICUF and its activities. He also informed them about the formation of a committee for the AICUF unit in Raipur in near future. He urged the youth to take an active part in the activities of youth and AICUF in Raipur Deanery in the future. The meeting ended with words of thanks

by Fr.



Ajay Bara, prayer by a boy, and blessing by Alexander Ekka, S.J. followed by light snacks, tea, and a group photo session at 1.30 p.m. The next youth meeting will be sometime after Easter 2021. Fr. Stanislaus Tirkey, S.J., Superior gave orientation to Sisters of JMJ, Tatibandh, Raipur on January 6, 2021, before they renewed their Profession.

Fr. Nicholas Barla, SDV, Secretary Tribal Desk CBCI, Miss Anupama Chelekchela, lecturer German language (DU) Delhi University, Mr. Neelam Kerketta, Ph.D. student JNU (Jawahar Lal Nehru University) and Alexander Ekka, S.J. met Sergius Minj Rtd (IAS) and Mr. Sunil Kujur Rtd(IAS), Raipur on January 7 and 8 respectively at their residences and discussed elaborately about the future tribal entrepreneurship for tribal economic development in Chhattisgarh. Later they also had an extensive discussion with Tribal leaders Mr. Serenius Toppo and Mr. Albert Kujur at XISA, Raipur.

Scholastics Abhay Kispotta and Amardeep Ekka left Campion, Raipur for Trichy to resume their college studies on January 12, 2021, Tuesday by bus-train transport via Nagpur-Chennai. Scholastics Antony Palhe and Naveen Tigga left Campion, Raipur on January 31, 2021, Sunday by train for Ahmedabad, Gujarat to continue their college studies.

-Fr. Alexander Ekka, S.J.

and think with the local Church. All will join the Diocese in the Diocesan pilgrimage at "leesh Janni Jagat Mata" Banhar on 6-7th February.

5- Ministry crossing boundaries-

Fr. Xavier Lakra of Ranchi in Assam came to bless the marriage of his relative at Rambhata Church. His stay in the Jesuit house gave the community the allegiance to Mother Province and one in UAP. Meeting with His Lordship Paul Toppo, DD Raigarh, he shared the pain and agony of the Adivasis in Assam. Dn. Dilip Minj came back to the pavilion serving Sch. Anjay Xess. His service brought Anjay to eat by himself. Along with service, Dilip tried to render some help to St. Xavier's Community. Now he is involved with the life of the faithful and the Jesuit Community. Fr. Miliyan Xaxa is awaited soon.

6- CTET exam in Bhubaneshwar (Odisha)-

Fr. Martin M. Tirkey wrote the CTET (Central Teachers Eligibility Test) exam along with 6 staff of St. Xavier's. All teachers are taking online classes in school and now preparing to host the PAC exam on 14th February.

Mukti Prakash Primary School took a half-yearly exam. Fr. Stephen Xaxa and staff are busy submitting the documents for Minority Certificate.

Fr. Zacharias Lakra Parish Priest is looking forward to cancelling the long-standing court case, forming the Parish Organizations and Parish Council, and concluding with the Sacrament of Confirmation in April and May. He went to Pithra-Simdega (Jharkhand) for the funeral of one of his first catechists Alphonse David Minj. The catechist was from the same village of late Br. Pascal Kujur.

-Fr. Zacharias Lakra, S.J.

St. Xavier's, Baramkela

The spiritual sharing on UAP-PAP by all the community members at Mauhapali was very inspiring. St. Xavier's School, Baramkela went through the official inspection on December 22, and permission was granted for further stage. Indeed it was a hard work of the community, led by Fr. Prabhu Narayan Khalkho, Principal.

Various meetings and a picnic were organised in January. Fr. Anmol Lakra, marched to Kharsia parish to celebrate Holy Eucharist on January 10. Sch. Roshan Baxla assisted him. On the same day, a deanery meeting and a picnic were arranged. Religious and priests gathered at Kinkari dam. On January 20 the St. Xavier's school staff went for an outing to Hirakud dam. Teachers witnessed various locations and places. On 24, January, Jesuits working in Raigarh Diocese namely Boirdadar, Baramkela and Mauhapali community headed to Kinkari dam for spiritual sharing. We had a

wonderful time with each other. Both Superiors Frs. Ajay Kumar and Zacharias initiated the plan meticulously. There would be some more UAP- PAP recollections and sharing in the coming days.

On Republic Day we unfurled the national flag in the presence of a few people. Fr. Henry Lakra, Socius, Frs. Alfred Toppo and Pradeep Ekka visited Baramkela on January 28. It was an auspicious moment for all of us. They had a brief meeting regarding the construction of



the new building. Soon after that, we had lunch together and they proceeded to Mauhapali.

-Sch. Roshan Baxla, S.J.

Loyola College, Kunkuri

Loyola College Kunkuri resumed off-line regular classes from 28th December 2020. The College is fulfilling the guideline given by the UGC during COVID-19 and fully equipped with the necessary materials. So far it is running well without any infection and interference.

Republic day was celebrated in the College. Mr. Ravi Rahi, SDM, Kunkuri was the Chief Guest and Mr. Avinash



Chauhan Tehsildar Kunkuri was the Guest of honour. Mr. Ravi Rahi the SDM gave a motivational speech to the students. It was inspiring and very much challenging. On this day three of our College students, Miss Prachi Minj, Mr. Kaushal Gupta, and Mr. Sumit Bara were awarded by the District Collector Jashpur for their outstanding performance in the state.

On 30th January Loyola College Kunkuri had a welcome ceremony for First-Year Students. Mrs. Ajem Toppo, Nagar Panchayat Adhyakch was the chief guest, and Mr. Jagdish Apat, Nagar Panchayat Upadyakch was the

guest of honour. Mr. Gerad the Skill Development Secretary and Mr. Satya the planner of the skill development were also present. Mr. Gerad gave an inspiring and very challenging speech to the students. The students and the staff profited from his speech.

Fr. Ignace Kindo, S.J.

Prakash School, Pathalgaon

The month of January brought a lot of blessings to Prakash School Jesuit Community. We went for a picnic to a place called Balajhar Dam as a group of religious communities - Holy Cross, St. Anne's, Asha Deep, St. Xavier's, and Prakash Community on 10 January under the guidance of Fr. Fabianus and Fr. Robert and their team. There was a great moment of joy, sharing, happiness, fellowship meal and group dance.

There was a staff meeting in the school on 15 January. Many good decisions were taken for the students. Students took help from teachers to clarify the subject matters in the school. Prakash School Hostel was reopened on 20 Jan and a good number of hostellers turned up. Fr. Justin Kujur and Sch. Anup Minj encouraged and inspired the Hostellers to study well. The construction of school building extension is in progress.

Sch. Anup Minj, S.J.

Jeevan Vikas Maitri, Pathalgaon

Kastura-Saraitoli had the New Year Holy Eucharist, in the morning, presided over by Fr. Yacub Kujur and climaxed with "Jalsa", a dance competition in the afternoon. The winners among the six groups bagged their prizes and others stayed tuned with consolation prizes. The gathering turned into village meeting. Participants were passionate to work on FRA. They were aptly aware of the *Kisan Andolan*. Fr. Yacub participated in a meeting on framing PESA rules for CG at Kunkuri on 6th January.

A State Level Workshop was held under *Lok Manch* on Participatory Training Module and Material Development on 19-20 January at JVM. There were 17 participants. Mr. Jayanta Patra, National Co-ordinator of LM was the resource person. There was sharing of experiences according to the objectives of Lok Manch, followed by discussion and strategic action plan. Fr. Yacub gave explanation in detail on FRA. A local *Kisan* leader and LM collaborators shared their views on the new Agri-laws affecting farmers regarding farming and ensuring food security.

The second day of the workshop began at 9 a.m. with

the reading of the Preamble of the Constitution led by Shashikala Ekka. Mr. Jayanta led into the identification of



issues -medicines, ambulance and insurance policy. He explained campaign strategy indicating to keep in mind-Activity, Stakeholders and Timeline. Then the group began to design strategies on health, followed by presentation and feedback.

The post lunch session was spent on the preparation of the training module and their presentation. Thus unit-level training module was prepared. Fr. Jacob Kujur, explained the main provisions of PESA given rules to be framed on it in CG, which the government has initiated. Meetings and seminars are being arranged at different levels to suggest the government. In JVM a big meeting of NGOs and CBOs was held and a draft was presented to the CM on his sojourn to Jashpur.

Fr. Jacob indicated, where and what type of rules be framed for PESA. Names were suggested by him to the Governor to participate in the framing of rules for PESA. Ms. Dhanmati Pradhan, Sarpanch and a close collaborator of LM and who attended a few meetings on the issue was invited to share her insights but due to some unavoidable situations, he could not come.

The NGOs were taught to raise issues and work accordingly. Lok Manch members should have a difference in thinking and working. The strategy of the campaign should be based on the rights of the people. Fr. Rajesh Xalxo proposed a vote of thanks.

Fr. Yacub blessed two marriages of his nephews and on 29th offered thanks giving Mass on the hilltop of Gundhara with his villagers.

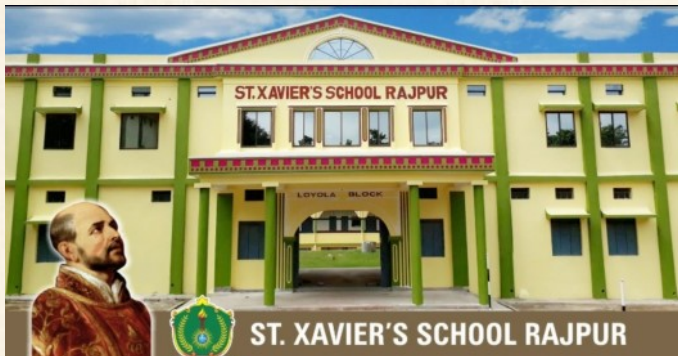
Another meeting was held at Bishop House Kunkuri on PESA on 31st Jan. Frs. Agapit Tirkey, Yacub and Mr. Hemant Lakra participated in the meeting. Representatives of the meeting presented the report to the Minister of Panchayats, CG.

Fr. Yacub Kujur, S.J.

St. Xavier's, Rajpur

On 21 January 2021, Fr. Polycarp Xalxo S.J. and Fr. Sebastian Tigga S.J. went to Sargedih, for the Burial of late Seraphinus, the father of Fr. Herman Tirkey S.J. On 23/01/2021 Fr. Polycarp Xalxo S.J. gave a recollection to Ursuline Sisters of Jhingo. On 30th of

January 2021, two of our school buses took Catholic Sabha Members of Jhingo Parish, to Kharkona for the



Pilgrimage. It was good news that St. Xavier School Rajpur got **CBSE affiliated No.3330423** on 27/01/2021. It is a matter of pride and joy for MP province and more particularly for St. Xavier's School Rajpur and the people of Rajpur area. Congratulation to each and all!

- Fr. Isaac Kujur, S.J.

St. Xavier's, Ambikapur

The community members organized a protest at Gharee Chowk against the arrest of Fr. Stan Swami in the second week of October 2020. The members of the IPTA (Indian People's Theatre Association - a pre Independence 1943 Association, promoted themes related to the Indian freedom struggle. Its goal was to bring cultural awakening among the people of India. Post-independence, IPTA, works for Equality of the citizens and brings together theatre artists from across India to illustrate political and social issues through dramas, street plays, and theatres) participated in the protest.

The IPTA members organized the protest against the arrest of Fr. Stan Swami. The CRI members of Ambikapur also participated in the protest. Then a third time, the Jesuits called for yet another protest, "**Solidarity – stand for Fr. Stan**" against the arrest of Fr. Stan Swami. A large number of people of goodwill of the town and a big number of CRI members came out to stand with Fr. Stan. Hence, the protest show was at Gandhi Chowk and the Gharee Chowk since the number of participants was large and hence it was imperative to observe Covid – 19 norms of the Government. The speakers spoke on different topic like – the first speaker at Gandhi Chowk questioned the manner of arrest of Fr. Stan, where NIA, despite interrogating for several hours earlier, issued a summon to Fr. Stan to travel to Mumbai who is 84 years old, and later arrested from his residence in Ranchi, Jharkhand. The second speaker said about the draconian law: "Unlawful Activity (Prevention) Act, 1967", (UAPA) or anti-terror law, as amended by the Lok Sabha in 2019; and its irrelevancy in today's time in a democratic country like India. The third speaker told the participants

about the provisions of the Indian Constitutional Fundament Rights and esp. the Right to Freedom (Art. 19) and the Right against Exploitation (Articles 23 & 24) and that the present Government is violating the Fundamental Rights of the citizens indiscriminately. Then, all the participants marched to the Aakashvani Chowk at the Statue of Mother Teresa, Where there was a prayer meeting for half an hour with lighted candles. The Community members also took part in the Protest, organized by IPTA against the three Agricultural Laws of the Central Government at the Gharee Chowk.

The Community participated in the second protest organized by the members of IPTA, in fact, not a protest, but to show solidarity with the farmers and to give homage to the farmers, who died during the protest in Delhi. Then, there was yet a third protest, organized by IPTA, the community took part against the three agricultural laws of the Central Government. In the protest, the copies of the three laws were burnt all over India.

Fr. Nirdosh Ekka, went to the village Saphaulee, in Lundra Block, in the district of Surguja, Chhattisgarh, with the members of IPTA to conscientize the farmers on the three Agricultural laws, namely : (1) The Farmer's Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Felicitation) Act, 2020, (2) Farmer's (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Act, 2020, (3) Essential Commodities (Amendment) Act, 2020 of the Central Government on 05 – Jan – 2021. We meet the small farmers in small groups 3 to 5 at a time. We are contacting the farmers to their village by village. We explain the consequences of the 3 agricultural Laws. The three laws appear in their principle very rewarding, nice, and beneficial to the farmers. Inherently, they benefit the Capitalists, the corporate, and the powerful. The 3 agricultural laws are, in fact, sugar-coated poison. The small farmers will be the most losers. They will end up becoming daily labourers in their plot of lands. The door of the Judiciary is closed to the farmers. "Will the bureaucrats be just in their administration justice?" – is a big, worth centillion question.



On 26 – Jan – 2021, the members of IPTA and Fr. Nirdosh visited another village, called Karakee, in Lundra block, in the district of Surguja, in Chhattisgarh. We participated in the flag hoisting of the village, where the

sarpanch of the village unfurled the National flag. The IPTA honoured the sarpanch for his honest work.

On the Martyr's day or the Peace Day, 30 – Jan – 2021, the community members along with CRI members and the people of the town gathered at Gandhi Chowk, Ambikapur to pray for the welfare of the Nation and the leaders of the country and the citizens, and to pay homage to the Father of the Nation. The four priests, from four religions, i.e., Hindu, Islam, Sikh, and Christian, said the prayer one by one. Fr. Nirdosh led the prayer by requesting the congregation to repeat the prayer after him. Then, the congregation lighted the candles and observed two minutes silence, and ended the 'Sarvadharm Prayer meeting'.

- Fr. Sandeep Lakra, S.J.

Xavier Sadan , Umaria

Umaria has experienced the dawn of newness in 2021. Province Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Province Development Officer came to Umaria to make sure upcoming buildings. The building works in Umaria and Nimha have begun. They are progressing with their own pace. The Principals of Kota, Manpur, Nimha and Umaria have applied for the Minority Status. Fr. Sanjeev was admitted in one of the hospitals at Katni for three days. Now He is back in the community with a rejuvenated spirit. High School is reopened for the students to conduct offline classes with all safety measures against COVID-19.

- Fr. Sanjeev Tenkey, S.J.

Catholic Ashram, Dhanwarkala

Fathers and Brothers from St. Xavier's community, Ambikapur came to Dhanwarkala for the New Year celebration on 1 January. Their presence doubled the joy of the members of Dhanwar community. There was an interesting short program for all boosting within a new beginning in the New Year. Thanks to St. Xavier community, Ambikapur for their care and concern for Dhanwar Kodaku Mission.

There was Sarva Adivasi Maha Sammelan in Chando, Balrampur district on 12 January. Mr. Sonha Potai, State president of C.G. Sarva Adivasi Samaj was the Chief Guest and other tribal leaders were invited for the program. About 35 Kodaku tribes had participated in the program from Dhanwarkala. More than 5 thousand Adivasis from different tribes came for the program. There was a meeting for all tribal leaders in the circuit house, Balrampur. Mr. Sonha Potai, SP Balrampur and

tribals shared what the problems and difficulties were faced by them. SP gave guidelines on how to process and deal in the police office. Mr. Potai assured all to raise the issues of the tribals specially the issues of Land



(Patta) and caste certificate of the Kodakus at the state level. There was a big rally from Balrampur to Chando. Kodakus performed a sondo dance. All appreciated the dance. It is the sign to keep the Adivasi culture alive and safe.

A short meeting was held for the Dhanwar Alumni on the 17th January. Fr. Palacidus Kujur, In-charge of Alumni and Fr Bipin Kujur guided all the members present in the meeting and encouraged and called them to strengthen the group. It was well appreciated that former students of Dhanwar started coming up and taking the initiative to help the mission.



There was a meeting for Kodakus in Champapur on the 22nd of January. Kodakus had gathered together, more than 400 of them in number from different villages. Mr. Basant Kujur, President of Sarva Adivasi Samaj was the main speaker who told them about their rights and duties in the community. He also assured to help them to get the land records (Patta) and caste certificate. Mr. Francis Maes was also present in the meeting and he asked the Kodakus to send their children to Dhanwar for better education and life. On 22nd January Akashwani group from Ambikapur came to Dhanwar for the interview with the farmers. They asked the Kodaku farmers how they cultivated the crops and other grains. It would be broadcast on the radio program Kisan Badi every Wednesday at 7.30 PM in Akashwani, Ambikapur. On 26th January, the Republic day was celebrated in St. John Berchmans School Dhanwarkala. The program was very short because of covid-19. There were two Sarpanches from Bada and Dhanwar as Chief Guests. The program was short and meaningful.

- Fr. Samir Minj, S.J.

On 28th February 1912, the Archbishop wrote to Sir A. Napier: "I am just back from a tour in Chota Nagpur. There is no news so far of the coming to Jashpur of the Political Agent. You told me that you were going there in March. I write to ask you to take up the Kastura case, if Mr. Blakesley has not done so in the meantime. As Fr. Van den Driessche who has been blamed by the Raja for this affair and consequently has a right to be heard in self-defence has to do a great deal of touring in the large district under his care, will you kindly give him timely information of the date at which he will be required at Kastura or in Jashpurnagar? From the conversations I lately had with the Missionaries who work in Jashpur, my former impression that the Raja is trying his best to coerce his people into abandoning Christianity, has been confirmed and strengthened. I trust you will not allow this injustice to go on under the protection of the British Government."

Sir A. Napier replied immediately on 3rd March 1912, mentioning that His Grace's letter has been forwarded to Mr. Blakesley. Finally on 29 March, Fr. Van den Driessche was able to inform His Grace that the interview with Mr. Blakesley had taken place, not at Kastura but Charaidand: "I hope that with God's help I have said nothing too much or too little. The affair of Kastura evidently came up too. I have exposed what happened there. The Political Agent gave me a copy of the Raja's accusation against me. Here it is, from a letter of the Raja to the Political Agent, dated 2nd July: Raja's accusation. 'It is reported that at the time when the Holy Car festival of Jagannath was being held at Kastura, where it is annually held, one Rev. Van den Driessche turned up with some catechists and tried to gather round himself the people who were otherwise engaged in works connected with this festival; but this failing, he came again the next day (29th June) with a large number of catechists and went near the temple calling for the men who were at work that day also and while so doing abused and intimidated a lower grade state official, who went to see that those men were doing the works allotted to them. I am unable to regard this alleged conduct on the part of the Rev. gentleman hardly in keeping with the noble profession he professes; much less he was justified in so doing whatever his intention might be.' In a 2nd letter, 24th July: 'With regard to what happened at Kastura, I (Raja) would among others, only point out to two things now, first, the missionary gentleman rode up to the temple which he ought not to have done out of consideration for our religious susceptibilities at least, secondly, he prevented the Christian *railyats* of Kastura and Pakertoli from going to work in connection with the Jagannath festival, but I think that it is no part of his evangelical works. Of others, I shall say when necessary.'"

"When the Political Agent had read these two extracts, I (Fr. Van den Driessche) have absolutely denied the accusation and I have asked for a copy to be able to answer in detail. I may say that every sentence of the accusation is false and a lie! And I shall try to show this clearly in my answer. As I have said, the Political Agent limited his action to write the "statement" which I have made (that lasted nearly 5 hours) without making any observations, satisfying

himself with occasionally a question. What will come out of it? Good, I hope, unless all these papers remain in the drawers!"

Note that the accusation made has now been shifted from the people creating a disturbance to the Father. In the next letter to His Grace, 19th May 1912, the Father writes: "The Political Agent has acknowledged with thanks the receipt of my letter of 14th April with its enclosure: my answer to the accusations of the Raja. He adds: 'I have read the letter and will duly consider it in connection with the Kastura case.' Hence we may hope that the Kastura case will not be shelved in Raipur, as it was in Nagar. Besides in my answer, I asked in conclusion that the accusations be withdrawn or, if my answer was not considered as convincing, that an enquiry should take place where I might be brought face to face with my accusers, adding that I insisted because I was accused by the Raja not as a private person, but, as appears from both letters of the Raja, as a missionary." After 8 months waiting for the final result of that enquiry, the Father sent a reminder to the Political Agent, dated 11th December 1912. It took another 4 months to get the long expected decision. This the Father communicated to the Archbishop on 23rd April 1913 more than a year after the interview itself. Here is what the Political Agent said:

1. "With reference to the first part of your letter of 11th December enquiring whether any decision has been arrived at concerning the alleged beating of some Christians at Kastura on 24th June 1911, and specially with regard to complaints made against yourself by the Raja Bahadur of Jashpur in his letters dated 2nd and 24th July 1911, I have the honour to inform you that the alleged beating of Christians forms the subject of part of a report which I am submitting to the Local Administration whose orders about it I will communicate to you in due course when received.

2. "With regard to the complaint of the Feudatory Chief against yourself, to which you refer, I have the honour to inform you that I (Political Agent) wrote to the Feudatory Chief informing him that I had received from you a written assurance that you never went to Kastura at all on 28th June, being all the day at Pakertoli, a mile distant, that you went from Pakertoli to Saraitoli on 29th June by the usual road which passes through Kastura, with only two catechists, and that you did not go nearer the temple than the ordinary thoroughfare, nor did you stop in its neighbourhood, that you did not call any one from work, nor abuse nor intimidate anyone there; and that you are not conscious of having done anything to wound the religious susceptibilities of anyone. The Feudatory Chief has written to me in reply stating that he accepts your assurance as he understands that you are a minister of the Christian religion and he, therefore, does not wish to press the case any further."

3. "With regard to the statements contained in the rest of your letter under reply, I regret that I do not see my way, on the information before me, to taking any action in the matter. It is open to any subject of Jashpur, Christian or otherwise, who has a grievance, to have recourse to the ordinary state courts. I do not agree with your view that it is useless for them to appeal to the constituted state authorities. On the contrary, the results of my extensive

enquiries made last year have led me to the conclusion that the Feudatory Chief and his Magistrates have done their best to administer even justice between Jashpur subjects of various religious professions in the past, and I have no doubt that they will continue to do so in the future.” The Father’s comment: “A certificate of impartiality granted to the Raja that deserves to be framed! One might ask what would have happened if the Feudatory Chief and his magistrates had not done their best etc., perhaps they might have been sent to jail for a few months. The Kastura Christians and the two Christians Birsai of Tapkara and Phalsa of Kelba, who having had their fields confiscated, complained in court! Our idea of justice must be quite different from theirs!”

“For no. 2, does it not look as if I (Fr. Van den Driessche) had apologized to the Raja who had accused me and who now is kind enough to “accept my assurance”? The Political Agent seems to have forgotten to tell the Raja that besides my “written assurance” I gave him two proofs to show clearly that every word of the Raja’s accusation against me was untrue; perhaps the Raja knew as much without requiring these proofs, and this is why he “does not wish to press the case any further! Finally, with regard to no. 1 (Kastura case) I expect we shall have to wait a long time before we hear again about it!”

bent on turning Kastura region again pagan. Success there would have meant success elsewhere. The boldness of Fr. Van den Driessche was contagious for his people and from cowards made them bold also, ready to endure anything to preserve their Faith. This contagion spread all over the Nich Ghat and put all the Christians on their guard under the ever vigilant eyes of their pastor. In more than one letter he considers this severe persecution like a crucible from which the Christians emerge purer and better than they were before, more steady in their religion, more tenaciously clinging to it. On Kastura side some vacillated for a time, but today all the Uraons of the said villages are Catholic.

On 8th October 1911, when welcoming His Grace, on his return from Europe, Fr. Van den Driessche said: “You will know already how steady our Jashpurrians have kept on this side up till now. Humanly speaking we could not have expected it, and it has been evidently the work of our Lord who wants the Uraons of Jashpur to remain his own. I cannot thank him enough for the very special help He has given us in the midst of our difficulties, and the best manner to show Him my gratitude will be, I think, to keep up the courage of the people until they can get some relief.” We may not close this chapter without paying a tribute to the very clever manner in which Fr. Van den Driessche conducted this case, in particular the enquiry at Kastura, and the proceedings during his stay at Nagar. It is worthy of a truly clever lawyer.

Compiled by *Fr. Agapit Tirkey, S.J.*

Rest in Peace

- † Fr Ronald Victor Menezes, (KAR), 48/26, at Benga luru on 14 January.
- † Fr. Ambrose Augustine, (PAT), 87/58, at Patna on 16 January.
- † Fr. Maxim Crasta, (GUJ), 54/32, at Our Lady of Pillar Hospital, Vadodara on 19 January.
- † Fr. Anthony A. D'Souza, (BOM), 94/77, at Mumbai on 27 January.
- † Fr. Lancelot Pereira, (BOM), 90/71, at Mumbai on 28 January.
- † Fr. Arwind Minj, (HAZ), 42, on 26 January.
- † Br. Stephen Kerketta, (RAN), 75/57, at Ranchi on 30 January.

REMEMBERING THOSE WHO HAVE LEFT US IN JANUARY FOR ETERNAL REST

S.N.	Name	Death	Birth
01	Br. Joseph Solozabal	01 Feb 1984	30 Jan 1905
02	Fr. William Missiaen	06 Feb 2013	12 Apr 1921
03	Fr. John Ancot	07 Feb 1983	07 Jul 1899
04	Fr. Jules Hens	22 Feb 1983	21 Sep 1902
05	Fr. George Lakra	25 Feb 1985	25 Apr 1932
06	Fr. Henry Geerts	26 Feb 1983	13 Sep 1905



BIRTHDAYS

Date	FEBRUARY
1	Sch. Toppo Amit
3	Fr. Minj Sameer
5	Sch. Hadde Basil
8	Fr. Kujur Ajay Kumar
8	Sch. Toppo Virendra
12	Fr. Tigga Satyaprakash
13	Sch. Panna Preetam
13	Fr. Xalxo Fabianus
14	Sch. Ekka Basant
18	Fr. Tirkey Vincent
20	Sch. Kujur Albester
20	Fr. Kujur Alok
20	Fr. Toppo Amritlal (R)
21	Sch. Tigga Nilesh
21	Fr. Toppo Binod Kr.
23	Sch. Lakra Almon
24	Fr. Tirkey Stanislaus
24	Fr. Toppo Manibhushan
26	Fr. Toppo Pratap
27	Fr. Toppo Silas
Date	MARCH
2	Sch. Toppo Anuranjan
3	Fr. Ekka Godfried
3	Fr. Khalkho Prabhu N.
3	Fr. Tirkey Martin M.
4	Sch. Tirkey Sikander
5	Sch. Xalxo Ravi
5	Sch. Baxla Roshan
6	Sch. Xalxo Amarjeet
8	Sch. Tigga Ashwin
9	Fr. Badne Rajkumar
10	Fr. Ekka Cornelius
11	Sch. Lakra Nelson
11	Fr. Minj Cyril
12	Fr. Beck William
13	Sch. Beck Cyril
16	Sch. Lakra Pingal
18	Fr. Minj Fabianus
20	Fr. Tigga Santosh
21	Sch. Lakra Edwin
22	Fr. Tirkey Michael
23	Sch. Ekka Robins
24	Fr. Kujur Charles
26	Fr. Tigga Robert P.
28	Sch. Ekka Michael
28	Kerketta Bartholomis
28	Fr. Tirkey Herman
29	Fr. Toppo Abraham
30	Sch. Lakra Shailendra

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