

JESUIT  
CHENNAI PROVINCE

# சிஷ்யமடல்

## CHEMMADAL



Our Lady of the Way

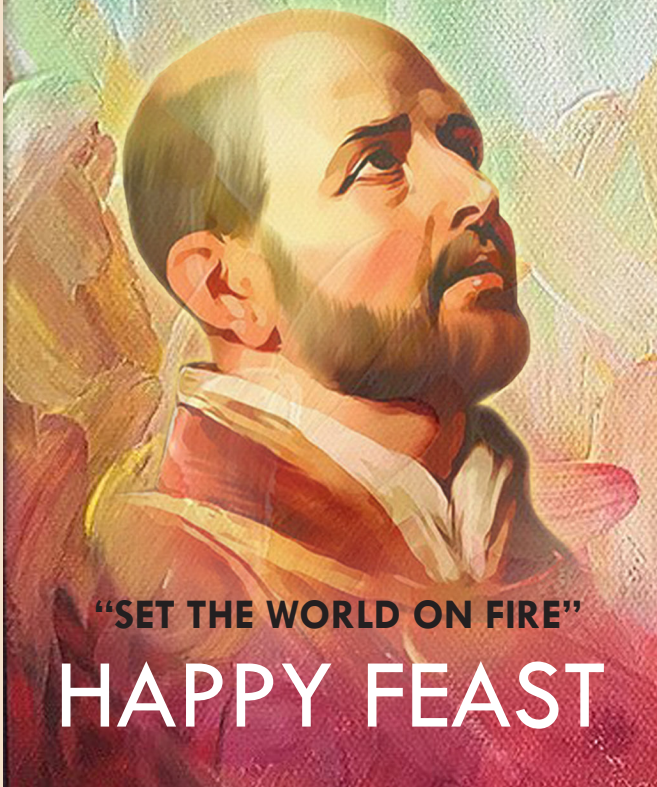
JULY 2020

C H E N N A I J E S U I T S N E W S

VOLUME 01 | NO. 06



“MY LORD AND MY GOD”



“SET THE WORLD ON FIRE”

# HAPPY FEAST

### PROVINCIAL'S MESSAGE

*Chemmadal* is the name finalized by the Superiors/Team Leaders, Coordinators and Consultors of the Province to the Monthly Newsletter of Jesuit Chennai Province. This name was chosen from the 57 suggested names by Jesuits, Collaborators, Coworkers and Friends. In Tamil language, *Chemmai* + *Madal* becomes *Chemmadal*. ‘*Madal*’ means epistle or mail. ‘*Chemmai*’ carries multiple deeper meanings like classic, excellence, correctness, fineness etc. ‘*Chemmai*’ also means redness and redness symbolizes martyrdom.



From the beginning, for us, the Christians of Tamil Nadu, redness symbolizes martyrdom which is associated with the evangelization of St Thomas, the Apostle. St Francis Xavier writes on 8 May 1545 from the city of St Thomas (Meliapor / Mylapore), that ‘*he prayed for God’s will in the holy chapel of the Apostle if he could go to Malacca and he felt incredible joy*’. For us, the Jesuits, redness also has its roots in Oriyur, the village where St John de Britto was beheaded by the then rulers in 1693 and the land metamorphosed into red sand by the splash of the blood of our saint. Even today, the sand of Oriyur has the *Chemmai* (redness) symbolizing the blood of St John de Britto.

Though geographically Oriyur is within the Madurai Province territory, historically St John de Britto spent his missionary life and rendered his evangelical ministry mostly in the Northern part of Tamil Nadu which comprises the present territory of the new Jesuit Chennai Province. Hence, *Chemmadal* meaning ‘*letter from the red sand*’, signifies that this Newsletter brings the Chennai Jesuits news from ‘*the land of redness*’ where historically our St. John de Britto and other Jesuit Missionaries of Old and New Madura Missions, shed their blood in the cause of evangelisation to further the

Mission of Reconciliation and Justice. *Chemmadal* also could mean 'letter from Chennai'. Thus, the name *Chemmadal* becomes an omnibus title that signifies multiple historical events and literary nuances, and henceforth, will also serve as one of the main connecting links.

Six months are over after the establishment of the New Jesuit Chennai Province, of which three months were spent in lockdown due to COVID-19. In my personal welcome note sent to Chennai Jesuits individually on 01 Jan'20, I have emphatically mentioned that God has His own plans to be fulfilled, in and through you for the people, especially the marginalised of the Northern and Western parts of Tamil Nadu and elsewhere in the world in the coming years. The birth of the new Jesuit Chennai Province is an invitation and call of the Eternal King to us to go beyond any of our differences, keeping God as our epicentre and God's own people as our focus and expressing a deep sense of commitment for greater apostolic effectiveness. To actualize this noble call, we need to put our hearts and minds together to further nurture and develop the Chennai Province. The following are the major events that have happened in the last six months:



**1. Pilgrimage to Konankuppam:** As a symbolic gesture, nearly 400 Jesuits, Collaborators and Coworkers went on a historical Pilgrimage to Konankuppam, in Pondicherry Diocese on 15 Feb'20. It was a meaningful spiritual journey in thanking the Lord for the creation of the new Chennai Province and a great experience of feeling oneness in hearts and minds and as we prayed together as a family together with our great Brother Veeramamunivar (*Constantine Joseph Beschi SJ, 1680-1747*) who was one of the pioneering missionaries of Old Madura Mission and who was the brain behind creating that pilgrimage centre.

**2. Visitations:** Except for three of our communities, I had nearly completed the visitations in the Province before the lockdown was imposed towards the end of March'20. I would like to thank each one of you for your warm welcome and for the trust you placed in me during your personal sharing and manifestation. I carry within me a very positive image about every individual in the Province. At the end of it all, I was overwhelmed by the united assurance of togetherness.

**3. Rapid Response to COVID-19:** Though we were locked down, there was a rapid response of CEN to Covid-19. Discerning over the current signs of times, the Province Disaster Management Committee (DMC) was constituted by me to appropriately plan and respond to this COVID-19 situation. DMC came together and planned the strategies immediately to address the issues of the most affected victims of this pandemic. The Province has reached out to more than 17,500 families of remote villages in and around our institutions, centres and parishes. I express my gratitude and appreciation to all Jesuits particularly the members of DMC, alumni, collaborators, volunteers and funding partners who generously collaborate in these humanitarian activities. Now we are moving towards the third phase of our involvement in reaching out to the affected, particularly the students. For more than two months, the space and buildings of our colleges in Chennai, Vettavalam and Mettala have been generously given to accommodate persons who are affected by COVID-19 and to be used as Corona Testing Centres.

According to the news reports, the number of infected cases in Tamil Nadu will peak in the coming months and the situation will be worse and unpredictable. Hence, **I request all Jesuits and co-workers to be extra careful in the coming months, avoiding unnecessary travels and strictly following the prescribed safety measures.**

**4. Formation of Administrative Structures:** The appointments of Consult members, Superiors, Team Leaders, Coordinators of Commissions and Officials of the new Province have been completed and they, as co-responsible persons with Provincial for the entire Province, have started to work systematically for the development of the Province. We organized very fruitful and separate Zoom meetings of these groups. The transfers were also announced and I appreciate the individuals for their cooperation in reaching their destinations amidst the lockdown difficulties.



**Chemmadal**, in today's context, also reminds us of the redness symbolizing the bloodshed in the brutal killings of innocent people like George Floyd of USA, Jayaraj and Bennicks of Sathankulam, Tamil Nadu and the innumerable marginalized people of our times. We are called upon to become true disciples of St. Ignatius, by being with the people without counting our personal gains, by raising our voices in favour of our people, and by collectively working for justice, peace and human dignity.

For Jesuits, July is our Master's month.

As a man for all times, St Ignatius constantly inspires throughout the history of our Society.

As a man of vision, (visionary), he invites us to free ourselves from any clutch that does not allow our hearts to move.

As a man of dreams, he calls us to translate our dreams into actions.

As a man of depth, he drives us into the depth of our mission.

As a man of prayer, he accompanies us in our times of trials and tribulations.

As a man of contemplation, he disturbs our complacency.

As a man of love, he sets our hearts free to accommodate the whole cosmos.

As a man of intellect, he induces our minds to soar high.

As a man of God, he unites each and every one of us, as members of the human family.

He comes alive and agile to us once again on his great feast day to tap the power within us.

Let us celebrate it in a meaningful and simple way!

**Happy Feast of our dear Master to each and every one of you!**

*Jebamalai Irudayaraj*



## PROVINCIAL'S PROGRAMME

### JULY

**02** Province Consult (Online)

**07** Regents Meet (Online)

**10** Schola Brevis, Arul Kadal

**11** Meeting of House Treasurers (Online)

**15** Holy Spirit Mass, LC, Chennai

**20-22** Class on Social Analysis,  
Arul Kadal

**31** Feast of St. Ignatius,  
Dhyana Ashram, Chennai

## EDITOR'S NOTE

Dear Readers,  
Greetings!

As I take charge as editor of செம்மடல் - **Chemmadal**: Chennai Jesuits News, I would like to appreciate and thank **Fr. Vasanth, the PDD**, who designed the Newsletter and edited the first 5 issues since Feb 2020, punctually and colourfully. While I thank all the correspondents of the newsletter for sending the news, I also would like to remind and request them to **send the news by 28<sup>th</sup> of every month** so that the newsletter could be released



latest by 10<sup>th</sup> of the following month. May I also request you to remember and **use the new email id: chemmadal@censj.org**, created exclusively for all correspondence related to Chemmadal. On behalf of the Province, the curia congratulates **Fr. Antony Inigo D (MDU)**, who proposed the name.

The curia also wishes all the readers a happy feast of St Ignatius and prays that we all grow more in loving service.

*Hanko Xavier  
Socius*



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### FATHER GENERAL APPOINTS

- **Frs. Danis Ponniah (MDU), Melvil Pereira (KHM) and Santosh Minj (HAZ)** as Consultors to POSA and JCSA Convenors and Chairs of South, North and Central Zones, respectively.
- **Fr. Jerome Cutinha** as the Provincial of Jamshedpur.
- **Fr. Joseph Maria Christie (MDU)** as Secretary for Higher Education in the place of Fr. Michael Garanzini.
- **Fr. Peter McIsaac** as the new Regional Superior of Guyana and Jamaica.

### FR GENERAL APPROVES THE APPOINTMENTS OF FR PROVINCIAL

- **Fr. Kumar Louis Vincent (MDU)** as the Revisor of Province Financial Administration
- **Fr. Joseph Ignaci** as the Province Treasurer.

### FR PROVINCIAL APPOINTS

- **Fr. Irudaya Raj A.** as the Province Official for Safeguarding the Minors and Vulnerable Adults in the place of Fr. Yesumarian L.

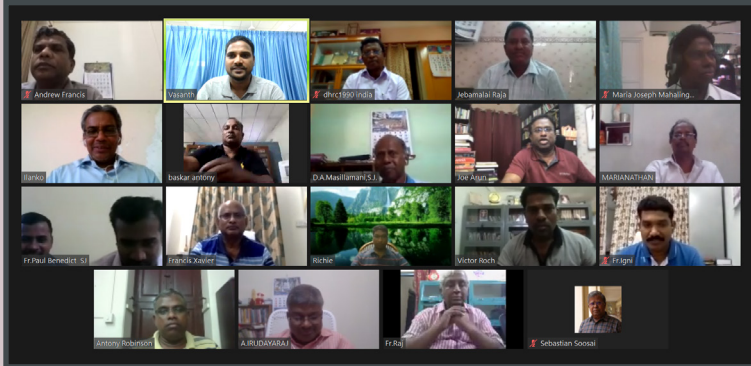
*Vijayasadh Subramanian*, a first year novice, left the novitiate on 04 Jun 2020.

## NEW/CHANGE OF PHONE NUMBERS/EMAIL IDs

NAME	PHONE NUMBER	EMAIL ID
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Director, Fisherfolk Ministry, Paramankeni	-	dir.arcali@censj.org
Fr. Maria Packiam	9445803415	packiamsj@loyolacollege.edu
Sch. Dhanaventhur Nazreth Raj	8240819210	dhanaventhur@gmail.com
Sch. Jeyasachin Jeyaseelan	7980081039	jjeyasachin@gmail.com
Sch. Kiran Joseph P	7736177980	kiranjosephadmm@gmail.com
Sch. Prithivi Kumar A	7736260895	prithivi8195@gmail.com
Sch. Titus Gnanaprakasam	9142017638	titusesthac@gmail.com
Sch. Yowan Cyril L	8910897005	yowancyrilsj@gmail.com

## COMMISSION COORDINATORS (4 JUNE) AND PROVINCE OFFICIALS (17 JUNE) MEETINGS

The lockdown did not prevent in any way from holding official meetings of the new born Jesuit Chennai Province (CEN). Fr Provincial with his proactive approach had virtual meetings with Province Officials and all the Coordinators of Commissions, each lasting more than two hours. Thanks to his familiarity and facility with digital platforms, Fr. Joe Arun, the Coordinator of Commissions (PCC), helped the participants in the two meetings to adapt seamlessly to the requirements of the virtual meetings.



In the two meetings, Fr. Provincial emphasised the role that the Officials and Coordinators had to play in the administration and governance of the Province. More importantly, he invited them to evolve innovative and creative plans and programmes by keeping in mind the Province option and the vision of empowering the marginalised. Developing the Province, he said, is a collective responsibility of every member of the Province. In their mode

of functioning, all the Officials and Coordinators were asked to create an atmosphere of inter-ministerial collaboration to avoid duplication and to be more cost effective, and were asked to make sure that everything was documented for posterity.

Each official was asked to define roles and responsibilities of his office and prepare a calendar of activities for the year. Similarly, in addition to preparation of a work plan for the year, he asked the Coordinators to revisit the Province Apostolic Plan specific to their Commissions and redraft in the area of Action Plans and propose a budget for approval.

*Joe Arun*

## JOINT MEETING OF SUPERIORS/TEAM LEADERS, COORDINATORS AND CONSULTORS

The first ever joint meeting of all the Superiors / Team Leaders, Coordinators and Consultors of the Province was held on 25 Jun'20. Fr. Socius welcomed all the participants including the PCC and the PDD. Frs. Ignatius Britto and Paul Benedict led us in prayer. Fr. Joe Arun facilitated this online meeting through Zoom. All the participants took part in the meeting braving the odds of the net connections.

Fr Provincial then welcomed all for the first joint meeting. He welcomed Fr. Ilanko, the first Socius, for whom it was the first meeting with the Superiors. He also welcomed Frs. Devasagayam, Ignatius Britto and Guna, the new Superior and Team Leaders. He thanked Frs. Masillamani, P.S. Arul and Eugene, the outgoing members from the Superiors' team for their yeoman service in their respective places.

He highlighted the structure of provincial governance of 15 communities with one Rector, 6 Superiors and 8 Team Leaders; 11 Commissions with three sub-committees (Ecology, Tribal and Migrants) and their members; and 19 Officials with their approved teams. He emphasized that all of them have a share in the Province administration enjoying co-responsibility with the Provincial. While being co-responsible for the entire Province, their specific role is to ensure that the directions and policies of the Province are to be followed or implemented in their own communities. The Superior is to take care of the entire community/institution and the individuals and he is expected to represent the views, expectations and concerns of the community to the Provincial.

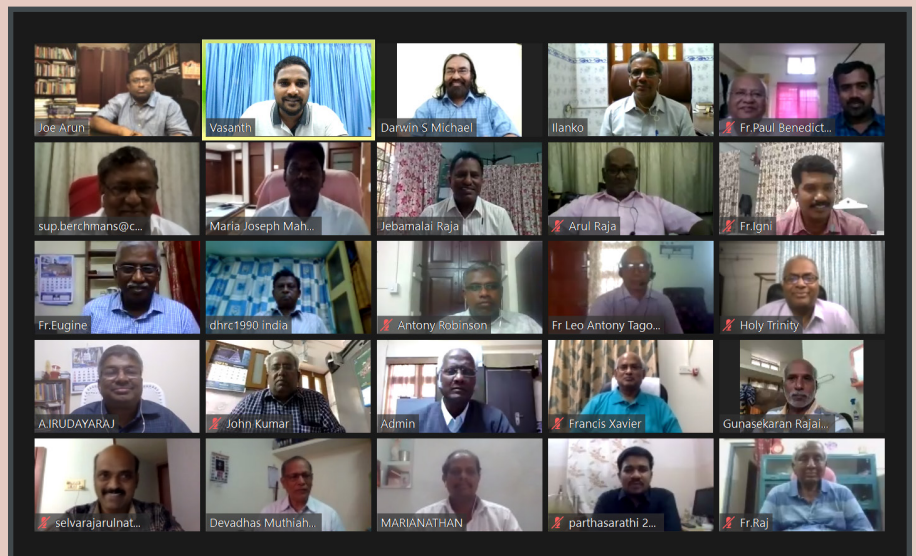
He quoted Fr. General's letter of promulgation of Chennai Province which insisted on *sustainability of missions, promoting quality vocations, union of minds and hearts and training our men for a variety of ministries who combine competence and spirituality.*

For the Community Orientation of the new academic year, he indicated the theme as *“Living in the Present and Focusing on the Future”*. He recommended the following points for our collective and personal reflection:

- Following the guidelines for financial management to mitigate the challenges and impact of COVID-19 and reducing 25% of the expenses.
- Revisiting the Community Apostolic Plans and concretizing the implementation process.
- Preparing for the Ignatian Year 2021-2022: Ignatian leadership training, proposing programmes for the Province etc.
- Appointing contact persons in the communities for implementation of CAP; safeguarding minors and local grievance cell.
- Collaborating and Networking with others, and promoting vocations from the mission.
- Following good food habits and having a good menu to increase immunity power during pandemic.

After the sharing of the Provincial, Fr. Joe Arun, the PCC and in charge of implementation of PAPs, presented a report on the meetings of Commission Coordinators (4 June) and Province Officials (17 June). **Previous news item carries the details.** He suggested to keep the UAPs in mind and to have a relook at PAPs and modify them according to our new CEN Province.

Fr. Vasanth, the PDD, presented the need assessment prepared based on the PAPs. He identified about 208 needs and classified them into 21 categories of both short and long term ones.



He encouraged the need for the involvement of individual communities in raising funds for the mission.

Fr. Francis P. Xavier made a presentation on Province Fundraising Team (PFT) and Disaster Management Committee (DMC). He made a presentation of relief work done for victims of COVID 19, stranded migrants, gypsies and our option people through Disaster management Committee (DMC) and Helping Hands Loyola (HHL). The Entomology Research Institute at Loyola campus will be working on establishing a virology research lab with the help of Dr. Rosy, a retired medical college professor.

Financial Status of the Province after the bifurcation was shared by Fr. Igni, the Province Treasurer. Fr. Robinson, the PCF, shared about stage wise distribution of scholastics and their activities during the lockdown.

Then the Socius presented the significance of maintaining decent database both at local and international levels. Finally, Fr Provincial clarified the queries from the members, shared his observations and signed off expressing his gratitude. The meeting was concluded with the vote of thanks by Fr. Socius and the final prayer said by Fr. Darwin.

*Ilanko Xavier,  
Socius*





**CHENNAI: ARUL KADAL**



The deacons have completed their comprehensive exams and come out with flying colours. Probably, Arul Kadal is the first theologate to conduct comprehensive exams in the Assistancy. They now await the lockdown to be over so that they can involve themselves in diaconate ministry in their respective parishes.

The classes have been resumed for the second year students from 22 June for this academic year. Thus, the normal life begins to flow in Arul Kadal. The re-organisation of library still continues, thanks to the generous service rendered by the final year students and the deacons.

During the lockdown days, the scholastics have fruitfully made use of their personal time engaging themselves in various useful activities like learning through online courses, rendering online counselling, and extending their helping hands to JRS English program in Afghanistan, which includes 8 online courses in areas like computer literacy, library management, automobile technology and scripture and 10 webinars on psycho-social, educational, theological topics et al.

*Edward Lenin*

**CHENNAI: BERCHMANS ILLAM**

The philosophers staying at Berchmans Illam began their online classes on Philosophy in June. The arrival of Juniors from Calcutta and Hazaribagh

Juniorates added color to the house. They went for their COVID-19 test and were tested negative by God's grace.

Besides the online classes, the scholastics also presented their reflections on the study of some of the Society's sources through creative powerpoints, followed by a quiz competition with exciting cash prizes. Amidst the extension of lockdown 4.0, Fr. Irudayaraj successfully completed 17 webinars on various media related themes and also organized a two-day virtual conference on the theme "COVID-19: A Game Changer in Media and Communication" which eventually turned out to be a confluence of presentation of 22 papers and participation of many from all over India.

*Vimal*

**CHENNAI: LOYOLA COLLEGE**

Despite many lockdowns which crippled the normal life of Chennaites, Loyola community found its own way of reaching out to people in need and serving them. Series of webinars were organised through Google Meet with our own Jesuits speaking on different topics and the response was overwhelming. On 17 June we had farewell Mass for two of our community members, Schs. Richard & Vimal and wished them Godspeed in their theological studies. Frs. Alton, Sahay & Sarathi who joined the community on the same day were also welcomed by Fr. Rector. The Community Orientation for the Loyola campus which was held on 27 June considered ways forward amidst the uncertain situation prevailing due to Corona lockdown and came up with practical and viable plans. Loyola campus is still being used by the Chennai Corporation for testing people for Corona and for quarantining the affected.

LIBA had faculty retreat for their Faculty, Research Associates and Teaching Assistants from 8 to 10 June. Reviewing the last academic year and planning for the new academic year, Fr. Joe Arun presented an academic strategic plan for a New Normal to meet the challenges in the post-COVID world of management education. A new and innovative Teaching-Learning-Assessment

(TLA) module was presented and approved by the faculty council. A robust Learning Management System (LMS) has been set up to move seamlessly to virtual teaching and learning.



A six-day online certificate course on Pro Act Digital Teacher was conducted from 15 to 20 June by the Management Development Centre (MDC) of LIBA using the digital platform of WebEx. One hundred and ten faculty and others across the country attended the course to earn an e-certificate for digital skills for teaching-learning-assessment.

*Xavier Samuel*

## HARUR: ARULAGAM

The new members, Frs. Gladwin, Mag Bay De Lawrence, and Sch. Tony were warmly welcomed by Arulagam Jesuit Companions. At the concelebrated Holy Mass of the Holy Spirit, the new members received the assignments for this academic year. Yet another moment of grace experienced by the community members was our meeting with Most Rev Dr Lawrence Pius, the Bishop of Dharmapuri on 19 June, 2020. He blessed us and shared some guidelines for this academic year.

To arrest the echo in the church, the Parish Priest with the help of youth planned and executed some modifications in the roofing of the church. Our school staff participated in two webinars organised by JCERT Team, Palayamkottai on 26 & 27 June, as this was supposed to take the place during the staff orientation of this academic year. As suggested by Fr Provincial, we had a fruitful community orientation on the theme “*Living in the present and focusing on the future*” led by Frs. Paul Benedict and John Paul.

*Tony Ajith*

## KASTHAMBADI: J.P. LEONARD ILLAM (JPLI)

Extraordinary situation demands novel response. So, the Kasthambadi Pre-novitiate was temporarily shifted to Loyola College, Vettavalam. The Pre-novitiate had a takeoff on 17 June for the academic year 2020-21. The providence of God has been very much palpable from its inception. Thanks to Fr. Alton, the vocation Promoter, and his team of vocation facilitators. There are 18 pre-novices this year. Their safe arrival was meticulously planned and judiciously executed by Fr. Robin, the PCF and Fr. Alton with the help of many Jesuits. The pre-novices are safe and healthy.



They hail from seven dioceses. In Vettavalam, the pre-novices are introduced slowly to our way of life, liturgy, saints, basic prayers and catechism. They also had special sessions to come to know of the various ministries of the Society of Jesus, especially those of Chennai Province. They were also given some inputs on study skills and arts. They are relaxed and are very happy to be here. Looking at their talents, we feel they are a very promising lot. There is a discernible eagerness in them to do God’s will in the Society.

*Hansel*

## KILPENNATHUR: AHAL CENTRE

Knowing the importance of forming Association and by the request of people of Irudhaya Nagar, the SWAT (*Sofa workers Welfare Association Tamil Nadu*) was formed by AHAL Jesuit Team on 31 May, 2020 at Irudaya Nagar with well-defined objectives. The AHAL team had 2 days of yearly orientation to AHAL staff and Jesuits on 9 and 10 June. It focused on PAP, CAP, Staff Capacitation, Job Description, Sangam Formation,



Documentation and Issue-based Interventions. The second and third phase of relief materials were distributed to deserving beneficiaries in Vizhupuram and Thiruvannamalai districts by AHAL Centre and Kilpennathur Parish. AHAL centre sincerely thanks the Chennai Province Disaster Management Committee (DMC) and the benefactors for their timely help.



The first batch of tailoring and computer students and staff of skill development centre had their first academic orientation on 22 June. They were highly motivated and encouraged to learn the roles and functions of ICRDCE (*Indian Centre for Research and Development of Community Education*) and the requirements of NSDC (*National Skill Development Corporation*) like syllabus, assessment pattern and placement details.

**Raja Jesu Raj**

### METTALA: LOYOLA COLLEGE



On 29 May, the new entrants Frs. Maria Joseph Mahalingam, Rajarathinam and Poondy Rajan assumed the offices of Principal, Campus Treasurer and House Minister respectively. Loyola College, Mettala, thanks Fr. John Bosco, the

outgoing Principal, and Fr. Dominic Jayakumar, the outgoing Minister cum Treasurer, for their yeoman service to the college last year. The Jesuit Management conducted three programs on Google Meet on 16, 22 and 29 June for the benefit of its academic and administrative staff and motivated them to get actively involved in the admission drive. It also emphasized the necessity of maintaining and updating the work logbook online and communicated to them that the salary will be disbursed to the teaching staff based on the performance appraisal of the academic work done during the lockdown period.

On 27 and 28 June, the Jesuit community had a two-day orientation program. The first day was dedicated to faith-sharing. The individuals shared at length their family background, history of their vocation to the Society of Jesus, the trials and tribulations in their life and mission in the Society of Jesus etc. These sessions helped the community members to understand and appreciate one another better. One observes the prevalence of a visible cordial atmosphere in the community. It would certainly help to forge and strengthen the unity of hearts and minds of community members which is an essential prerequisite for the effective implementation of the Action Plans evolved on the second day of the orientation.

**Maria Joseph Mahalingam**

### METTUPALAYAM: ARRUPPE ILLAM

PARAN took initiative to provide some nutrition supplements like sundal, and biscuits to 17 evening study centres at Kadambur and Gundri zones. It is part of PARAN's COVID-19 relief work. Children are motivated to be safe from the virus attack and are helped to practice their writing habit. 490 students benefit from this initiative. We thank Mispagal and his team for their support and help.

At Thalavadi, we listed out the names of students without parents, the physically and the visually

challenged for providing relief materials. We distributed relief materials to forty two students. The staff of our evening study centre helped us find the deserving students. As part of our relief work and a good will gesture, we distributed sanitizers and face masks worth Rs 3,000 to local police personnel, the forest officers and people at VAO's office at Kadambur.



Community leaders and the Lok Manch staff met the local and district government officers to submit applications for the ST welfare card. PARAN first-aid centres at Makkampalayam and Arigiyam villages are of great help for the villagers to meet their medical needs during the lockdown when the public transport remains unavailable.

*Naveen Kumar*

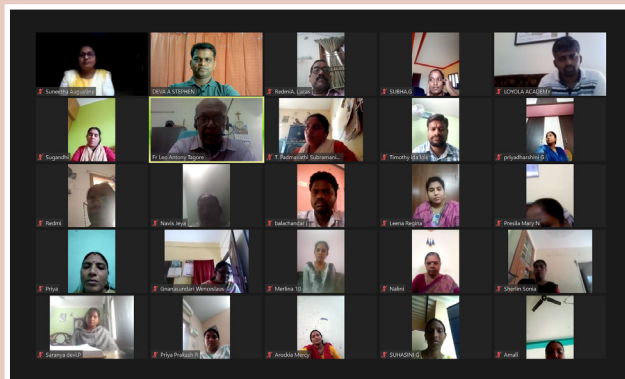
## UDHAGAMANDALAM: ST. JOSEPH'S INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL

St. Joseph's Industrial School, Ooty supplied vegetables to our staff and domestic co-workers during the time of lockdown. On 2 June we had an introductory session with our staff members. Fr. Frederick, the Superior and Correspondent introduced Fr. Xavier, the Production Manager and Sch. Sundar, the new regent, to the staff. During the same session we also discussed specifically on our general response to COVID-19 and the future plans for the students.

*M. A. Sundar*

## VADAMELPAKKAM, LOYOLA ACADEMY

Loyola Academy conducted its first online official staff meeting for this academic year through Zoom Meetings on 8 June. Fr. Leo Antony Tagore, the Correspondent of the school addressed the staff members starting with a personal note of *cura personalis* enquiring about them and their children's wellness during these lockdown days. He congratulated the staff for the successful completion of the Online/Virtual classes of phase-I. It has helped our teachers to adapt themselves and to respond appropriately to the present situation of lockdown. The teachers admitted that the present situation provided a bundle of opportunities to identify and develop their hidden talents and skills. Fr. Tagore explained the modalities of the second phase of the online classes for the month of June. Before plunging the students into the NCERT syllabus we wanted to provide them with some exercises for the enhancement of aptitude, logical, verbal reasoning skills, analytical, arithmetic and communication skills. Daily evaluation of the students through Google forms was a new feature of the second phase.



As a part of the Management's staff orientation-cum-capacity building program for this year, our teachers were asked to exploit the rare opportunity offered by JCERT. Our staff were in full strength at the webinars on 'Ten Global Identifiers of Jesuit Education' and 'Teachers as Educators' on June 25 and 26 respectively. Fr. Deva A Stephen, being a co-host in the webinars provided them with excellent technical support. Fr. Kennedy (MDU),

as a token of his appreciation of our overwhelming support, gave our school the privilege of proposing the vote of thanks. We also provided technical support for the meeting arranged by the Secondary Education Commission.

Second online staff meeting was conducted through Zoom on June 29, to discuss modalities for fee-collection and the related topic of the teachers' salaries for June and July. We shared with the staff some guidelines for the third phase of online classes. We also had an evaluation of the online classes for the X and XII Stds. Fr. Tagore shared some salient features of the results of the Opinionnaire sent to our parents. With regard to the virtual classes the parents were overwhelmingly positive. It was very encouraging indeed for the staff and the Management. On other issues like fee collection, opinions varied with 80% respondents suggesting that we wait till reopening for fee collection and another 80% that we could allow the willing parents to pay online. It was difficult to assess the mood of parents who are, by and large, in a state of uncertainty with regard to their jobs and income.

**Jayanth Frankly**

### VALLAM: PAATHAI CENTRE

10<sup>th</sup> standard students of our hostel were given 5 days of coaching in Spoken English at Paathaicentre with all Corona precautions in place. It helped them cultivate confidence in speaking and writing in English. Paathai community is actively getting involved in caring for our common home by organic farming and making our campus a plastic free zone during the corona lockdown. An hour of adoration was held to remember our forefathers who worked tirelessly to spread the devotion of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, especially in the area of Chennai Province, during which we also prayed for the development of our mission.

**David Francis**

### VETTAVALAM: LOYOLA COLLEGE

The Jesuit Community of Loyola College, Vettavalam, under the leadership of Fr. Selva, the Superior, distributed the second phase of relief materials to 326 Puthiraivannaar and Arunthadhiyar families of Velankanninagar, Azhaganendhal and Aarapatu of Pavithram Parish near Thiruvannamalai. Each family was given kits containing ten kilograms of rice, one litre of cooking oil and grocery worth eight hundred rupees each. All the Jesuits of LCV, were actively involved in the process of arranging, packing and distributing the relief materials, thus making it a team work.



On 3 and 4 June, the Tamil Department of LCV, in its first year of inception, conducted a two-day Webinar on “Introduction to *Thamizhisai* (Tamil Classical Music)” by Dr. Mammathu, Writer and Researcher in *Thamizhisai*, Madurai and on “Introduction to *Thamizhisai Pangal* (Melody patterns in Tamil Music)” by Dr. Mammathu and Mr. Rajapat Raja, Folk Theatre Artist and Singer, Coimbatore. More than 200 professors, scholars, artists, literary persons, students of Tamil Literature, Classical Music, Folklore, etc., participated actively with a lot of enthusiasm on both the days. They all appreciated the two-day event as scholarly, one of depth and a musical treat during the Corona fear.

Under The Patronage of Honourable Dr. Thamarai Selvi, the Vice-Chancellor of Thiruvalluvar University, the Departments of Computer Science and Computer Applications of Loyola College, Vettavalam, Tiruvannamalai Dt, organized an Online International Conference on *Data Science* for four days from 15 to 18 June.



Dr. Vijayakumar, CRM/Program Management Lead, Cognizant, Bangalore; Dr. Juliet Rajan, Lead, Infosys Ltd., Chennai; Dr. J. Betina Antony, Panimalar Institute of Technology, Chennai and Dr. Paul Manuel, Kuwait University, were the resource persons. We appreciate and offer our felicitations to Fr. Albert William, the Secretary and Fr. Vincent Britto, the Principal for their meticulous planning and accompanying the staff towards the successful conduct of the conference.

*Justine Emma*

### DINDIGUL: BESCHI (NOVITIATE & JRS)



On 12 June, the renovated restrooms for Novices were blessed. We have postponed the entry of first-year novices to the novitiate to the first week of July since the pandemic situation is alarming. Fr. Michael Panimaya Raj took over as Socius to the Novice Master on 18 June. We sincerely thank Fr. Swaminathan Krishnamurti for his multifarious services in the Novitiate and the Beschi Community. Bro Santiago Arockiam, the new Minister and Treasurer, reached Beschi and took charge of the responsibilities. After the vows retreat preached by Fr. Dhanaraj, on 21 June, eight second-year novices, (four each for Chennai and Madurai Provinces) pronounced their First Vows with a motto, *‘As the light of Jesus, a dawn to the downtrodden’*.

We wholeheartedly thank Fr. Danis, the Provincial, for his grace-filled presence, homily, and Eucharist that made the occasion memorable. LUMINA, Novices’ Magazine 2020 on PAP

and UAP, and home-recorded DVD of the songs composed by Novices were released by Fr. Stephen, the PCF. Soft copies are sent to the members of both the Provinces. On 22 June, the Juniors left for St Mary’s Madurai for a course in computer skills and phonetics under the guidance of a team of experts organized by the PCF.

Br. Aloy went through cataract operation on his right eye and is now recuperating. The senior members keep hale and hearty at Arrupe Bhavan because of the tireless services of our co-workers ably guided by PDDM Sisters. CIS became quarantine quarters for Philosophers and Juniors. I & II Year Philosophers create a serious and robust academic ambiance on the campus as they have begun their online courses of Philosophy. Fr. Swaminathan coordinated their program according to the guidance of Fr. Superior and PCF.

**JRS:** Amidst this confinement situation due to the COVID-19 lockdown, JRS adopted innovative ways of training its Complementary Education (CE) teachers to effectively support the education of the children in the refugee camps in Tamil Nadu. It has organized a quasi-online two-day training program for the Complementary education Teachers in groups of 5 to 10 from 2 to 15 June.

JRS-TN has distributed facemasks, soap, and towels for 4200 children in 90 camps and 3,300 blankets to the most vulnerable refugees in 31 camps in the first week of June. Considering the struggles of the refugees due to COVID-19, JRS-TN gave dry ration for 656 vulnerable families living in 11 different camps across the state in the middle of the month. On 20 June, the observance of World Refugee Day was held in different ways and forms almost in all the Sri Lankan Refugee camps, with the support and participation of different sections of the refugee community. On that day, JRS-TN, released a short video highlighting the need for standing with the refugees and for their durable solutions.

*Michael Panimaya Raj*

## ABIDE WITH THE LORD

- *Fr. S.M. Xavier Irudayaraj SJ* (MDU, 79/61), passed away on 16 June 2020 at Beschi Illam, Dindigul.
- *Fr. Marcus Murmu SJ* (DUM, 63/38), passed away on 20 June 2020, at Ursula Hospital, Dumka.
- *Fr. Joseph L. Pragasam SJ* (MDU, 83/64), passed away on, 03 July 2020 at Saravana Hospital, Madurai.
- *Fr. Paul Jackson SJ* (HAZ/PAT, 83/64), passed away on 05 July 2020 at Kurji Holy Family Hospital, Patna.
- *Mrs. Adaikala Mary* (82), mother of Fr. Jerome Kulandaisamy, passed away on 29 June 2020 at Dindigul.
- *Mr. S. Anthonysamy* (77), father of Fr. Arockiasamy Antony, passed away on 29 June 2020 at Irugaiur, near Jayamkondam.
- *Mr. Sebastian* (94), paternal uncle of Fr. Andrew, passed away on 10 July 2020 at Kanakkankuppam.
- *Mr. Santiago* (69), younger brother of Fr. Antony samy (MDU), passed away on 12 July 2020 at Devakottai.
- *Mrs. Priya Chinnammal* (38), niece of Fr. A. Soosai Raj, passed away on 12 July 2020 at Nagalur, Erode Dt.

## NEW BOOK

S BASIL XAVIER

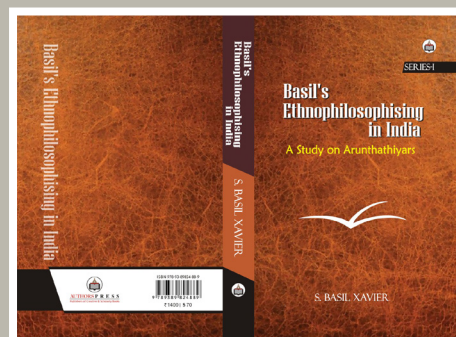
*Basil's Ethnophilosophising in India:  
A Study on Arunthathiyars*

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2020



## KNOWING ST. IGNATIUS WITH 5-Ds

**Discernment:** He was a man of discernment – He would listen to the inner voice where God speaks in silence and he would allow others to resonate with his thinking and feeling. Once someone asked him: What would do you, if the Pope suppresses the Jesuit Order? St Ignatius very calmly replied: I would go to the chapel and sit in front of the Blessed Sacrament for 15 minutes. Then I would be serene and happy again.

**Determination:** He was a man of determination – He would get what he wants rain or shine. After the painful surgery when his knee was shattered, St Ignatius felt that the operated leg was a bit shorter than the other one – He insisted on another operation. In many of his decision making processes, one could see his spirit of determination.

**Decision:** He was a man of right decision – Decision follows determination to do something beautiful for God and for the people. He made a distinction between ‘making’ the decision and ‘taking’ the decision. In any major decision-taking process, the leader listens to the stakeholders and then he/she takes the final decision to be implemented.

**Direction:** He was a man of direction – God’s will was the compass that guided him. He has written in the Constitutions of the Jesuit Order that one should be driven by the spirit of Jesus, powered by one’s desire to serve the unserved, the underserved, and the unreached. It was his custom to get his direction from God. He writes in his Autobiography that “he had always grown in devotion, that is, ease in finding God; and now more than ever in his whole life. Every time, any hour, that he wished to find God, he found him.”

**Distinction:** He was a man after distinction. Whatever he said and did, it should be for the greater glory of God in the service of the needy; and this ‘greater’ should be better than the best. He would do things ever more and ever better for God by serving the people at the margin who live around him. The spirit of his ‘magis’ has become the hallmark of Jesuits and Jesuit works. St Ignatius would not settle down for mediocrity but excellence in whatever one does, even giving the best to the least.

In this spirit of his magis, last year the Jesuit Order discerned with determination and decided to work in the direction of Universal Apostolic Preferences (UAP) for 10 years with distinction. And the mission is four-fold:

1. Showing the way to God through the Spiritual Exercises and discernment;
2. Walking with the poor, the outcasts of the world, those whose dignity has been violated, in a mission of reconciliation and justice;
3. Accompanying young people in the creation of a hope-filled future;
4. Collaborating in the care of our common home.

Let us continue to be inspired by this man of God, who lived for others, and who found the glory of God in the service of his fellow human beings.

*Francis P Xavier*

**FR. XAVIER IRUDAYARAJ, S.J.**  
**1941 – 2020**



Fr. Xavier Irudayaraj (as we all fondly called him “*Fr. X*”) was born on 27 February 1941 at Michael patnam – known as ‘Chinna Romapuri’ (Little Rome) – of the Diocese of Sivagangai. The Parish has been a cradle of vocations and the long list includes two Bishops, 30 Jesuits (Fathers and Brothers), 19 Religious Priests, 20 Diocesan Priests, 13 Religious Brothers and 63 Nuns. As a child born of pious Catholic parents Mr. Susai manickam and Mrs. Susai Sinnammal, Fr. X had two brothers and three sisters.

At age 12, he had a very serious attack of typhoid; his mother’s prayer at that time was to offer him to priesthood if he recovered from that illness. As the desire of the mother and son blended harmoniously, he joined the Society in 1958. His formation was fast-tracked and he was ordained a priest in 1968. This resulted in a happy coincidence years later in 2018 when he was the only one of his batch to celebrate both his Diamond Jubilee in Religious Life and the Golden Jubilee in Priestly Life. With Licentiates in Philosophy and Theology, he was sent to Paris for his doctoral



Studies in Theology in 1971. After his return from Paris, he served as Professor of Theology at St. Paul's Seminary (1974–1984) and Arul Kadal, Chennai (1974–1992).

Fr. X made significant contributions to MITS (Madras Inter-Theologate Sharing) regularly organised at the initiative of Arul Kadal in collaboration with Sacred Heart Seminary, Poonamallee, Madras Bible College and Seminary, Department of Christian Studies, and Gurukul Theological Centre. During the visit of Pope St. John Paul II to Chennai in 1986, Fr. X organised a grand Interreligious Dialogue Meet at Gandhi Mandapam.

Fr. Xavier Irudayaraj was a multifaceted personality: A writer, speaker, teacher, good companion and friend. He served the Church in various capacities as the Asst. Director of NBCLC- Bangalore (1992–1994), the Secretary of the Interreligious Dialogue Commissions of the CBCI and TNBC (2001–2005) and as the Director of the Laity Centre of the Archdiocese of Madras-Mylapore (2005–2006). He did the pioneering work of launching Marai Aruvi - the Tamil Theological Quarterly and Andrada Arul Vakku - the reflections on the daily Mass readings as a joint venture with the laity, the religious and the clergy. “*Harmony through Dialogue – Renewal through the Laity*” was the goal of his life.

Fr. X was a heart patient and had also other ailments. In 2016, he moved out of Chennai and has been taking care of his health and doing spiritual ministry alternatively between Beschi, Dindigul, and St. Mary's Madurai. He returned for good to Beschi in September 2019.

On 16 June morning, he complained of indigestion and uneasiness; turning down the suggestion of Sr. Infirmarian to be admitted in the hospital, he took his supper and went to bed. At 9.00 p.m., when the Infirmarian and attender entered his room to check how he was, he had already surrendered his life to the Lord.

The next day, 17 June, duly noting the COVID-19 lockdown rules governing funerals, with his sister and very few relatives, we celebrated a simple and meaningful funeral Mass at 10.30 a.m., Fr. Provincial presided over the Holy Mass and reminded us that Fr. X entered the Society on the same day in 1958.

During the past few months, Fr. X was talking to all including visitors like Bishop Emeritus Jude Paulraj about his imminent going to meet his Maker. Mentioning this in his homily and singing *Asatoma Sadgamaya, Tamaso maa jyotir-gamaya, Mrityorma amritam-gamaya* that Fr. X taught him at Shembag in 1969, Fr. Devadoss said that for Fr. X has been praying God persistently to lead him from ignorance to truth, from darkness to light, from death to immortality (Brihadaranyaka Upanishad 1.3.28). Bishop Jude in his message highly commended him for having completed his Ph.D. very successfully (PHD--Preparation for a Happy Death).

**L. Michael Doss**

**FR. JOSEPH L. PRAGASAM, S.J.  
(1937-2020)**

Fr. J.L. Pragasam who used to refer to himself, like Tagore in his *Gitanjali*, as “*A Reed in God's Hand*” was born in Madurai on 21 April 1937. His parents were Mr. Lourdusamy and Mrs. Irudayammal. He was the eldest son and had four younger siblings, three brothers and a sister. He had his schooling at St. Mary's, Madurai, and he was also a member of St. Mary's Cathedral choir. Inspired by the Jesuits, he joined the Society of Jesus in 1956. He was ordained a Priest in 1971 at St. Mary's Cathedral, Madurai, and he was proud to say that



he was the first parishioner of the Cathedral Parish and the first day scholar of St. Mary's to become a priest. In 1973, he began his teaching ministry at St. Francis Xavier's, Thoothukudi, followed by St. Joseph's, Tiruchi, St. Mary's, Madurai, Arulanandar School, Oriyur and St. Xavier's, Palayamkottai.

Fr. Pragasam shone as an admirable teacher and a revered headmaster. Students thronged to his classes attracted especially by his novel methods of teaching English without using Tamil in the classroom. His maxims were LOYALTY to the Institution, DEDICATION to the teaching ministry, IMPARTIALITY and PUNCTUALITY.

Of his students he would say: *"Always I approached them as their father, mother, friend and guide. They crowded my working days as much as they crowded my praying heart."*

His personal contact inspired quite a few of his students to become diocesan priests, religious in different congregations and some of them became Jesuits. One of his talents that captivated his young students was his God-given gift of music (reed flute through which God has breathed eternally new melodies). He also had an extraordinary memory to remember hundreds of names. He was totally, impartial, sincere and honest in his school administration.

Retiring from school teaching after 21 years, he volunteered to be sent on mission to Brazil. As a missionary, he engaged himself in pastoral ministry with much love and great generosity in Marabá in the Jesuit Region of Amazonia, Brazil, from 1996 to 2006. He even inspired a young man there (Silvio) to become a Jesuit priest.

He returned to work in our educational institutions from 2006 to 2020. Of these 14 years he served for three years as a chaplain to Boys' Town, Pulloothu, Madurai.

Fr. Pragasam had been suffering from cold and cough for the past few weeks. After consultations as outpatient at Sahaya Annai Hospital, Koodalnagar, and Apollo Hospital, Madurai, with all the leading hospitals in Madurai overflowing, he was admitted in Saravana Hospital with the help of his old boys, Dr. Balamurugan and Dr. Sundara Pandian,. The COVID-19 Swab test was taken and he was put on Oxygen support.

The intensive care he received at Saravana Hospital was of no avail and he passed away at 12.30 p.m. on 03 July 2020. As the swab test result that had come the previous day confirmed that he was COVID-19 Positive, immediate arrangements for his burial were made. His body which had been properly wrapped in disinfectant-packed cover was taken to St. Mary's cemetery. Mr. Regis, his surviving brother and a few family members were present during the funeral rites. With a short introduction by Fr. Xavier Antony and homages by Mr. Regis, Frs. S. Marianathan and Antony Arockiam, the funeral prayers were led by Fr. Paul Michael Raj and Fr. Joseph L. Pragasam was laid to rest in a specially prepared grave.

People in Marabá, Brazil, used to fondly call Fr. J.L. Pragasam *"Padre Jô"* and no sooner had they come to know of his death than they started pouring out their sentiments of prayerful condolences in the social media. As AMT is 9.30 hours behind IST, on 3 July itself, they organized a Eucharistic celebration in the parish church at 7.30 p.m. with the necessary social distancing measures. May God grant *Padre Jô* eternal rest!

*Antony Inico and George Raja*

**HAPPY FEAST OF ST IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA**