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No. 1 Newsletter of Darjeeling Jesuits- January~2021

From the Provincial's Desk

The cannonball moment proved to be the catalyst moment in the life of St Ignatius of Loyola for a new path. This path now spanning 500 years has changed the lives of many because an unexpected cannonball created enough space for the young, Basque Soldier, to discern that God was calling him to do something different, something greater. As he lay in his convalescence bed, Ignatius was healed not just of body but also of mind and heart. The cannonball that laid him low laid the foundation for his new life in God and the beginning of a story that now envelops each one of us. Perhaps the era of uncertainty of COVID-19 is the cannonball moment that will lead us to conversion and real change.



The Ignatian Year declared by Fr General, Arturo Sosa, will be both a celebration and a call to action guided by the four Universal Apostolic Preferences(UAPs). As we enter the Ignatian Year may we continue to see God at work in our everyday lives and in our histories with all of our sorrows, pain, desires, and hopes. Let us also understand ourselves and our neighbors as beloved of God, and discern that which is for God's greater glory. In the process may we experience our own conversion from death to life, devastation to gratitude, despair to joy and desolation to consolation. As we respond to the demands of both the upcoming Ignatian Year and the Apostolic Plans in the context of UAPs, let us resolve to engage more deeply the gifts of Ignatian Spirituality toward interior and social transformation as a means for confronting the particular concerns of our times.

APPOINTMENT BY FR GENERAL

Fr Shajumon Chakkalakkal SJ - Socius to POSA
Fr Xavier Alangaram SJ - Socius to the provincial
Fr Stanley Karakkada SJ - Province Consulor

APPOINTMENT BY POSA

Fr Arjen Tete, SJ (CCU) --- Conference Delegate for Formation

APPOINTMENT BY FR PROVINCIAL

Fr Patrick Pradhan – Parish priest of Sacred Heart Parish
Fr Benoy Lama – Parish priest of St. Joseph's Church
Fr John Banerjee – Minister/Estate in-charge, NP School
Fr Justin Bage – Teacher/Co-pastor, Uttar Salbari
Fr Bijay Kirti Kindo – Vice-Principal/Teacher, NBSXC,Rajganj
Fr Philemon Tirkey – Teacher, St. Xavier's school, Alipurduar
Fr Paulose Ezhakunnel – Minister, Province Curia
Fr Justin Thiraveyam – Teacher/Treasurer/Minister, Namchi
Fr Pascal Ekka – Bursar//Estate in-charge, St. Joseph's College, Darjeeling
Fr K. L. George – Interim Vice-Principal/Treasurer/Minister of St Xavier's College, Lengpui

Fr Alphonse Lepcha - Vice-Principal/Treasurer/Minister of St Xavier's College, Lengpui, after the return from studies
Fr Divyanandam – PhD studies in St Xavier's, Palayamkottai
Fr Dennis Soosai – PhD studies in Loyola College, Chennai
Fr Susai Kennedy – Youth and Vocation Promotion, Residing at Hayden Hall
Fr K. J. Joseph – Professor of History in SJC, Residing at St. Joseph's School Community
Dn. Oshish Tirkey – Acting Socius to the Novice Director from Jan 1 to Feb 28, 2021 and Pastoral Experience in St Peter's Parish, Gayaganga, from Mar 1, 2021
Fr Bosco Michael – Loyola High School and M. Ed.

PROVINCIAL'S PROGRAM

JANUARY 2021

02- St Joseph's School, North Point
03- Sacred Heart Parish, Singamari
09- Meeting with Mizoram team
12- Visitation (Scholastic), Hatighisa
14- Consult
16- Visitation (Scholastic), Jesu Ashram

UTTAR SALBARI

The Parish youth had a two-day retreat from 11th to 12th December, conducted by **Fr John Kennedy**. Thirty youth benefitted from the retreat. Shaadi School was conducted in the parish from 14th to 20th December. Seven couples attended this programme. Due to Corona virus, there was no Carol singing by the parish choir team. However, Totapara tea garden youth went to each line of their tea garden for carol singing. The catholic children of Kelabari and Mogulkata had a Christmas get-together on 23rd December. To reduce the number, the other tea garden children will have the get-together a little later.



Following the directives of the government and our Bishop to have Mass in smaller groups, Christmas night Mass and morning Mass were celebrated in the Parish Church and in Totapara village chapel. **Fr Bijay** said the night Mass in the parish and morning Mass in Totapara Chapel. **Fr Sebastian Minj** said the night Mass in Totapara Chapel and morning Mass in New Dooars Tea garden Church. **Fr Basil Toppo** said the morning Mass in the Parish Church.

The school gave out the results on 17th December. The school staff had a Christmas get-together on 19th December. The police department gifted us with a Christmas cake. We too had given them one. The police came to maintain law and order for the night as well as for the morning Mass.

Fr Basil Toppo

MANRESA

Our Socius, **Fr Roshan Kiro** left for a short home visit on 14th December. From there he will proceed to Pune to attend a mini sadhana course in Lonavla and return by the end of February 2021. **Deacon Oshish Tirkey** will be replacing him from the end of December 2020 till Fr Roshan's return.

In preparation for Christmas we were divided into small groups for decorations and as a spiritual preparation we had confessions on 23rd Dec. On 24th **Fr Director** celebrated the solemn Christmas vigil Mass at 9 pm. On the Christmas day the Manresa community had the Christmas gathering with Jesuits of Kalimpong, namely, **Fr Benny Paul** from Sakyong, **Fr Binod Kerketta** and **Gilbert Lepcha** from Gandhi Ashram. **Fr Ranjit Kujur** from Assam mission and three scholastics (**Prabhu, Barnabas and Niroj**) also joined us for the gathering. The gathering was filled with carol singing, games and it culminated with a sumptuous dinner prepared under the direction of our minister, **Br Gabriel Gurung**. This year we missed the carol groups coming for singing because

of the prevailing situation as parishes had decided to have common carol singing after the Christmas Mass.

Aatish

LOYOLA COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, NAMCHI

The month of December 2020 witnessed physical classes for the first semester students in spite of the winter cold wave in the class rooms. The students wrote their first sessional/formative tests on 26th and 28th December before the winter break. Though Christmas was a low key celebration this year, the Holy Mass at 7.00 AM was attended by the staff and students. A Loyola family lunch was served to teaching faculty, supporting staff and students in front of the residence in a pleasant sunshine ambience. **Fr Paulose Ezhakunnel SJ** left Loyola family on 21st December, after serving Sikkim Mission for about 18 months, to take up his next assignment in the Provincial Curia.

ST XAVIER'S COLLEGE, RAJGANJ

December 2020 proved to be an eventful month indeed. On 22 December, the last working day of this academic year, during the Pre-Christmas Celebration, the College teaching and non-teaching staff bade farewell to **Fr Xavier Alangaram** with heavy hearts. Xavier, who was the Vice Principal of the college for two and half years, is being replaced by **Fr Bijay Kirti Kindo** who was welcomed on the same day. Many students, too, were able to say goodbye to him since that day everyone from 2nd and 3rd Year had to submit their Examination paper in assignment form. On 22 December, the College also achieved another milestone when for the first time IIQA was uploaded as the first step towards National Accreditation and Assessment (NAAC) for the college's 1st NAAC Cycle. This year admission process went on almost endlessly; even after being closed on 31 October, West Bengal Higher Education Dept. ordered the admission portals to be reopened to accommodate many students who were deprived of admissions this year. That benefitted our college with total admissions this year reaching about 360. Thanks to **Fr Xavier** who efficiently coordinated the admissions in the college. Our Second building is almost complete and it gives a much better look to the campus where a lone building stood for many years.

On 20 December, the community, together with 11 scholastics, gave farewell to **Fr Xavier** and welcomed **Fr Bijay Kindo**. The event was combined with Pre-Christmas celebration with bonfire since many scholastics were to go to various parishes for Christmas ministry while Nepal scholastics were going back to their region.

Fr Lalit Tirkey went to Good Hope T.E under Mal Bazar parish for celebrating Christmas mid-night Mass accompanied by **Sch Anup Minj** and **Jayaraj Solomon**. **Fr Deven Yonzon** celebrated Christmas morning mass for the nuns and candidates of Holy Cross.



Fr Bijay has gone back to Uttar Salbarii to fulfil his commitments especially Christmas Masses and is expected to join

the community by the year end. Earlier in the month three Jesuits returned to the community after completing 14 days in quarantine at Senior Home, Matigara. We extend our heartfelt thanks to all those who made their stay comfortable and safe particularly Br Francis Basumatary and cook Valerian (Vale).

Fr Lalit

ST JOSEPH'S SCHOOL, NORTH POINT

Mr. Noel Rai was appointed as Senior Master in place of Mr. D.N. Pradhan after DN's sudden demise. The teaching staff meeting was held to round up the academic year, in which Fr Rector delivered his Christmas message, thanking the staff Jubilarians of this year and the retiring staff for their selfless services to the school.

The academic year is over and the School is closed for winter vacation after the online publication of results of this academic year. However, keeping in mind those taking ICSE and ISC exams, online remedial classes are arranged for them for a month. There is no Winter Camp for the underprivileged children this academic session due to the pandemic.

The community members joined the Darjeeling Deanery for the monthly recollection, preached by the Bishop at Divyavani. Fr K.J. Joseph has joined the school community as a new community member. Fr K.L. George and Sch. Amit Kullu have gone for their annual holidays. Fr Leo Alphonse finished his 2nd Semester B. Ed exams.

The School held out a picnic at Singla for Group-D staff, extending gratitude for their service. Fr Rector addressed them with his Christmas message and thanking them for their availability.

The youth of Lepcha Busty Parish went for a trekking to Sandakhpur along with Fr Stanley. Later, a seminar was organized for the youth on 'Career Guidance', conducted by Fr Kennedy. The youth actively participated in going around for Christmas carols to various places. On Christmas Eve, the church organized a carol competition in groups for all the Parishioners. The community members actively participated in Christmas ministry by going to Lepcha Busty, Singla, Sittong and Bethany for the Christmas Mass and meeting the

sacramental needs of the faithful. On 25th, the school held a fellowship dinner for the Bishop and the priests in which Fathers from Bishop's house and Divyavani were invited



along with the extended community and college community members.

Fr Anuranjan

XAVIER SANGEETANJALI

During the months of October and November, Xavier Sangeetanjali organized a series of Online Dance and Music Competitions for its students of different age groups. A large number of students participated and had a unique experience of online music and dance performance. This event was sponsored by our dear Ms. Patrizia Bianconi of SOS-India. We are grateful to her for her generosity. She has helped us in biblical dance- drama preparations which we will put up once we are free of Covid-19.

We have resumed music and dance classes for senior students from the month of October. Only a few students are able to come for classes. We are waiting for the other schools to start regularly; then we can allow the junior students to come for dance and music classes.

In November we had three orientation programs for Sangeetanjali students, one each for Vocal students, dance students and instrumental students. These orientation programmes were organized basically to bring back the students from the lockdown effect of Covid-19 to music and dance learning.



During the lock down Fr Kalyan Tirkey produced several music videos and posted in Facebook and Youtube. A large number of students were inspired watching these audio-visual presentations. The story of Christmas in Sadri with fusion audio-visual form by Fr Kalyan was appreciated by many. He went to Gangtok for the video shooting for the Sangeet Natak Academy, India. During this pandemic period

Fr Edward Arokiaraj was able to score music and produce three Devotional Songs in Hindi, composed by his Brother and Sister-in-law. All these three hymns were uploaded in Youtube. All of them including the recent Christmas hymn was appreciated by the viewers.

Fr. Kalyan performed instrumental music and gave Christmas message online for a local TV channel. **Fr Edward** and his vocal students sang Christmas carols and gave Christmas message to a local TV channel.

Fr Edward

ST PETER'S, GAYAGANGA

The seasons of Advent and Christmas rejuvenated and replenished the spiritual life of the parishioners. There were arrangements for Confessions and Masses in the villages for the elderly who could not come to the church because of the corona restrictions. The infirm could also make confessions and receive the Communion at their homes. The parish had a small program for the widows and widowers, consisting of Mass, lunch and the distribution of blankets as Christmas gifts. There was a two week-long marriage preparation programme for twenty couples and catechism classes for the adults. There was only one Christmas vigil Mass in the parish *bagaicha*. Three substations had Christmas Masses on the feast day. After waiting for more than a month and a half, seventy-eight children received the Sacrament of Confirmation administered by **Rt. Rev. Bishop Vincent Aind** on December 27. There was a pretty good response to all the activities by the faithful.

St Peter's High School took new admissions for class 5 and readmissions for classes 6-10. The school also had interviews to recruit three new teachers to the teaching faculty. St. Peter's Primary and the High School celebrated Christmas with the staff on December 19.

The community had a day of recollection in which **Fr Simon Kerketta** gave a talk. **Fr Simon** gave a recollection talk to the Sisters of the Daughters of St Anne in Faudijote and **Fr Cherian Maliekal** to Sisters of the Holy Cross in Hansqua in preparation for Christmas. The community was delighted to have **Fr Provincial** and **Fr Socius** for the Christmas vigil Mass.

Fr. Augustus Ekka

ST VINCENT'S, HATIGHISA

The community was elated to have **Fr Provincial** and the **Treasurer** on the 1st of December to survey the proposal for the approach road. The work commenced soon thereafter and the parishioners expect to traverse the new pathways soon.

On the 4th of December, the High School students submitted their answer scripts after months of online classes and question papers were distributed to primary school children as a remedial and study aid. All primary and middle school students have been invariably promoted.

Fr Alvin Minj organised a meeting of the parish youth on the 4th of December and was instrumental in gathering almost 200 of them for a day-long seminar on diverse issues in collaboration with **JYMSA** co-ordinator, **Fr. Kennedy**, the **Disha foundation** – Lighthouse, **H.L.D.R.C** and **Xavier Sangeetanjali**. The day presented a wonderful opportunity for vocation promotion. It helped youngsters to come abreast with economic empowerment, skill development and anti-human trafficking initiatives which can be pursued by them. **Fr Kalyan's** cultural montage and the flair of his students left the audience stunned.



Fr Lawrence continues to request our prayers for his ailing mother. He returned from his home visit on the 4th of December and assessed the implementation of the Province Apostolic Preferences with the committee on the 20th of this month. Fr Peter Jong, Fr Francis George and Fr Pascal Xalxo presented detailed reports on the status of different apostolates and brought the annual appraisal to a close. A Christmas Meal was arranged for the staff and the hostellers on the 21st. The five hostel students (two of whom are candidates) left for their holidays the following day.

This was indeed a season of surprises, we were honoured by the presence of His Excellency Rev. Vincent Aind post his recovery and graced to have Fr. Provincial and our new Socius – Fr. Xavier Alangaram visiting the community for Christmas. For the parishioners at Hatighisa, it was the Vigil Mass in every village which seemed to ring in the Christmas cheer. **Fr. Alex** extends sincere gratitude to **Fr. Amid**, **Fr. Justin Bage**, **Fr. Edu**, **Fr. Niraj** and **Fr. Vincent** for presiding over the Eucharist in different sites and ushering in the joy of the season.

Reuell Paul

REST IN PEACE

Fr Augustine Lopes, SJ (BOM) 75/49 -	1 Dec 2020
Br Desmond Dias, SJ (BOM) 87/65-	2 Dec 2020
Fr O.P. Mathew, SJ (KER) 75/54-	3 Dec 2020
Bro Epiphania Dias, SJ (GOA) 99/77 -	7 Dec 2020
Br. Basil Turkey, SJ (RAN) 73/46-	7 Dec 2020
BR. SAUL ABRIL SJ, (GUJ) 89/73-	13 Dec 2020
Fr. Cyprian Andrade SJ, (GUJ) 74/56-	17 Dec 2020
Fr. Stanley D'Souza, SJ (DEL) 88/63-	19 Dec 2020