



# GUJARAT JESUIT SAMACHAR

Premal Jyoti, PB 4002, Ahmedabad - 380 009



73/924 GJS JANUARY 2021

## From The Provincial's Desk

We have just bid farewell to 2020 and entered the New Year 2021! Whether we like it or not, the year 2020 will remain an unforgettable one in the history of mankind, for the number of lives taken away by dreadful COVID-19, the many jobs lost, migrant workers who were forced to undergo long painful agonising journeys on foot; and above all, the ineffectiveness and helplessness of Medical Science and Human Development. We have been shattered but also challenged to find a 'new normal' in life.

Yet we enter the New Year with the hope and courage that the Child Jesus brings to the broken humanity. In the darkness of the freezing night, the shepherds saw new light with the promise of a Saviour, Immanuel: *God is with us, for us and among us!* When God is with us who can be against us?

This year marks the 500<sup>th</sup> year of the conversion of St. Ignatius. The Society all over the world has planned various kinds of celebrations at different levels from May 2021, which will culminate with the celebration of the feast of St. Ignatius on the 31 July 2022. The yearlong celebration is a privileged and graceful moment for us to internalise and relish our Jesuit identity, traditions, values and ideals and to share them with our collaborators and others!

The theme of the Ignatian Year is '*All things new in Christ*', reiterating the fact that Christ is the centre of our life; it is Christ who gives meaning to our life and mission. Everything is to be seen with a newness and differently in the light of Christ. New normal life is to be derived from Christ's life. We share Christ's life and mission. At every moment of our life, in every situation that we are faced with we need to prayerfully discern God's way and faithfully walk in that way. As St. Paul says we must grow in the stature of Christ. To be relevant in our rapidly

changing world, the conversion of Ignatius invites us at a deeper level to constantly undergo the ongoing process of conversion: *conversion at a personal level, community level and institutional level.*

The Holy Father has proclaimed a 'Year of Saint Joseph' from 8 December 2020. In Joseph we encounter a silent hard-working carpenter, a caring protector of the vulnerable, a self-sacrificing collaborator, a loving father who joyfully plays second fiddle. He is best defined as an "*upright man*". It is an opportunity for us to reflect upon the way we cooperate with God in carrying out the mission assigned to us. Mary and Jesus were the centre of his life. In our dealing with others, do we value the dignity of others and provide them with the space they need? May this celebration help us to make the poor, especially the labourers, farmers, migrants and the oppressed, the centre of our life and to serve them with the same enthusiasm, commitment and love that Joseph had.

I wish you all every blessing of 2021 and a very Happy Feast for our titular Feast 'The Holy Name of Jesus'!

A.M.D.G



A HOPE-  
FILLED  
NEW YEAR TO  
ONE & ALL!

## PROVINCIAL'S PROGRAMME

- 05 : Meeting: Youth Commission  
11 : GB Meeting: XRF, LCRD, Ahmedabad  
12 : Meeting: Province Development Office  
13 – 15 : Visitation: Khambhat –Varasda  
18 – 21 : Visitation: Anand, Vidhyanagar, Nadiad  
25 – 26 : Consult: Premal Jyoti, Ahmedabad  
27 : GB Meeting: Sangath, Modasa

## APPOINTMENTS

### FR. GENERAL has appointed

- Fr. Brian Paulson: President, The Jesuit Conference of Canada and the US.
- Fr. Karl Kiser: Provincial, The USA Midwest Province.
- Fr. Leonard Chiti: Provincial of the newly created Province of Southern Africa (SAP).
- Fr. Roberto del Riccio: Provincial, The Euro-Mediterranean Province.
- Fr. Miguel Garaizabal: Regional Superior, Thailand.

### POSA has appointed

- Fr Arjen Tete (CCU): Conference Delegate for Formation (CDF).

### PROVINCIAL has appointed

- **Fr. Anil Severin Macwan:** XTI community, Sevasi.
- **Fr. Sanjay Aind:** Teacher, St. Xavier's School & Asst PP Bharuch.
- **Br. Malcolm Rodrigues:** Minister, Loyola Technical, Nadiad.
- **Fr. Lucas Rayappan:** Treasurer & Administrator, St. Xavier's School, Loyola Hall, Ahmedabad.

## PROVINCE HIGHLIGHTS

### ►► "READY AND WILLING!"



On 28th December **Dn. Pratik Christi** was ordained priest by **Archbishop Emeritus Stanislaus Fernandes** at St. Joseph Church, Vadodara. In keeping with the official regulations, a limited number of invited guests were present for this important ceremony. These included Fr. Provincial, a few Jesuits, and the relatives of Dn. Pratik. Many others were present virtually as the entire ceremony was live streamed by the Gurjarvani team. The Parish Priest, Parish Council members, Sisters, and the youth of St Joseph Parish made all the arrangements to perfection for the ordination. **Fr. Raymond Chauhan** and the St. Joseph's Parish choir added to the solemnity of the ceremony with their melodious singing. **Sch. Jayaprakash** prepared the backdrop. **Fr. Anil Parmar** was the Master of Ceremonies. There was a small felicitation function soon after the Eucharist. **Fr. Pratik Christi** celebrated his first mass at Catholic Church, Karamsad on 29th December. (Sch. Alam Parmar, SJ)



## »» THE SCHOOL OF HEART:

### • *In Sitagarha*

Though several other things seemed “impossible” due to the pandemic, the third probation in the Society of Jesus took off here at Sitagarha, Hazaribagh with 26 tertians from 14 provinces and regions of India. Fr. Ignatius Tete and Fr. K. C. Stephen were the tertian instructors. Since we are placed in a period between the end of studies and the final commitment, the experience of the ‘school of the heart’ has been overwhelming, transformative and integrative. The love of God and blessings of our Father Ignatius immunized us so that the viruses of both the corona and of mediocrity could make no entry into the cells of our soul and body. The thirty days of ‘lock down’ with the Lord during the long retreat remains the nucleus of the foundational experience of uprooting core sin and upgrading of core grace. We are deeply grateful to our tertian instructors for guiding us in many ways during this important period of our lives as Jesuits. We complete our tertianship on 22nd January and look forward to living out the graces we have received in the journey ahead particularly in the implementation of the Universal Apostolic Preferences (UAP)! (Fr. Suresh Antony, SJ)

### • *In Bengaluru*

The experience at the ‘school of the heart’ has been a memorable one. After the initial uncertainties regarding the tertianship programme at Shembaganur this year due to the pandemic, we finally had it, thanks to the generosity of Karnataka Province to host it. Ours is a unique experience as ‘covidtertians’. 23 of us began our tertianship on 1st September under the able guidance of our tertian instructors Frs. Arul Sivan and William Sequeira at Prerana Ignatian Spirituality Centre, Bengaluru. The high point of the tertianship was the Long Retreat in October, which helped me to rest and to go into a deeper union and familiarity with the Lord. It also made me realize my true Jesuit identity as Ignatius envisaged, that is, the generosity to embark on any mission wherever the Lord calls me to serve him, and to serve with the spirit of Magis for his greater glory. Tertianship also gave me a sense of going back to our roots, as I read the Autobiography, the Spiritual Diary, the Constitutions and the decrees of the General Congregation. I realized the rich treasure that we possess, which I had forgotten as I got involved in the ministry. I am fortunate that I got this opportunity to rediscover our treasure, and to taste and relish it. As part of the UAP and PAP, I look forward together with other Jesuits of the Province, to promote our spirituality, which is very relevant for our times. (Fr. PT Simon, SJ)

## »» NOVITIATE JOTTINGS

December was a busy month for us in the novitiate. Four Goa Jesuits pronounced their Final Vows on 8th December. From 14th to 18th December, Fr. Cecil Fernandes, the House Minister, conducted a course on how to conduct holiday camps. It was full of activities and games, cooking and skits, honing our skills and enjoyment. We were in a camp mode and learnt the importance and benefits of arranging camps in schools and parishes. We then went through an important study experiment on presenting the documents of the General Congregations 31-36. The novices were divided into groups and given the GCs to study and present. We did a thorough study of all the GCs - the history, background and the need-of-the-time that necessitated the GCs. Every GC that we presented broadened the horizon of our understanding of the spirit and the mission of the Society. GC 31 to re-establish ourselves after Vatican II; GC 32 identifying ourselves as sinners yet companions in the Lord; GC 34 strengthening our vocation more by understanding our vows better; GC 35 for becoming men of depth; GC 36 rowing into the deep. As we studied the GCs, we got more familiar with the Society. This experiment was great in the deepening of our vocation. (Novices)



## »» JOURNEYING WITH THE COMMUNITY

12th December was a red-letter day for St Xavier’s Social Service Society (SXSSS). Two important books were released at the Loyola Golden Jubilee Hall before a select but august audience. The books were the outcome of a significant but path-breaking initiative called, ‘Urban Poor Development Program (UPDP) through Community Mobilization’, which began in 2009 in three urban areas of India Ahmedabad, Kolkata and New Delhi. Later on, two rural areas in Ujjain and Gorakhpur were added to the programme. The implementation of the project was the responsibility of a local NGO. SXSSS, with its years of experience in community development in the slums of



Ahmedabad, was responsible for the Ahmedabad project. The whole project was sponsored by Caritas Germany and the Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development of the German Government. Other partners in this major initiative were MISEREOR, Caritas India and the Indian Social Institute.

Welcoming the gathering, **Fr. Isaac Rumao**, the Director of the SXSSS traced the genesis of the project to the expertise which SXSSS had developed over the years working with communities in the slums. This particular project, he said, began when **Fr. Paul D'Souza** was the Director of SXSSS. It continued in the time of his successor **Fr. Rajeev Chakranarayan** and now has come to fruition. The Provincial **Fr. Durai Fernand** (along with others) released the two books 'Development as Community-led Journey (Learnings from Community Mobilisation Processes)' and 'Development Anchored in Community Intelligence (A Handbook for Community Mobilisation)'. Speaking on the occasion he congratulated the Director, the SXSSS team, Fr. Joe Xavier and the researchers and all concerned for the hard work put in over the years. He also hoped that this important study would find great impetus for more meaningful community development work everywhere.

Fr. Joe Xavier (currently the Director of ISI - Bengaluru) who led the research study in a very detailed presentation highlighted various aspects of the study and how these documents would soon be used as textbooks for those pursuing Social Work Degrees in institutions/Universities both in India and abroad. Ms Alpa Ganatra, one of the researchers for the SXSSS study presented the process and the findings where Ahmedabad was concerned.

A panel discussion, with **Fr. Cedric Prakash**, **Fr. Xavier Manjooran**, Dr. Saroop Dhruv and Dr. Mukesh Lakum as panellists, highlighted the significance of the books from various perspectives and the way it could

enhance the work of community development. **Fr. Stany Pinto** moderated the discussion.

Thanks to the efforts of the SXSSS team – the three-hour programme was not only unique in many respects, but was also an enriching one. The reading and the utilisation of both books as primers for one's work in the community is highly recommended. Soft copy versions of both books can be had on a request to the Director SXSSS. Gujarati translations of the books will be available shortly. (Fr. Isaac Rumao, SJ)



## » WE THE PEOPLE

Though we are citizens of India many of us are not aware of our rights and duties as enshrined in our Constitution. Consequently, many citizens face exploitation and injustices, especially tribals and other marginalised sections of the society. Shakti, Songadh organised a three-day workshop for the youth of Vyara and Mandal on the rights and duties in the Constitution of India. The Shakti team prepared the modules. There were 27 enthusiastic youth who participated. **Fr. Xavier Manjooran** and Mr. Ramesh Tadvi, the Director of Shakti, along with their resource team led the entire group through games, activities, short films, discussions and question-answer sessions. Towards the end of the workshop each of the parish groups prepared an action plan for the future. We have decided to have some follow-up programmes for greater awareness and concerted actions by the youth of this area. (Fr. Xavier Manjooran, SJ)

## » NEW EDUCATION POLICY

On 20<sup>th</sup> December a webinar on the 'New Education Policy 2020' was organized for the scholastics of our Province with **Fr. Arul Rayan** as the resource person. It was an opportunity for us to become aware of this new policy and to understand its many nuances. Though it has a specific vision, there are several anxieties and challenges at

the ground level. Fr. Arul had a comprehensive and critical approach to this policy and he also emphasized what could be the Jesuit contribution to it. We are grateful for this thought-provoking session. (Sch. Raman Dalvi, SJ)

## ▶▶ COVID-19 RESPONSE



One of the major concerns we had during an Ashadeep staff reflection in August on the current pandemic was the education of rural children particularly those in primary schools. Most of these children are unable to cope with the online classes due to lack of appropriate gadgets, network issues in rural areas, etc. After some initial hiccups by the end of October we had 53 volunteers (most of them educated/college going youth, a few teachers and some educated village leaders) who began taking classes for 630 children in Thasra, Galteshwar, Balasinor, Borsad and Anklav areas. In response to a felt need 705 kits were given to students, and teacher kits to 60 youth between 12th and 20th December. As a result of the joint efforts of the staff and the Director, we managed to mobilize some resources to meet the expenses. Besides this, 175 poor and needy families were identified through a survey and they were given food kits. Jesuit Research and Development Society, Delhi Samajik Vikas Kendra (JRDS-DSVK) and Ashadeep contributed to meet these expenses. Kudos and



gratitude to one and all! (Fr. John Kennedy, SJ)

## ▶▶ PREPARATIONS AND CHRISTMAS-20 IN COVID-19:

### • Ahmedabad District

The Jesuits of Ahmedabad District had an online Advent Recollection on 14th December on the theme 'To see all things new in Christ'. **Fr. Franco Fernando** who directed the recollection based the theme on Pope Francis' Encyclical 'Fratelli Tutti' and the Ignatian Year beginning on 20th May, 2021. He drew our attention to the growing individualism and ethnic problems in our Province which leave hardly any space to live one's universal vocation. He invited us to look at the relationships we build among ourselves in the Province and with others in a new way - New in Christ. He also emphasized the need for reconciliation with God, fellow humans and Creation. We thank **Fr. Ambrose Vedam**, the District Coordinator, for organizing the recollection. (Sch. Aric Makwana, SJ)

### • South-South Gujarat

The community of South-South Gujarat met at Shakti, Songadh for a day of recollection and prayer in preparation for Christmas. The coordinator of the zone **Fr. Manoj Parmar** organised the entire day for the spiritual renewal of the group. **Fr. Francis Macwan** led the group with his lively Ignatian inputs in the morning and an innovative Holy Hour in the afternoon. We spent the day in meaningful silence and prayer. The day was concluded with the creative celebration of the Eucharist and a fellowship meal. Everyone enjoyed this meaningful get-together in preparation for the coming of Baby Jesus. (Fr. Ashok Vaghela SJ)

### • Bardipada

Christmas came early for the faithful of Bardipada. It was celebrated on 19<sup>th</sup> December at 'Jivan Jyot'. **Fr. Vinayak Jadav** and his 'Adilok' team facilitated an



interesting session on 'Adivasi Lok Jagruti' which covered several important topics related to Adivasi rights and unity. The participants included women and men leaders, teachers, and some sarpanches of Dolvan Taluka. They were all very appreciative with the inputs provided to them and the depth of knowledge of the resource persons.

The Christmas Mass at the 'Christ - Rock of Salvation Church' was celebrated by **Fr. Kishor Gavit**. **Frs. Victor Davamani, Abraham Kallarangatt, Peter Kozhikkadan, Andrew D'Abreo** and **Vinayak Jadav** concelebrated. Fr. Vinayak gave the people a wonderful Christmas message. Everyone was touched by the devotional and meaningful Eucharist. Christmas gifts were given to all present and sixty poor families were given food kits. This wonderful celebration ended with a Christmas meal for all. (Fr. Andrew D'Abreo, SJ)

### • **Belgaum**

Amidst the crisis of Corona pandemic causing loss of lives and jobs, the political struggle between the farmers against the injustice meted out to them by the Government, the atrocities faced by the prophetic voices of Fr. Stan and the other activists who are fighting for the rights of the Dalit and tribals, women safety being at risk in Hathras, and the minorities being targeted through CAA and NRC is God really with us? The theme which reflects and flows through our altar, crib and backdrop testifies to the labour pain, the suffering in the world (through protests) and the despair and dryness (through cactus) which is shattering the lives of many. However, as Christians we look back and find similar labour pain that Mary our Mother went through on that cold winter night, finding no place to give birth to the Son of God. This shows us that Jesus was with Mary during her labour pain and in a truer sense His birth took place only because of her endurance. (Novices)



### • **Mandal**



Christmas-20 in COVID-19 times! Jagruti High School, Mandal took up the opportunity to reach out to students and our well-wishers, with the message of the new born Baby Jesus through the use of mass media. **Fr. Ashok Vaghela**, with the youth of Vyara-Mandal was instrumental in preparing the programme. Strictly adhering to the official SOPs every effort was made to convey the message that Jesus is born once again this year to give us new life and hope during this pandemic. A one-hour Christmas programme has been video recorded and uploaded on the YouTube channel of Jagruti High School for all to watch, enjoy and receive the joy of the angels, the simplicity of the shepherds, the perseverance of the three kings and the happiness of Mother Mary and St. Joseph. The programme includes dances based on Christmas songs, a Christmas poem composed by one of the staff members, a Christmas message and finally the blessing; each of the items in the programme is introduced by a staff member of the school. (Fr. James Vas, SJ)

### » **PREMAL JYOTI**

The scholastics of Premal Jyoti after almost ten days of hard work have put up a creative and beautiful crib at the entrance. The crib is full of potted plants and seedlings and also with a small fountain in it. Several passers-by are attracted to the crib and come to see Baby Jesus. We hope that the true message of Christmas reaches to every one through this crib. We also had a memorable Christmas outing to St. Xavier's, Loyola Hall on 26th December. We enjoyed the warm hospitality and generosity of the community. Thanks to all! (Sch. Valerian Kujur SJ (DAR) & Sch. Bosco Dailu SJ (KOH))



• **Triduum**

We the Gujarat scholastics and scholastics from other provinces of Premal Jyoti went through a spiritual journey of three days filled with ample graces and blessings. **Fr. James Savarimuthu** (PCF) organized it for us at the Pastoral Center, Nadiad from 28th December to 31st December. **Fr. Jitendra D 'Monte** inspired us with his talks and reflection. It helped us in Christ, to renew ourselves and gave us hope to move forward in the future. (Sch. Jayaprakash SJ)

» **STUDY CAMP FOR THE APOSTOLIC SCHOOL, SURAT**

Due to Covid -19 the Apostolic school boys could not come to school and they had to attend online classes. While visiting them I came to know that they are finding difficult to attend online classes because of the poor coverage in their area. With the support from **Fr Robert Parmar** and **Fr. Xavier Arockiam** we organized a study camp at Unai from 26<sup>th</sup> December to 3<sup>rd</sup> January. There were 21 boys from Nanisingloti, Bharuch, Zankhvav, Vyara, Unai, Pimpri, Shamgahan, Bardipada. With the help of local teachers, we concentrated on three subject Mathematics, Science and English. The boys were happy and enjoyed the off line classes. (Fr. Mahesh Bagul SJ)



» **BR. ABRIL REMEMBERED**

**Br. Saul Abril** was called to his eternal reward in the wee hours of Sunday 13th December. Since he succumbed to COVID-19, it was not possible to take his mortal remains to Anand. He was therefore cremated and his 'asthi-kumbh' was taken to Anand and interred in the premises of the Anand Press where he had spent 57 years of his life. On Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> December, the Jesuit community with the Sisters of St. Anne of Luzern gathered together for a memorial Eucharist in the community chapel. Br. Abril's brother, his Eminence Santos Cardinal Abril and his sister, Señora Maria Isabel Abril Borao participated in the Eucharist online. The Cardinal gave his message in English and his sister in Spanish. Fr. Anthony Pitchai, the Rector, said a few words in Spanish too! The memorial was a fitting farewell to Br. Abril who spent 65 years of his life in this community. Eternal rest grant unto him O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him! (Fr. Anthony Pitchai, SJ)

» **FELIX, NOT FORGOTTEN**

At Vyara we remembered **Fr. Felix Gonsalves** on his first death anniversary. A limited number of representatives were invited from all the villages. The newly built grave was blessed by the superior of the community, **Fr. James Vas**, who was also the main celebrant at the Eucharist. A short video on the life of Fr. Felix was screened during the Eucharist. Due to the restrictions imposed by the district administration the previous evening we had to restrict the number and the mode of the entire celebration. However, that did not affect the solemnity of the event and the admiration of the people for our beloved Felix. (Fr. Ashok Vaghela, SJ)



## ▶▶ JHEASA MEETING

The JHEASA Commission met on 30th November in the St. Xavier's College Conference Hall. The Provincial, **Fr. Durai Fernand**, and all the members (excluding the theology professors), were present. The meeting began with some moments of silence in memory of **Fr. Carlos Valles** who had served for a long time in higher education. Several issues were deliberated upon. Among the suggestions agreed upon were: to write article/s to help the Province better understand the socio-economic and political challenges before the people of Gujarat and possible responses. The process, including preparation of the abstracts, was also decided upon. Once agreed upon the abstracts will be developed into articles and submitted to the Provincial before April 2021. The group also proposed to the Provincial that JEA could take up a study of sample Catholic schools with number of criteria such as financially sound schools, poor schools, urban schools, rural schools, medium of instruction, etc. The objective of the study will be to find out 'online study and reach of education'. JHEASA will be willing to help in this study. (Fr. Jimmy Regina C. Dabhi, SJ)

## ▶▶ GOLDEN MILESTONE

'The Golden Milestone' - a Coffee Table Book - was released by St. Xavier's School, Gandhinagar as the culmination of the Golden Jubilee celebrations which began in June 2019. The Book is a souvenir, a commemoration of the glorious journey of St. Xavier's School from June 1970 spanning five decades of world class education provided to the citizens of Gandhinagar. The event was presided over by the Provincial, **Fr. Durai Fernand**. Archbishop Thomas Macwan of Gandhinagar and our former student, Dr. Hemang Baxi, Director CIMS Hospital, Ahmedabad were the guests of honour.



At a simple but impressive ceremony the Principal, **Fr. Anthony Cruze**, invited Fr. Durai to release the Coffee Table Book. The Book, a stylish chronicle, was greeted with a thunderous applause by those present. The Book also pays tribute to the pioneers, Principals and the many other stalwarts of yester-years. (Mrs Sweta, Teacher, St Xavier's Gandhinagar)

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### ▶▶ ORDINATION:

**Deacon Melwin D'sa's** ordination will be held at 10.00 AM on 8 January, 2021 at Our Lady of Loreto Church, Mangalore. Bishop Peter Paul Saldanha will ordain Deacon Melwin. He will celebrate his first thanksgiving mass on 10 January in his home parish.



**DO NOT LOSE HOPE; ST. JOSEPH ALSO EXPERIENCED MOMENTS OF DIFFICULTY, BUT HE NEVER LOST FAITH AND WAS ABLE TO OVERCOME THEM, IN THE CERTAINTY THAT GOD NEVER ABANDONS US.**

- Pope Francis







### PLANNING FOR THE IGNATIAN YEAR

Dear friends in the Lord,

May 20, 2021 to July 31, 2022 has been declared as the ‘Ignatian Year’ by Fr. General. It marks 500 years “of the wound suffered by Ignatius of Loyola in the battle of Pamplona on May 2021... We desire that the inspiration of the process of personal conversion that led Ignatius to share his spiritual experience and to found the Society of Jesus may become for us an impulse toward and transformation of our life and mission,” says Fr. General. He further hopes that the Ignatian Year will “bring to personal, communal and institutional conversion all those who have found the meaning to their lives in the mission of the Society of Jesus” (cf. Jesuits, 2021). The call is to all – Jesuits, members of the Ignatian family, students, staff, collaborators, well wishers, etc. On March 12, 2022 we also commemorate 400 years of the canonisation of Sts. Ignatius of Loyola and Francis Xavier.

Fr. Provincial has appointed a four member team to coordinate the year-long renewal process and celebration of the Ignatian Year. The team is made up of **Frs. Vincent Saldanha** (coordinator), **Simon Thomas**, **Shaji Thekkemury** and **Kamlesh Raval**. The team had a preliminary meeting on Dec 20 to chalk out a general outline of what could be done in our Province. We felt that there should be programmes at two levels: internal spiritual renewal and external activities. The idea is to invite all our Province men to become part of this process, and to carry the others along.

With this in mind we want to request you to send in your suggestions about what could be done at various levels – individual, community, institutional, commissions, District and Province. This is like a Province-level brain

storming process. Please send in your suggestions to any of us by January 20 at ([vincentsaldanha@jesuits.net](mailto:vincentsaldanha@jesuits.net), [shajisj@jesuits.net](mailto:shajisj@jesuits.net), [simon.thomas@jesuits.net](mailto:simon.thomas@jesuits.net), [kamal@jesuits.net](mailto:kamal@jesuits.net)).

We will collate your suggestions and carry the process forward. We look forward to getting a positive response from you.

Wish you a HOPE-FILLED, CHRIST-FILLED 2021.

- The Ignatian Year Team

### JESUIT SAINTS OF THE MONTH



#### ▲ 03: Most Holy Name of Jesus:

On this titular feast of the Society we pray to live up to the name we bear.



▲ 19: Sts. John Ogilvie, Stephen Pongracz, Melchior Grodziecki; Bl. Ignatius de Azevedo, James Sales & William Saultemouche and their companions, Martyrs for Catholic Faith

## PAP IMPLEMENTATION



### RE-ORGANISING WORKSHOPS

In the PCM meeting held on 13th October 2020 a suggestion was made to combine the workshops in order to avoid having too many of them. The APCT deliberated over the matter and found it most advisable to reorganize the workshops. Accordingly, the APCT proposed the following types of PAP workshops to the Provincial for his approval. The Provincial has approved the proposal.

The title of the workshops will be “Workshops on the UAPs”. The APCT has given this new title because it matches the intention of Fr General for the Ignatian year and under this title many of the workshops mandated by the PAP can be integrated.

#### The UAP-Workshops will comprise the following PAP workshops:

- Mission 1, Goal 1, AP 3 Ignatian spirituality
- Mission 4, Goal 1, AP 2: Challenges of Covid-19.
- Mission 7, Goal 3, AP 1: Challenges of to a safe Environment
- Workshops on the values of the Constitution (Mission 6, Goal 1, AP 3).

#### The suggested structure of the UAP Workshops can be as follows:

- Starting point and background: The call to depth and personal and communitarian conversion (UAP 1). The Jesuit identity as expressed in M6, G1, AP 2:
  - Reconciliation, Justice, and peace.
  - Universality and inclusion.
  - Use of spiritual conversation for decision-making.
  - Collaboration and networking.
- The ethical values of the Constitution of India M6, G1, AP 2. The “secular “value we also must embrace to our life and mission.
- Challenges of Covid-19. This will also include the challenges of the existing context in which we live now. M4, G 1, AP 2. It can be connected to the UAP 2 and 3.
- Challenges to a safe environment M6, G1, 2. This links with UAP 4 and with our commitment to Laudato Si.

A 2-day workshop can take up all the four themes, or we can have two workshops to compete all the themes.

If these suggestions are accepted, then a meeting of the Coordinators of JIGSA, JESAE, JEA, JEPASA and JESCOM needs to be called as soon as possible.

#### Go ahead as planned:

- Workshops organised for POCSO (Mission 2). They do not change and go ahead.
- Training of trainers for Inigo groups (Mission 3: Goal 2, AP, 1). They go ahead as planned.
- Workshops for Pastoral policy (Mission 5, Goal, 1.) They go as planned.

With New Year Greetings,  
Ambrose  
For APCT



### POPE'S WORLDWIDE PRAYER NETWORK

#### Human fraternity

*May the Lord give us the grace to live in full fellowship with our brothers and sisters of other religions, praying for one another, open to all.*



## R.I.P

- † Fr. Augustine Lopes (BOM), 75/49, at Mumbai on 01 December.
- † Br. Desmond Dias (BOM), 87/65, at Mumbai on 02 December.
- † Mr. Manilal Solanki, 78, father of **Fr Sunil Solanki**, at Bhumel on 03 December.
- † Fr O.P. Mathew (KER) 75/54, at Christ Hall, Kozhikode on 03 December.
- † Bro Epiphania Dias (GOA), 99/77, at Mapusa, Goa on 07 December.
- † Br. Basil Tirkey (RAN), 73/46, at Ranchi on 07 December.
- † **Br. Saul Abril** (GUJ), 89/73, at Shalby Hospital, Ahmedabad on 13 December.
- † **Fr. Cyprian Andrade** (GUJ), 74/56, at St. Mary's Nursing Home, Ahmedabad on 17 December.
- † Fr. Stanley D'Souza (DEL), 88/63, at Delhi on 19 December.
- † Mrs. Sheela Dias, 83, elder sister of **Fr Leslie D'Souza**, at Mumbai on 20 December.
- † Fr. Linus Dungdung, SJ (RAN), 69/47, at Ranchi on 29 December.



## GREEN CORNER

### MINIMUM STANDARDS

In the spirit of the Universal Apostolic Preferences (UAPs) of the Society and in keeping with Mission 7 of the Province's SAP, a basic format of minimum standards has been designed "to promote environmental-friendly practices in all Jesuit institutions" [Goal 2]. This has been derived from UNEP guidelines, and from protocols used by the Centre for Science and Environment [CSE, Delhi] & from GJEM's Eco-Audit Manual. It is a simplified version and aims to bring general awareness through engagement with practical guidelines, aimed at making our institutions green and sustainable. The Eco-Audit Minimum Standards will focus on five components: Energy, Water, Food, Biodiversity and Waste; which could be the first step towards sustainability.

As per the mandate from the PCM, the minimum standards protocol has been worked out and the eco-audit format has been designed by the GJEM team. For the time-being, the eco-audit is being planned to be carried out on a pilot basis in two to three of our Province institutions. This will subsequently be offered to all the Jesuit communities and institutions. We will need the cooperation and support of each Jesuit institute! As a starter, we would like two to three institutions to volunteer for the audit! The format for the audit will be soon shared with all! Let us come forward to see where we stand and what more ('magis') we can do to make our life styles- personal, communitarian and institutional—more environment-friendly!!

- Fr. Lancelot D'Cruz SJ

## BIRTHDAYS & DEATH DAYS 2020

- |                                 |                               |                                 |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 01 Nixon Macwan                 | 15 Ign. Sz. Guardamino        | Fr Domingo Larumbe – 2019+      |
| 03 Cosmas Kurikkattil           | Rolph Pinto                   | 27 Fr Dias Chelston – 2015+     |
| 04 Pravin Falcao                | 16 Fr Herrero Manuel – 2001+  | 29 Timothy Macwan               |
| Pandor Ashish                   | 17 Chacko Thottupurath        | 30 Fr Luis Maria Bermejo -2016+ |
| Fr Esteban Aveli – 1972+        | Fr Rayer Michael – 2010+      | 31 Saurabh Parmar               |
| 07 Paul D'Souza                 | 18 Lancy D'Cruz               |                                 |
| 08 Fr Miguel Urrutia – 1998+    | 19 Anthony Britto             |                                 |
| 11 Fr Idiakunnel Joseph – 2000+ | 21 Francis Pudhicherry        |                                 |
| 12 Ronald Saldanha              | Simon Thomas                  |                                 |
| 13 Sunil S. Macwan              | Fr Francisco Cabanach – 1975+ |                                 |
| Br Feliciano Aizpurua – 2005+   | 22 Fr Romualdo Aguizu – 1998+ |                                 |
| 14 Hilary Pereira               | 24 Fr Eduardo Gadea – 1975+   |                                 |
| James B. Dabhi                  | Fr Dias Francis – 1998+       |                                 |
| Robert Mascarenhas              | 26 Albert Arockiam            |                                 |
| Fr Jesus Creus – 1968+          | Fr Zubeldia Francisco – 2000+ |                                 |

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## BRO. SAÚL ABRIL, SJ

### 1931-2020

**B**ro. Saul Abril was born in Spain on 14th April 1931 and died in India on 13th Dec. 2020. Of the 89 years of his life, he lived 22 years in Spain and 67 in India, especially Gujarat which he made his karma bhumi for 65 years. So Br. Abril was more a Gujarati than a Spaniard.

Born to Eduvigi (mother) and Joakim (father) in Alfambra of Veruvela District in Spain, Abril had five brothers (Santos - the youngest – is a Cardinal at the Vatican and has been the Vatican Ambassador to many countries) and a sister.

On 14th Feb. 1947 Abril joined the Society of Jesus to become a coadjutor brother together with Brs. Jordana and Galicia who also came to Gujarat. It was the Lord's will that Abril serves His people in Gujarat. So he left Spain on 7th Feb. 1953. He spent almost all the years in Anand, barring two years (1964-66) at De Nobili College, Pune. From 1953 to 1963 and 2006 to 2013 he served as Assistant Manager at the Anand Press and then from 1966 to 2006 as Manager. He also worked in and around Anand serving the people, especially the youth, in other ways.

Abril and I came very close to each other in 1969

when I conducted the first ever youth camp at St. Xavier's Anand. Though he was the manager of the prestigious Anand Press, Abril was in contact with the youth of Anand parish, especially of Gamdi. In fact he used to say that Gamdi was his village. He was a support and guide for many families. So when I had the first camp at Anand for the youth of Ahmedabad Diocese, he was both impressed and interested. When we had the second camp in 1970 he agreed to join our team. From then on Abril was associated with all the camps we had every year, and also in the formation of the first ever youth organization, Gujarat Tarunoday Mandal. As the manager of the Press he could not give his full time during the camps which were held during the summer and Diwali holidays. However, he somehow made it a point to attend at least one camp and the Tarunoday Mandal meetings. Because of his interest in these camps and in the running of the Tarunoday Mandal he had to sometimes face unpleasant comments and strong criticisms from his collaborators and even fellow Jesuits. But he was committed to the youth.

Once he was among the youth everyone forgot that he was the manager of Anand Press. He got fully involved and became one with them though he was almost 40 when we joined us. Though I was a young scholastic and he a senior and experienced Brother, he was always very cooperative and accommodating during the camps and followed



everything faithfully. Though he would say “my Gujarati is not good so you people conduct the sessions” he would intervene whenever he felt he should – very effectively at that. He was creative and very supportive of all our plans and programmes. During the evening entertainment programmes Abril was at his best, entertaining the students, joining in and often helping the shy and the diffident ones. He would call them, talk to them, and often sit with them during the session and encourage them insisting on their participation. He thus helped them to develop and become confident.



went wrong he would stand by that person or family and help them out of the situation. He was true to his name: ‘Abril’ means spring time, and he was indeed like ‘vasant’ for the youth and for us who worked with them.

Abril was a person who cared for the well-being of his workers and so he collected funds to build a housing society for them. He helped them own a house, an almost impossible dream for many of them in those days. Abril’s nobility was such that even when some created problems for him in the Press and he had to take disciplinary action he would forget

Since I was a scholastic and we had no ‘project’ for youth work, we insisted that the youth pay for their expenses. Abril was there to help the really poor and those who could not afford. He helped not only the students but also the resource persons financially, and with stationery and other material. Even when he was busy in the Press and could not attend the camps, he made it a point to help us by giving us his vehicle to reach the place and get back. In a way, Saul was the ‘soul’ of the camps and of Tarunoday Mandal. There was a time when some of the senior Jesuits were uncomfortable with our youth camps because these were for both boys and girls. Some Jesuits thought the camps should be only for boys. At that time Br. Abril was very supportive and would defend the activities before those Jesuits. He would also meet the parents of the students to make them understand the usefulness of the camps. So he was the link and catalyst between some fathers and sisters, us and the parents. I can say it was Abril’s role that made our youth work successful and socially effective. Personally he was a friend, guide, support and mentor to me. In fact when Ashadeep was started it was he who prepared the first project and got it approved.

their misbehaviour and extend a helping hand when the need arose. Consequently, in spite of being the executive of the Press, I do not think Abril had any enemies – a real achievement! In short, we can say that like Jesus “he went about doing good” and helped one and all among the needy. His life was a personification of “the Spirit of the Lord is upon me for he has anointed me to preach the good news to the poor” (Lk. 4:18-19).

Dear Abril, I can say sincerely that you were one of those who contributed tremendously to the youth work in Gujarat, and to my personal formation and development. Today as I pass through Anand Press, I remember the many hours we spent together planning and sharing about the many training programmes for our youth. I will miss you and so will the people of Anand, especially the youth. They will miss you more. Adios, amigo. Adios, my friend!

- Xavier Manjooan, SJ

Abril was sometimes too concerned about people and there were occasions when he mildly forced young people to take certain steps regarding marriage and/or joining religious life. What was very noble in him was if anything



## **BRO. SAUL ABRIL, SJ - A FAITHFUL SERVANT INDEED!**

One of the popular faces of the Jesuit presence in Anand, Bro. Saul Abril went to his eternal reward at 2.45 a.m. on Sunday 13th December 2020. He had already spent two weeks in the Medical College Hospital, Karamsad due to Covid-19. Following the advice of knowledgeable persons, he was shifted to Shelby Hospital, Naroda, Ahmedabad, where he breathed his last.

Bro. Abril, as he was popularly called, was born on 14th April 1931.

On 14th February, 1947, at the tender age of 16 he joined to dedicate his life as a Jesuit Brother. Of his 89 years of life, 73 long years were spent as a Jesuit. On 7th February 1953, at the young age of 22, he landed in India and spent the remaining 67 years of his life, serving in India. Barring two years (1964-66) of his service as sub-minister-buyer in Pune, he served in Anand for the remaining 65 years. For 17 years, (1953-63 and 2006-13) he served as Assistant Manager and for 40 years (1966-2006) as Manager of the Anand Press. Thus, he spent major part of his life (57 years) serving in Anand Press. He also rendered services as community minister, In-charge of Xavier Farm, Mogar, and in the administration of St. Xavier's School, Anand (1963-64).

At one time, in the Anand Press, established in 1926, there were 5 Jesuit Brothers, working in collaboration with each other and the staff: Late Bros. Escofet, Nicolas Hernandez, Rabella, Manolo Eneriz and Abril. In those days this was perhaps the only Jesuit institution entirely run by the Brothers. Their talents, labour and ability to work in collaboration helped to put the Anand Press on a firm footing. With the wisdom of building on the foundation laid by the predecessors, during the time of Bro. Abril, the Press received as many as 8 awards at the State level



and two at the National level (one each from the President and the Prime Minister of the country). Working in tandem with the indefatigable Late Fr. del Rio, Bro. Abril succeeded in securing international fame for the Press. Printing of the Indian Editions of foreign books and the books of Late Fr. Anthony de Mello contributed to this fame. The ability of Bro. Abril to work in collaboration with others, helped achieve this feat.

A Jesuit is called to serve God in and through his fellow human beings. He can't be satisfied doing the ministry entrusted to him. He needs to keep his eyes and ears open to find out the

needs of the people entrusted to him as well as of all those he comes in contact with. For that, he has to establish close contacts with as many people as he can. Bro. Abril understood this and created rapport with most of those who came in contact with him. When an individual of the Parish was mentioned in the conversation at the table, he would give details of the individual's ancestral village, spouse, children, parents, job and other relevant details. Till the very end, he retained a phenomenal memory, a sure proof of his love, concern and care for all those he came in contact with.

The Jesuit is called upon to serve not for personal glory, but for the Greater Glory of God, as an instrument in the hands of God. To achieve this, he has to have close contact with God through his prayer to know the will of God. Bro. Abril balanced both the aspects in his life, intimacy with the God of the people and with the people of God.

His close contacts with the workers helped him to be concerned about their need of proper housing. His



predecessor, Late Bro. Nicolas Hernandez had purchased land for this purpose. Bro. Abril took up the challenge to build housing colonies for them. He wrote a number of letters to his friends and benefactors in Spain, got funds and built the Press Colony of 32 houses, hostel for trainee press workers and Xaviernagar Colony.

He also realized the need of working for youth. To work with the youth, one has to collaborate with young Jesuits. In the 1970s, he lent a helping hand to young, enthusiastic Jesuits, Xavier Manjooran, Varghese Mannarkulath and Late Bento Fernandes and actively participated in youth related activities of the newly established Tarunoday Mandal. In the era when collaboration, especially with women was not much thought of, he collaborated with the then Principal of Vimal Miriam School, Sr. Munira and others, who were part of the group engaged in the activities of the Tarunoday Mandal. With the establishment of the Tarunoday Mandal on a firm footing, there was a felt of a centre to run the activities from. Bro. Abril used his ability and contacts to help purchase a building in Vidyanagar for this purpose. Ashadeep owes gratitude to him as one of its founding fathers.

His heart went out to the poor and he helped them in whatever way he could. On the day of the funeral, there were a number of persons who had a story to tell of the generous help rendered by him to them. One of them said that Bro. had given him Rs. 20,000/- for a house. That very night, thieves deprived him of the help he had received. On hearing of it, Bro. Abril was quick to give him the same amount once again. A sensitive soul indeed!

“By the grace of God ... I laid the foundations ... and someone else is building on them. ... nobody can lay down any other foundation than the one which is there already, namely Jesus Christ” (I Cor 3:10-11). Be it in the Press or Ashadeep or any other ministry, Bro. Abril has left us an excellent example of collaborative ministry.

There is steady decline in the flow of vocations to Religious Life and Priesthood. But when it comes to the vocation of Brothers, the situation is pathetic. A younger brother of Bro. Abril, Santos Cardinal Abril is serving in the Vatican. Bro. Abril too could have opted for the comparatively more recognized life of a priest. However,



he paid heed to his call to be a Brother. By his life, he has given a good example, especially to those called to be Brothers. The words of Pope Francis regarding Jesuit Brothers bear out in the life of Bro. Abril:

*“My experience with the brothers has always been very positive. The brothers with whom I lived in my time as a student were wise men, very wise. They had a wisdom different from that of scholastics or that of the priests. Today, even brothers who have studied a great deal and who have leadership positions in the institutions still have an ‘I do not know what’ that is different from the priests. And I think this has to be preserved, the wisdom, that special sapiential quality that comes from being a brother. What’s more, in the brothers I knew, I was impressed by their special sense, the ability to ‘smell’ that they had when they said, for example: ‘Watch that father, I think he needs special help ...’ The brothers I have known often had great discretion. And they helped! The brother realised, before any other community members, what was happening. I do not know how to express it, I believe that there is a specific grace here and we must find what God’s will is for the brother right now, and we also have to find how to express it”. (GC 36, p. 110).*

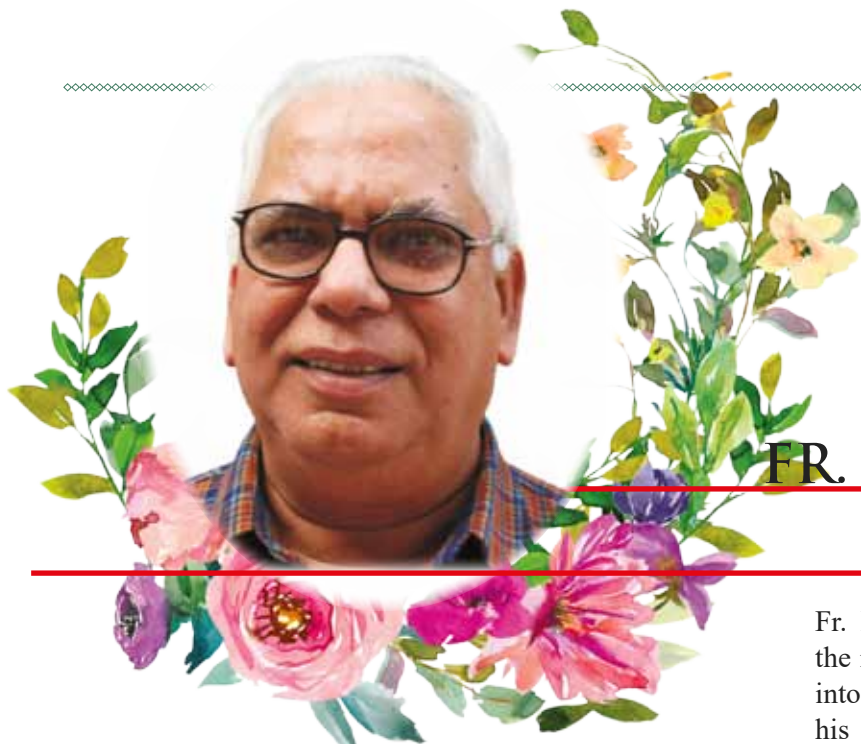
U. S. President Harry Truman once said, “The President is always abused. If he isn’t, he isn’t doing anything.” This applies to all who try to do good. Like his master, Bro. Abril too ‘went about doing good’ (AA 10:38). And so like his master, he too had to face opposition. There were pamphlets, demonstrations, court cases against him by some disgruntled elements. He took them in his stride as God given crosses, believing that they’ll lead to resurrection.

The only regret we have is the fact that due to the pandemic, we couldn’t give him a more fitting funeral. Keeping in mind the situation of the pandemic, his body was cremated in Ahmedabad and the urn containing his mortal remains was brought to Anand and interred in the premises of the Anand Press. On further thought it seems God has accepted his humble life of a Jesuit Brother in the spirit of the Baptist, ‘He must grow greater, I must grow less’ (Jn 3:30) and granted him a funeral, befitting a humble soul. May his soul Rest In Peace!

Eternal rest grant unto him O Lord,  
And let perpetual light shine upon him!

- Francis Parmar SJ





## FR. CYPRIAN ANDRADE, SJ

1946-2020

“Friendly, approachable, homely and one who cared for people”; “A good man, a faithful servant, a deeply committed religious”; “His disarming smile and his sociable nature decked with affability and ready wit, coupled with originality and initiative, lend to his charming personality, making of him an easy companion”. This is how his companions describe **Fr. Cyprian, sj**.

Cyprian was born in 1946 at Pandubettu in South Kanara (Karnataka) into a family of farmers. His dad straddled between managing the farm lands and working in a bank, possibly the source of the versatility seen in Cyprian’s own life in the Society. He was part of a large family and happily remembered the several occasions when the family converged for a celebration of rural life - running wildly in the fields and gathering fruits from trees! He had enduring memories of all “the brothers and sisters trudging to school hand in hand.” ‘A loving family’ is how he described his early years. He would also vividly describe the orchard behind the Church that was ‘visited’ every Saturday after the kids had made their ‘weekly confession’.

In fact, it was on one such escapade that Cyprian found himself, pockets stuffed with mangoes, accosted by a ‘cassockwala’, who was none other than



Fr. Hererro, the vocation promoter from Gujarat. With the nod of his father, he was admitted the following year into the Apostolic School Gonzaga House, while he did his schooling at St. Aloysius High School and, later, at Aloysius College, Mangalore. However, his heart was set on the Gujarat Mission and hence he did not hesitate to join the Apostolic School at Ahmedabad. Years later, here is how Cyprian summarized his vocation: “The picture of Hererro stuck; I did not choose; One Spanish Jesuit came to India; once he visited my Parish; I am the only one chosen; and he went back to Spain and he died. That is being chosen by God. If this is not my vocation... then what is?”

Cyprian began his religious life in June 1964 in the Novitiate at Mount Abu. His companions say that he was always up and about doing things: playing the organ, binding books, repairing or making rosaries, hiking on the hilly terrain, and on occasions, giving ‘magic shows’. After a year of Juniorate studies in Vinayalaya, followed by a second year at Sadhana Bhavan, he joined St Xavier’s College in Ahmedabad for his College studies. His request to do Commerce was turned down and he happily settled

for Gujarati. He later said he was “being led by the Spirit”. The fact is that the multi-linguist added one more language to his repertoire of languages: besides his own mother tongue Konkani, he could speak Tulu, Telugu, Kannada and Gujarati with equal facility.

While studying at

St Xavier's College (1970-1974), the versatile Cyprian coached the girls' basketball team and was also closely involved with Br. Augustus Lobo in managing the Social Service League which flourished on the College campus during those years! He was also a philatelist and he later donated a good part of his collection to the Social Service League, Ahmedabad. Though he still retained some enchanting sets of foreign stamps!

Cyprian has served the Gujarat Jesuit Province in diverse capacities, the hallmark being his dedicated service! After his ordination on April 30, 1978 he first full appointment (after serving as a substitute in Kalol and in Petlad for 3 and 5 months, respectively) was as Assistant Parish Priest and Director of Social Work for Kaira District at Nadiad in 1979. He was soon to take over as the full time Director of the District Social Works in 1980, a responsibility which he shouldered till 1991, with a break in 1982 for a 'short' Tertianship in Varanasi. Serving as Consignee of the Catholic Relief Services [CRS], from 1982-1990 was a delicate job that involved liasoning with Government officials, funding agency personnel and with the Fathers and Sisters who were working extensively across Kaira District. Cyprian efficiently handled the distribution of large quantities of grain and other materials over a wide area! But, as always, he remained in the background!

Cyprian had confided to some of his closest companions that those were indeed the happiest years of his religious life. He recalled his visits to the villages with nostalgia. "When I was in Nadiad I was young and foolish," he said, claiming he would have travelled over a lakh kilometers per year while he was there. He lived in close proximity with nature as was evidenced from the dogs, the fish and the diversity of plants which he lovingly tended!

From 1986 to 1990, Cyprian was appointed the Director of the Loyola Training Centre and the Technical School. In fact, it was he who shifted over to Indira Nagar (Nadiad) in 1986 and played a pioneering role in setting up the Technical School along with his trusted Jesuit companion, Br. Nicolas Hernandez, SJ. He was ever grateful to the Sisters of St. Anne, especially Sr. Mary, for their support in those difficult years! Not only did he take over the

reins from Fr. Hererro, he also set up the Technical School on a firm footing thanks to his foresight and his ability to ensure he always had his feet on the ground! Jesuits recall the simple life that the community at Nadiad lived. "If one went over without informing, one got just rice and curry. But if one informed before landing up, there was something special prepared by the cook, invariably by Cyprian himself." Cyprian cherished Br. Nicolas, who left for Spain in 1986-87, as a very good Jesuit companion. He was deeply affected when Br. Nicolas passed away recently.

In his next assignment, Cyprian was moved to Ahmedabad and appointed as the Province Treasurer. For Cyprian, banking was probably in his blood, coming as he does from a family which has produced a number of experienced bankers, including his dad and brother who worked with Syndicate Bank! His college companions recall that he scored well in Economics even during his graduate years, and interestingly, Cyprian had backed this up with an LLM, as he believed that good legal knowledge was a sound basis for good financial management! Extremely knowledgeable, very astute with accounts and very perceptive - would be a fitting description of Cyprian, the Province Treasurer, during his long innings from 1991 to 2000 and from 2003 to 2005! His was skilled in dealing with investments and the Province of Gujarat is the beneficiary of his skills and his commitment! He did his job faithfully and with a deep sense of loyalty to the Society; something which may have not gone down well with some Jesuits. He also served as Revisor to several Jesuit Provinces in the Assistancy, always making his experience and expertise available to the larger Society.

From 2005 to 2013 Cyprian served as the Chaplain of St. Mary's High School, run by the Christian Brothers in the hills of Mount Abu. He was also in charge of Glen View, the official villa of the Province. His versatility and

his commitment came into play on both fronts: he renovated the Jesuit villa, cutting through a whole lot of bureaucratic impediments (thanks to Mt Abu having become an Eco-sensitive zone); and he opened the gates of the villa to Jesuits and their groups, reaching out to them in his own unique, hospitable



way! One of the groups which were privileged to have benefitted from his hospitality over several years was the Botany students of the College! Cyprian reached out to the senior Dr. Almeida with the same sensitivity with which he prepared a special meal for an ailing or injured student! Students still carry memories of those days spent with ‘Cyprian Dada’ who in return, would proudly add some rare plants lifted from the wilderness of Abu to his Glen View collection!

As Chaplain to the Christian Brothers, he did not limit his services to mere celebration of the Eucharist; he enjoyed teaching Catechism to the students and giving Recollections to the Sisters of Sophia Convent where his well-prepared talks and his spiritual mentoring was much appreciated. The parishioners of Mt Abu remember him as one whose services were always available specially and he repeatedly ‘substituted’ their Parish Priest, always ‘with a smile’!

Cyprian was attached to his family who recalls the joy and happiness he brought with every home visit. He was a great source of encouragement and appreciation. He played his role as ‘the Priest of the family’ par excellence and his presence gave every family gathering or event, the flavor of the Divine! He was especially close to his brother Victor, and I am personally aware that he was extremely happy that his family members could visit him over the last few years when his own mobility decreased. The family will definitely be missing the touch of his delicate hospitality which was generously dished out to them during their visits to Gujarat.

During his last stint, he served as Assistant Treasurer (from 2013). The young scholastics at Premal Jyoti remember Cyprian as ‘one who was always smiling’. He was a much sought after confessor and several of the youngsters appreciated his well-prepared Eucharistic celebrations. This matches with what his companion, Fr. Hedwig Lewis, SJ affirms: ‘Cyprian was deeply involved in exploring the depths of Ignatian spirituality in his later years.’ The seniors in the Premal Jyoti community were touched by his unexpected acts of hospitality: he was a regular at community recreation and the first to be seated in the recreation room post supper, having turned on the AC to welcome his brethren. His contribution was generous – for the body and mind (a



stock of good snacks matched with a rendition of online jokes!). His little touches of sensitivity-laced hospitality will be missed by one and all at Premal Jyoti!

In short, here was a man who enjoyed life; a man who worked hard and one who never wished to burden others. He had a deep, hidden spiritual interior of which, his companions confess they occasionally had a glimpse. This was Cyprian in a candid interview given to Gurjarvani: “My life makes me happy. Happiness is an inside job. Don’t try to please others. Don’t go after the butterfly. If I am happy, others are happy. So I will not do anything to make you happy. I will do my duty, my work. I will live a religious life. If you go after the butterfly, the butterfly escapes. Just be quiet and the butterfly will alight on your lap. If you are true to yourself you may not have many friends; but you will not be without Him. But the friends you have will be genuine. That’s my firm conviction and that’s what makes me stand on my feet firm.”

Hence, it is no surprise that God granted him his wish: to live on his feet and to die on his feet! He seemed to be preparing for it and was more confined to his room in these last few months. Indeed, he had shared with some of his closest friends that he was ‘preparing himself to go’.

The low blood pressure which eventually cut short his life’s innings has actually been the cross he carried over the years! His novitiate companion, Fr. Francis Parmar, remembered the evening prayer in Mt Abu in 1967 when Cyprian collapsed and was carried off by scholastic Kolady. A similar but more severe episode took place in Abu a few years ago where his good friend, Dr. Sharma, played the ‘guardian angel’ and resuscitated him ‘back to life’. Cyprian said his time had not yet come, then!

But this time, it was indeed the gentle voice calling him home! On December 16, his blood pressure having dropped, he was admitted to St Mary’s Nursing Home in Gomtipur. The next morning, as he always wished, without much trouble to anyone, he quietly slipped into eternity... the ‘butterfly’ leading him home!

Fr. Jose Changa, one his close friends, summarized his life poignantly: “Cyprian was always available to his work and to his companions. He was happy to serve and so he did. He was loving, simple, sensitive... and he never wanted to be in the limelight.” His was an experience of “Emmanuel - God with

us” and it was fitting that one who made this experience of “Emmanuel” tangible and real to us, went back to his Master and Lord, without any advance notice and without much ado, as the season of Advent was drawing to a close. Like the silent St. Joseph, he too would surely have heard the Master’s beckoning: “Well done, good and faithful servant. Enter into the joyous hospitality of the Master.”

- Fr. Lancy D’Cruz,  
with inputs from Frs. Jose Changa, Francis Parmar,  
and Hedwig Lewis, SJ

