



GUJARAT JESUIT SAMACHAR

Premal Jyoti, PB 4002, Ahmedabad - 380 009



73/928 GJS MAY 2021

From The Provincial's Desk

Dear Brothers,
The Peace of Christ!

May is normally the month of holidays and fun, relaxation and renewal! Unfortunately, this year it will be different: a challenging one for all of us. The number of people (also those close to us) getting infected with the **COVID-19 pandemic** is drastically increasing with an alarming number of them losing their lives. In our Province alone, till date fifty-five have been infected, out of which sadly, five of them have gone to their eternal reward. Ordinary people have no access or very little access to medical care: whether it is a hospital bed or an oxygen cylinder or necessary medication! We are certainly facing very difficult times. With deep faith and hope in our Risen Lord, we need to continue to pray for each other, our communities, for our country and the world at large, that God of Hope, the Lord of Life, may enlighten us to find a new meaning, a new enthusiasm and a new way of life at this critical moment of human history.

Called to deal with the alarming pandemic situation, the Province under the aegis of the PDO, has already moved into action: making an assessment of the ground realities and designing activities with short term and long-term plans, to facilitate the process of reaching out in various ways, particularly to the poor and vulnerable victims who suffer helplessly.

The Holy Father has proclaimed the **Year of St. Joseph** from 8 December 2021. The Feast of **St. Joseph the Worker**, is celebrated on the very first day of this month. Work is sacred. St. Joseph is an inspiration for us to work with passion, persistence, dedication and determination. We need to develop a good work ethic and apply ourselves to it constantly. It is unfortunate that we fail to recognise the dignity of labour and also to promote it. Today's

context challenges us to reflect upon 'work from home', to find a different way of fulfilling the mission assigned to us, to discern a new way of following Christ. What steps have we undertaken in this line?

We begin the **Ignatian Year** on 20 May. On that day we commemorate the 500th anniversary of Ignatius getting wounded at Pamplona and the conversion that took place eventually in his life. The motto of the celebration is: "To see all things new in Christ". During this year-long celebration centred around Christ, with all the plans prepared and communicated and the guidelines given by the Ignatian Year Committee, we must endeavour ultimately to experience conversion at three levels: personal, communal and institutional. The committee had planned a Province level Inaugural Mass of the Ignatian Year on May 20. However, taking into consideration the present situation, you are requested to have a community or district community level Inaugural Mass on that day. I am sure that the committee will send you more materials/details, to make this experience truly personal and transformative. May we enter into this celebration with openness, sincerity and generosity that God may enter into our lives and help us experience a true transformation of heart, mind and soul.

Durai Fernand SJ

A.M.D.G



PROVINCIAL'S PROGRAMME

MAY

- 03 : PDT Meeting (Online)
04 - 05 : Finalizing Community Budgets
05 - 09 : Tempo Forte, XTI, Sevasi
31 : Address to the Scholastics

APPOINTMENTS

► PROVINCIAL has appointed

- **Fr. Agnelo Vaz:** Acting Parish Priest, Loyola Parish, Ahmedabad
- **Fr. Harry Martis:** Director, Pre-novitiate, Sughadpath-Hillnagar
- **Fr. Lucas Rayappan:** Acting Superior, Loyola Hall Community
- **Fr. Roland D'Souza:** Xavier Residence, Gandhinagar

PROVINCE HIGHLIGHTS

► Responding to COVID-19

Reports have been coming about the tragic and critical situation in the villages of South Gujarat. In order to understand the situation an on-line meeting was organised with the **Coordinators of JESAE, JEPASA, JEA, Frs Stany Pinto, and Kishore Camilus** the horror of the stories was confirmed. Some suggestions were given and on 30 April with a broader participation (34) a second online meeting was held.

At this point of time, we focus on an **immediate response**, during the month of May 2021. The Coordinators of the apostolic commissions in consultation with the District Coordinators have been **responsible for inviting** Jesuits, religious Sisters, and others. We believe that **acting together** in saving peoples' lives will make a difference. It is crucial that we **coordinate, contact and share** our efforts with other groups in the area.

The areas of intervention have been configured as follows:

(a) **Raising awareness** through the distribution of 'patrikas' making a clear appeal to follow appropriate action, giving the other (correct) side of the situation, and promoting vaccination. A letter has been prepared to be submitted to the Medical Officer at the taluka level by the elected representatives explaining the situation and the fears of the people. [Stany Pinto-RSSS].

(b) Starting an **information hub** where information is available 24 hours, and some material can be distributed to

those asking for it. This hub can also provide information regarding the availability of home-care facilities. [Isaac Rumao].

(c) Provision of **services and infrastructure**. Among the suggestions given: medical kits and support to Asha workers, starting a mobile ambulance, setting up a cadre of volunteers, and offering our premises to provide medical care. [Jimmy C. Dabhi]

Names in [] are the persons/institutions responsible to start implementation. Three WhatsApp groups have started functioning and, in a few days, an online review will be organized. The response has been very encouraging.

Those of you wanting to join and/or knowing persons wanting to join this effort in South Gujarat please contact pdogujaratjesuits@gmail.com and/or the following phone numbers: **9879127163/ 9824651845**.

On Monday 3 May, the first on-line meeting with North Gujarat and Sabarkantha District communities has been organised and we hope to be able to ascertain the situation and the needs. (Franco Fernando SJ)

► PCM cum Superiors Meet

A virtual meeting of members of the PCM & Superior's Forum was held on the 26 and 27 April. This online meeting was the first of this kind but it was a success given the fact that it was very interactive and highly participative thanks to the technical efforts of **Fr. Alpesh Macwan** and **Sch. Alam Parmar** who managed this virtual meeting from Premal Jyoti.

The members deliberated on a wide range of topics such as Restructuring commissions, Introducing sociology in SXC, Higher Education Institute in South Gujarat, Report on the effects of COVID-19, Report on the youth, Fr. General's Letter on Vocation, Internal fundraising and Collaboration with the religious congregations. Each topic was dealt with an enlightening PPT presentation by the resource persons followed by lively and meaningful group-wise deliberations. Fr. Durai Fernand, while thanking the



members of PCM and Superiors' Forum for their active presence and participation in the meeting, said, "I am exceedingly happy and satisfied with this virtual meeting. Although it is not a face-to-face meeting, yet it is a fruitful one." (James Savarimuthu SJ)

► Protecting Minority Rights

On 23 March 2021, the Gujarat Government issued 'The Gujarat Secondary and Higher Secondary Education (Amendment) Bill, 2021'. This bill in many ways denies us our minority rights. It has serious implications on our educational institutions, especially on our grant-in-aid schools in matters of appointment and management. In order to respond strategically and challenging this Bill in order to protect our minority rights, JEA took a call and organized an urgent virtual meeting under the guidance of Fr. Telesphoro Fernandes, the GEBCI secretary on The Implications of this (Amendment) Bill & our Future Strategic Action Plan. **Provincial Fr. Durai Fernand** and 34 principals and managers actively took participated in it. Fr. Teles highlighted some of the serious implications of 'The Amendments' in Section 40(A) of the Gujarat Secondary and Higher Secondary Act, 1972 on our Minority Rights. These included losing our own 'marking system' for the Selection of our Staff, following the conditions laid down by the Government for the Appointment of Staff in our schools, Appointing the senior most teacher as a principal, Forming the 'Selection Committee' as laid down by Section 35 like any other non-minority schools, Making TAT (Teacher's Aptitude Test) mandatory, Regulating the Recruitment & Conditions of Service including Conduct & Discipline of Staff by the Board are some of the serious implications infringing on our Minority Rights. Fr. Durai, emphatically asked the members to challenge this (Amendment) Bill. During the meeting the JEA body assured Fr. Teles its support in the strategic plans of action to challenge the Bill, even in the High Court. (Francis Macwan SJ)

► Novitiate News

On 28 March, three of our first-year companions were given the ministries of Acolytes and Readers at a Eucharistic Celebration presided over by Fr. Roland Coelho the Jesuit Provincial of Goa. The Paschal Triduum which followed renewed us spiritually and brought us closer to the Lord. After Easter we went to Goa for a holiday. It was a time of companionship and togetherness. We had the opportunity to visit all the Jesuit communities in Goa. On 7 April we were privileged to celebrate the 515th birthday of St. Francis Xavier near his mortal remains. The fathers

at XCHR also showed us important historical documents from the archives of Goa dating back to the 12th century. We also saw some icons of inculturation like the Indian way of portraying the Holy Family. Our Goa holidays were memorable and we are grateful to all who made it possible!! (Novices Anburaj Singarayar and William Santosh)



► Academic Year Completed

The Academic Year in Shraddha was completed on 9 April. Our planned 'farewell programme' had to be called off due to the current pandemic situation. Our final exams were held from 6 to 8 April. We had the Provincial Visitation on 9 April and in the presence of Fr. Provincial the final issue of 'Pahel' for this academic year, was released. We take this opportunity to thank one and all who were instrumental in guiding us, for their support and for making the year a fruitful one for us; these include **Fr. Ambrose Vedam**, the director, our current and former teachers **Fr. Nilesh Macwan** and the entire community of Premal Jyoti particularly Fr. Superior and Fr. Minister. (Sch. Alam Parmar)



► COVID Explosion

On his birthday (5 April) **Sch. Jayanti Bhadagi** tested positive for COVID 19 and was immediately isolated from the rest of the community. A couple of days later (7 April) four of us **Joyson Rayappan, George Victor, Felix Raj** and **Hitesh Parmar**) tested positive and we were kept isolated in GVD house, the building next to Sneh Jyoti for isolation. We also began some preventive and helpful exercises. The symptoms (including weakness, body pain, difficulty in breathing) were so severe that Schs. Jayanti, Joyson, Hitesh, George and **Frs. Vincent Pereira, Jitu D'Monte** and **Simon Thomas** had to be admitted to the Corona ward of Our Lady of Pilar hospital. We were diagnosed with viral pneumonia with COVID- 19. **Fr. Nagin Macwan** and **Schs. Jaya Prakash** and **Allwin Macwan** also tested positive but were home quarantined. **Sch. Ashish Pandor** after being discharged from hospital is recovering here in Sneh Jyoti. We all are back home now and trying to strengthen our immunity. It was a very difficult experience for all of us. Thanks to all our caregivers and to all others for their prayerful support. (Sch Hitesh Parmar)

► CCD Foundation Day

Centre for Culture and Development held its Fourth Foundation Day Lecture delivered online by Dr. Felix Padel of Sussex University on 17 April on the theme, 'Decolonising Tribal Research and Education in India' to an audience of sixty. The webinar link was hacked interrupting the proceedings. However, the event continued with a new link and later the book launch session was held. The two books by CCD were (i) Revisiting Suicide: from a Socio-psychological Lens, by Routledge London, and (ii) Anthropological explorations in East and South-east Asia by Primus Books, Delhi. The soft copy of the abovementioned lecture will be sent on demand for any Jesuit of the province or elsewhere. (Lancy Lobo SJ).

► Last Days and Farewell of Fr. Jesuraj

Fr. Jesuraj Arputham hails from Susaipatty near Anumantharayankottai, Dindigul. He went for a home visit from Gujarat and landed at Madurai Airport on 6 April. On the next day itself, Fr. Jesuraj began having diarrhea. One of his nieces, a nurse, gave him some tablets and he recovered quickly.

On April 9, Fr. Jesuraj went to see the Pascha at Panjampatty where one of his sisters stay. From April 10 to 12, he was at home. Other than taking regularly insulin for his diabetes, he seemed to have had no health issues on those days.

On the morning of 13 April, he felt some discomfort. He had diarrhea and some breathing trouble. That afternoon, he was admitted to St. Joseph's Hospital, Dindigul, After the initial treatment, he felt alright and he was given a room in the Priests' Quarters of the hospital. As he had a lot of phlegm in his chest, the doctors asked him to go for a CT scan of the chest. The scan revealed 5% infection and the doctors were quite confident of handling it. But the phlegm could not be controlled. On 15 April afternoon, Jesuraj had breathing trouble. That evening he was shifted to Vadamalayan Hospital in Dindigul. There, the doctors confirmed that he was COVID positive, quarantined him and started treatment. No one was allowed to visit him. He suffered continuous suffocation; on 16 April at 5.30 p.m., he breathed his last.

Fr. Jesuraj's family members contacted Gujarat and Madurai Provincials concerning the burial of the mortal remains of Fr. Jesuraj in the cemetery of Beschi Illam, Dindigul. The officials of Madurai Province and Beschi Illam immediately swung into action and made all the necessary arrangements. As it was a COVID-related death Fr. Jeyabaskaran of Maduralaya Provincialate community obtained the necessary permissions from the government health officials and coordinated the procurement of necessary supplies including PPEs for Beschi staff to be involved in burial procedures.

On 17 April morning **Fr. Harry Martis**, the sole member of Gujarat Province residing at Beschi, blessed the body of Fr. Jesuraj at Vadamalayan Hospital. Some of the bereaved family members of Fr. Jesuraj (mother, sisters and their children) had a quick glimpse of the mortal remains of Jesuraj before the body was completely sealed in the coffin. Fr. Michael Panimayaraj, the Socius to the Novice Master, dealt with the clearance procedures at the hospital. Beschi co-workers clad in PPE's and taking all the necessary precautions, accompanied the mortal remains in an ambulance from the hospital. Fr. M. Devadoss, Socius to Madurai Provincial, blessed the grave newly dug as per the specifications of the department of health and conducted the final commendation. Fr. Dennis Ponniah, the Provincial of Madurai, Fr. Maria Joseph, the Treasurer, Fr. Michael Doss, Superior of Beschi Illam were among the few who took part in the funeral ceremony. Fr. Thayriam took the photos and prepared the funeral video for the benefit of those who could not be present, particularly, Fr. Jesuraj's fellow Jesuits from Gujarat Province.

Some close family members of Fr. Jesuraj followed the last journey from a distance. At the end, they thanked the Jesuits of Madurai Province. Fr. Jesuraj's mortal remains are laid next to those of Br. Jeyaraj Annaviar who also died of COVID a few months ago in Beschi Illam.

At a short notice, all the arrangements for the final journey of Fr. Jesuraj were done at Beschi Illam! We could witness the spirit of the universal society at work among the Jesuits of Maduralaya and Beschi Illam communities. May the good Lord bless and keep them and may Fr. Jesuraj rest in peace! (S. Aruldoss SJ (MDU) and Harry Martis SJ)

We Gujarat Jesuits thank Fr Provincial, Socius of Madurai Province and Fr Superior and community of Beschi Illam for making all the arrangements for the final journey of Fr. Jesuraj. Besides this, the important documents of Fr. Jesuraj were obtained by Fr. Superior to be sent to Gujarat. We are grateful to Madurai Province.

R.I.P

- † Fr. Phillip Crotty, SJ (HAZ 89/71), died on 06 April 2021 at Lavendar Bay Jesuit Residence, Sydney.
- † **Fr. Varghese Paul Chollamadam, SJ** (GUJ), 77/56, died on 10 April 2021 in GMERS Hospital, Vadodara.
- † Fr. John Joseph Amaladoss, SJ (AND), 75/58, died on 14 April 2021 in St. Joseph's Hospital, Gun-tur.
- † **Fr. Jesuraj Arputham, SJ** (GUJ), 60/39, died on 16 April 2021 in Vadamalayan Hospital, Dindigul.
- † **Fr. Erwin Lazarado, SJ** (GUJ), 58/37, died on 17 April 2021 in New Life Para Medical Premium Hospital, Vadodara.
- † **Fr. Jerry Sequeira, SJ** (GUJ), 73/54, died on 18 April 2021 in Sola Civil Hospital, Ahmedabad.
- † Fr. Sylvester Kerketta, SJ (DUM), 62/42, died on 18 April 2021 in St Luke's Hospital, Dakaita.
- † Fr. Francis Guntipilly, SJ (KAR), 72/54, died on 18 April 2021 in St Philomena's Hospital, Bengaluru.
- † Fr. George Karamayil, SJ (PAT), 75/53, died on 21 April 2021 in Kurji Holy Family Hospital, Patna.
- † Fr. Praveen Hrudayaraj, SJ (KAR), 41/22, died on 22 April 2021 in Mazumdar Shaw Medical Center, Bengaluru.
- † Fr. Severius Ekka, SJ (RAN), 82/60, died on 22 April 2021 at Lievens Hospital & Research Centre Mandar.
- † Fr. Srinivasan T. Joseph, SJ (MDU), 89/69, died on 22 April 2021 at Beschi Illam, Dindigul.
- † Fr. Panoor C. Joseph, SJ (MDU), 85/66, died on 22 April 2021 at Beschi Illam, Dindigul.

- † Fr. Sushil Sah, SJ (PAT), 67/47, died on 24 April 2021 in Kurji Holy Family Hospital, Patna.
- † Fr. Sushil Kujur, SJ (DUM), 58/35, died on 24 April 2021 at St Luke's hospital, Dakaita.
- † Fr. Samuel Marandi, SJ (DUM), 56/32, died on 24 April 2021 at St Luke's hospital, Dakaita.
- † Br. Clestus Baxla, SJ (MAP), 53/30, died on 24 April 2021 in Constant Lievens Hospital, Mandar.
- † Br. Modestus Tirkey, SJ (RAN) 72/53, died on 25 April 2021 in Ranchi.
- † Fr. Mangal Kerketta (DAR), 46/23, died on 25 April 2021 in Gayaganga.
- † Fr. Peter Terrence Jones, SJ (HAZ), 90/66, died on 25 April 2021 at St Stanislaus College Sitagarha.
- † Fr. Royce Wenceslaus Macedo, SJ (AND), 89/71, died on 25 April 2021 at St. Patrick's High School, Secunderabad.
- † Fr. Thomas Thekkethala Joseph, SJ (HAZ), 74/56, died on 29 April 2021 at Samford Hospital, Ranchi.
- † Fr. Joy Karayampuram, SJ (PAT), 60/41, died on 29 April 2021 in Ruben Memorial Hospital, Patna.
- † Fr. John Tirkey, SJ (RAN) 59/35, died on 29 April 2021 at Deokamal Hospital, Ranchi.
- † Fr. Christopher Kerketta, SJ (HAZ), 68/45, died on 29 April 2021 in the Samford hospital Ranchi.
- † Fr. Gyan Prakash Minj, SJ (RAN), 46/25, died on 30 April 2021 in Manresa House, Ranchi.



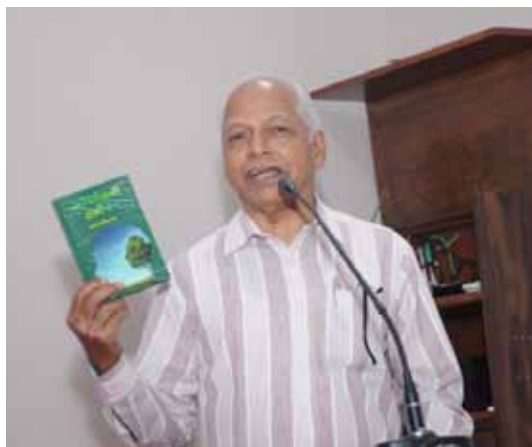


FR. VARGHESE PAUL CHOLLAMADAM SJ (31.05.1943 – 10.04.2021)

A Brief Biographical Sketch

Fr Varghese Paul was born to Paul and Annakutty Chollamadam on 31 May 1943. He was born at Enanloor in Anicadu Parish of Kothamangalam Diocese, Ernakulam District of Kerala. His devout parents brought up the children in an atmosphere for prayer and practices of devotions and instilled in them love for the church and missions. He was the second eldest of nine children. His parents offered five of their children to the Church as religious and priests.

Varghese attended the Infant Jesus High School at Vazhakulam about four kms away from home. From his school days he had a great interest in attending daily Eucharist. He would rise early and walk to the parish church to attend mass. He was a topper in the class. He was selected and it was decided that he would join the diocesan seminary after his class X results. But to everyone's utter surprise, he failed in Hindi for 2 marks. His dream to join the seminary was shattered. He later wrote the examination to clear the failed subject in September and passed with good marks. It was at that time that Fr. Miguel Urrutia SJ, Vocation promoter of the Gujarat Province came to Kerala to recruit candidates. He met Msgr. Mathew Vellankal, maternal uncle of Varghese, who was the hostel warden at the diocesan college. His uncle took Varghese to Fr. Urrutia who gladly accepted him.



A MAN OF LETTERS

Varghese entered the Jesuit novitiate in Sadhana Bhavan, Mount Abu, Rajasthan on 8 June 1964. After pronouncing the first vows on 8 June 1966, he went to Vinayalaya, Mumbai and completed his Juniorate studies in humanities during 1966-67 and returned to Mount Abu to complete his Juniorate studies in Gujarati during 1967-68. From 1968-72, he did B. A. in Gujarati literature at St Xavier's College, Ahmedabad passing with a first class.

It was during this time that the scholastics doing college studies in Ahmedabad were entrusted by the provincial with the task of editing the Gujarati Sacred Heart Messenger 'Doot' which up to then was being edited by illustrious missionaries such as Fr Suria SJ and Fr Basil Lala SJ. The scholastics formed the editorial team including Varghese. He served as its editor from 1969-73. Here he found his life time mission of being a missionary as a pioneer in communicating the good news as a journalist in the print media and as a writer and author of books, mainly in Gujarati. He was then sent to the London School of Journalism to do professional studies in Journalism from 1974-75.

Varghese did his Integrated philosophy studies at Pontifical Athenaeum, Pune from 1972-75. For his theological studies from 1975-77, he was sent to the Gregorian University, Rome, residing at Gesu, the international study house of the Jesuit scholastics. After completing theology studies, he was ordained

to the priesthood on 21 June 1977 at Gesu, by Cardinal Lourdsamy, Prefect of the Congregation for Evangelization of Peoples. From June to October 1977, Varghese attended an advanced journalism course, in Chicago, USA., and returned to India to take up his ministry in communication and was appointed to Premal Jyoti, Ahmedabad. Later, he completed his tertianship at Shembaganur, under Frs. Joe Aizpun and Joe Currie (1983-84) and pronounced his final profession on 31 June 1984 at Premal Jyoti, Ahmedabad.

Responsibilities Held in the Society

Varghese was the editor of Doot during various periods from 1969-73; 1978-80 and from 1984-94. As editor, he introduced several innovations and changes. He changed the size of the magazine to the regular full size as we have today with a fixed number of pages. He introduced new features such as cartoons, and jokes. He encouraged young writers to contribute and thus prepared a new generation of writers. He also increased greatly the subscription of the magazine and made it popular.

He was a pioneer who founded the South Asian Religious News (SAR News) based at New Delhi, and served as its first director from 1980-83. He was also involved in promoting Catholic journalism and communication and was the secretary of the JESCOM from 1986-1994. He was the president of the South Asian Catholic Press Association (SACPCA) from 1986-89. He was also the province coordinator of JESCOM from 1988-94.

Varghese was the founder of the Catholic Information Service Society (CISSS) which he built from scratch and was its director from 1984-2018. It was modelled on the Institute for Home Studies, De Nobili College, Pune. Fr Varghese prepared a series of booklets on the Bible and on Jesus. He would place advertisements in the prominent Gujarati newspapers inviting seekers who want to know about Jesus to write to the Centre. Genuine seekers who would write to the centre would receive a reply to their queries and also booklets to deepen their knowledge.

Wider Perspectives

Varghese was a pioneer on many fronts in Catholic Communication not only in Gujarat, but also in India and International fora. He was the Founder President of the Gujarati Catholic Press Association (GCPA), Founder President of the Gujarati Christian Press Council (GCPC) and Chairperson of the Gujarati Lekhak Mandal (Gujarati Writers' Association). Besides these, he was an Executive Body Member of Indian Catholic Press Association, Vice-President International Federation of Catholic News Agencies and International Catholic Union of the Press (UCIP).

Though he was engaged in communication ministry, he found time to promote the welfare of the Religious in the Ahmedabad Diocese. He was the driving force behind the animation of the Conference of Religious (CRI) Ahmedabad Unit. He would regularly organize for several years, meetings and seminars to update the religious in their mission and ministry.

Varghese was well motivated and disciplined so that he could find time to contribute regular newspaper columns in Gujarati dailies such as Charotar Times, Nadiad; Madhyantar, Anand; Sambhav, Ahmedabad; and Divyabhaskar, Ahmedabad. He would use these columns to write about the New Testament Characters, and reflection on some 40 difficult passages of the New Testament. He was able to publish in these prestigious newspapers because he was able to establish warm ties with the editors and journalists of these papers who appreciated his contributions.

Varghese began his mission and ministry with Catholic journalism but this led him to wider ecumenism and inter-religious dialogue. In the process, he became a prolific writer of books in Gujarati which were published by the leading secular publishers such as R. R. Sheth and Rannade publications. Since he had a wider readership, several of his books had several reprints which shows that he was able to reach out and touch the hearts of the readers.

If you take a count, he has written and published 47 books in Gujarati, four in English, three in Malayalam and one in Hindi. He has contributed more than a thousand articles in Gujarati and hundred plus in English.

He has received more than fourteen national and international awards including the Lifetime Achievement Award in 2017 from the National and International Compendium, New Delhi for his Outstanding Achievement in Chosen Field of Activity.





Fr Varghese has visited more than 34 countries in his capacity as a Christian communicator to attend international meetings and present papers and has interacted with leading men and women in the field of Christian communication.

Felicitating Fr Varghese on his Golden Jubilee in the Society of Jesus, on 8 June 2014, Fr. Nicholas Adolfo, S.J., the then General wrote: “You were able to bring a commendable sense of commitment, earnestness and interest to bear on the diverse forms of the ministry of writing. I am sure that the message you have communicate through your books will bear abundant fruit in transforming the hearts and lives of your readers. ..In addition to the decisive mark you have made as a Gujarati writer, your life authenticates an austere and ecologically sensitive way of being a Jesuit. This inspires and challenges others to avoid any form of use of natural resources greater than what is necessary.”

Conclusion

While Fr. Varghese had been ailing for some time with kidney and other complications and was undergoing treatment at a Vadodara hospital, he was also diagnosed with COVID and passed away on 10 April, 2021. He was buried in the Catholic cemetery on the same day following the Catholic rituals. It is very commendable and inspiring that he had willed that his organs such as his eyes be donated for the needy.

His death was mourned by Catholics and eminent writers and journalists alike in words such as, “He was a passionate journalist, prolific writer, human rights advocate and a pious catholic priest and a dedicated spiritual leader. His ever smiling face and soft spoken nature have made him a familiar face to anyone who met him even once.”

His contribution to the Gujarat Church and Literature



will be fondly remembered for long. We pray that the Almighty may accept his noble soul to his right to Rest in Peace.

- Fr. Joseph Valiamangalam SJ

FR. VARGHESE PAUL CHOLLAMADAM SJ

Given Fr Varghese Paul’s penchant for hard work be it as a Gujarati writer or as an Editor of Doot, there is a lurking danger of highlighting his achievements as a Journalist and writer and missing out on him as a person. It might be worth our while to get a glimpse of the person behind those journalistic accolades and achievements. Fr. Varghese was a member of Gurjarvani Community from 1993 to 2018. To a companion who knew Fr. Varghese a bit he came across as a man with a simple but deep Ignatian spirituality that was centered in Christ. Much of the reason for this spiritual trait is the family he came from. Fr. Alex Thannipara who knew his family, the Chollamadams, once confided to me that just being in the presence of his God fearing parents was like a contemplation in itself. “They just oozed with Gratitude to God for everything they received as a Grace, as a Blessing.” It is no wonder that in his family of nine children, five of them joined Religious life as Nuns and Priests.

However, this simple but deep Ignatian spirituality of Fr. Varghese led to three traits that defined him as a person. The first trait was his daily religious and spiritual practices despite his busy schedule. It was a ritualistic joke in the Gurjarvani Community that you could correct your



wristwatch at exactly 6.00 am when Fr. Varghese would leave for his ‘Rosary – cum - walk’ after his glass of lime juice. Another gem from the Gurjarvani tales was the Italian Missal in the Gurjarvani chapel since he said his private masses in Italian.

The second trait that resulted from his deep Ignatian spirituality was his single minded focus and dedication for the mission God and the Society entrusted him with. He was quite mono dimensional. He burnt the midnight oil to meet the deadlines as Editor of Doot, Director of Catholic Information Service (CISS), and as a writer. The result was that it made him a prolific writer in the Gujarati circles of literature. It is no mean achievement to come from Kerala into a new geographical arena called Gujarat, learn and master the local language Gujarati and then become a popular and prolific writer with 46 books to his name. They were a series of articles based on real life anecdotes with a deep moral or spiritual lesson behind them. The many articles he wrote in the Gujarati dailies also led to a lot of interactions in his correspondence courses. His famous byline was “Mano ke na mano, Prabhu Isu vishe jano” which means “Whether you believe or not, come to be acquainted with Jesus”. It also earned him the compliments of the flattering nickname as ‘The Second Fr Valles’, who was a famous Spanish Jesuit writer in Gujarati.

The third trait that resulted from his deep Ignatian spirituality was balancing his fidelity to his triple layered intense relationship with God, the Society of Jesus and his wider family of the people he interacted with be it the ‘Lekhak Mandal’ or ‘Writers’ Cell’, or his virtual readership of clients who read his books or his articles in the newspapers. He would often invite some of these Gujarati friends for a cup of tea with the Gurjarvani community.

At the end of the day, the image I carry of him is ‘a Saint in a hurry’ as he rushed past immaculately dressed to go to his office day after day. He left immediately after breakfast, came back for lunch, left at 2.00pm, returned at 8 pm for dinner. He religiously rushed to watch the 9.00 pm news on TV where he often slept out of sheer fatigue. In fact, when he was appointed Superior of Gurjarvani he was very often exhausted and finally requested the Provincial to release him from his duties after three years.

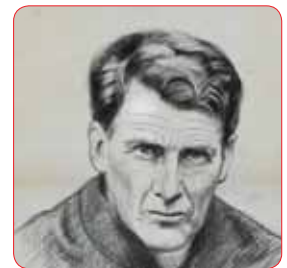
When he passed away on 10th April 2021, my parting words to him were, “Dear Varghese, in every family some members go to sleep earlier than the others. What matters is we will all wake up together when it’s Dawn.” Rest in peace my friend, rest.

- Fr. Devasia SJ and Fr. Jerry Fernandez SJ.

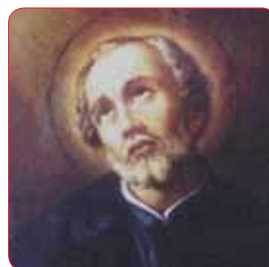
JESUIT SAINTS OF THE MONTH



▲ St Jose Rubio



▲ Bl John Sullivan



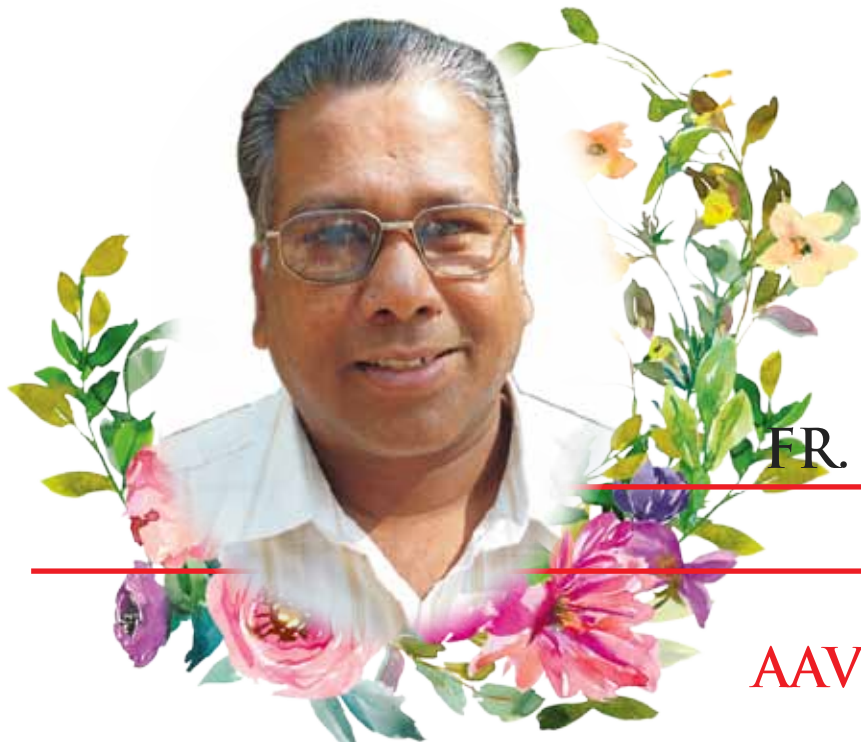
▲ St Andrew Bobola



▲ Our Lady of the Way



with a
Father's
heart...



FR. JESURAJ ARPUTHAM SJ

(06.12.1960 – 16.04.2021)

AAVJO JESURAJ, ISUNA RAJYAMAA!

That June 1978 scene is still fresh in my mind. Short of my eighteenth birthday, I'd arrived in Ahmedabad and was finding my way through a new, labyrinthine life at 'Sunshine' apartments, our pre-novitiate. A few days later, two others joined the gang, late Kulandairaj and Jesuraj.

I can't forget that yellow printed shirt and matching trousers, the well-oiled hair stylishly combed into a puff and the ear-to-ear smile. Introducing ourselves to each other he said, "I am Jesuraj." Finding the name unlike the ones I was then used to, I asked, "What does it mean?" He replied, "Jesus, King!" A friendship was born, which came to an end, at least temporarily on April 16, almost 43 years since that first encounter.

July 2021 will be 40 years, the Ruby Jubilee, of seven of us, companions, who joined the SJ in Ahmedabad: Agnelo Vaz (Jr.), Ishwan Gamit, Hemant Dias, Lancy D'Cruz, Jesuraj Arputham, AD Joseph and myself. We joked about being a biblical 'perfect seven' united-in-diversity - hailing from five states, speaking diverse languages, from Arts-Science-Commerce streams, capable of entertaining others by making our own music. And king among us all was Jesuraj: actor, dancer, tablaist, sportsman, joker and companion beyond compare.

Our G-7 planned to meet at important anniversaries. The last we met was at Glen View, Mount Abu, in 2006, the silver jubilee of Jesuit companionship. United, we shared about our lives, ministries, hopes, joys, failures and dreams. Thereafter, though we've met separately on many occasions, we never met as a group. Hence, I thought it but appropriate to write this memoir with inputs from my

companions who, like me, will miss our dear Jesu very, very much.

Says Lancy D'Cruz, "I enjoyed the best experiences of Jesu as a companion and friend during my formation in the early eighties. Coming directly to the novitiate—without the experience of the Sunshine-Shefali-SXC Bungalow pre-novitiate—was a 'cultural shock' in itself. My first 3-month stint in the Premal Jyoti novitiate '5-star dormitory' was with Jesu as roommate. He had an unassuming way of making me 'feel at home'. His simplicity, sensitivity and concern for details and for reaching out are qualities that I vividly remember almost 40 years later."

Highlighting Jesu's charisma, Lancy says: "He was blessed with an abundance of talents—sportsman, good actor and the tablaist at every event! However, no party would be complete without the 'Murgi Dance' (a la MGR) which Jesu would perform to perfection! The spring in his steps! The swirl of his attire! The chuckles of laughter.... His was to bring joy and he did it with a smile!"

Lancy laments, "Sadly, Jesu and I were not together after Juniorate and only on a couple of occasions (after ordination) we were lucky to meet and relive some of those early days. He always enquired about my work and ministry and was keen to know if all was well with me."

Like Lancy, Agnelo Vaz (Jr.) too joined the novitiate without pre-novitiate experience. "I remember Jesuraj," says Agy, "for his harmonization of two worlds: Tamil Nadu and Gujarat. His love for rice remained, and even in the silence of the Long Retreat at Glen View, we would push the bowl of rice towards his plate, at lunch and dinner, and he would smile."

In home-quarantine, Ishwan Gamit could share very briefly the following: “Jesuraj was a very good pastor. He loved his people, was very close to them and committed to his ministry. He stayed humble and simple all through his life.” The mission-stations where Jesu worked as assistant or parish-priest are many: Unai, Anand, Karamsad, Khambhat, Fulwadi, Pimpri, Kalol and Dhandhuka. In each of these, he gave of himself joyfully and generously.

Among Jesu’s companions who has been in Gurjarbhoomi’s pastoral field is Hemant Dias, who sent me a list of ten qualities that Jesu possessed, with a short explanation on each. Want of space constrains me to simply list these: “Jesuraj was: (i) a person for others and (ii) a very diligent person; (iii) He worked out options before choosing and (iv) was open to receive suggestions. (v) He believed that God could work miracles and sincerely felt that God would provide for people’s needs.”

With God and his flock as prime focus, Hemant says, “(vi) Jesu had a heart for the poor, sick and suffering; (vii) He trusted people fully, and, therefore; (viii) at times, seemed simplistic, believing that God would provide for everything; (ix) He was always open to new ideas and would listen carefully to increase his knowledge; and, finally, (x) he always sacrificed his personal interest, time or occupation in order to reach out to the others. For him, the welfare of others mattered.” Yes, Jesuraj was always the community-man, keen to make everyone happy.

Not many will know that Jesuraj was an excellent sprinter, representing St Xavier’s College in the Gujarat University. I often told him that there were traces of his ‘Murgi Dance’ in whatever he did: playing basketball or football, sprinting or acting. In fact, in a pre-novitiate play entitled ‘The Happy Jailbirds’ directed by Pat (Martin Patrao, of happy memory) Jesu stole the show.

My final recollection of Jesuraj is during our twenty-fifth anniversary get-together at Mt Abu. He told us how through his prayer, he became aware of God’s Spirit working in wondrous ways. He narrated how in a village in Khambhat, people were terrified since a cobra was nestled in the roof of someone’s house. Jesuraj recounted how, using some reiki techniques, he directed the cobra to come down and leave the village. The cobra obeyed! God’s Spirit works!

Lancy writes, “Jesu’s sudden and untimely loss came as a huge shock and leaves us with a big void!” Indeed, we all miss Jesuraj. Little did he know that his holiday at home would lead to eternal joy in His Abba’s Home. I’m

sure he’s playing the tabla up there! And, just as I recall his words forty-three years ago, “I’m Jesuraj, meaning, Jesus, King” I can see Christ The King welcoming him Home, saying, “Aavo, vahala Jesuraj, inherit the Rajya of the Raja whom you served so dutifully and beautifully!”

- Francis Gonsalves SJ





FR. ERWIN LAZRADO SJ (17.07.1962 – 17.04.2021)

AN INVINCIBLE WARRIOR

Seventeenth was a date destined by God for Erwin. God chose it to give him life in July of 1962 and chose it to call him back in the April of 2021. In between, a life just three months short of 59 years was lived with a spirit of a sportsman that he was and with a spirit of a warrior that he turned into in the last eight years of the bone myeloma ailment. Erwin Lazrado died earlier than one would have expected but definitely mightier as no one would have expected. He was determined to defeat the bone cancer and its agonies if the cruel Covid had not caught him off guard. Until then, he faced the battle valiantly with an indomitable spirit. We have many reasons to eulogize all that led to this incorrigible spirit in his life.

Missionary for the people

During our major holidays in Mount Abu our Novice master Fr. Joaquin, a veteran mountaineer himself ventured with us up the toughest Needle point of the Aravalli range. At a particular point you either made it or went down the abyss into oblivion. Erwin with a couple of us had cold feet and had to be lifted up by Fr. Master who then jokingly chanted the song “Bambai se aya mera dost”. Erwin did keep climbing tough hikes of missionary life leaving behind the city bred softness. The



Bandra boy who walked into the pre-novitiate in 1980 with jeans guitar kept growing into an ardent missionary. Among his family members who visited from across the world, he proudly stood out a “deshi gaonthi” uninterested in matching their elite taste or sophistication.

Erwin kept growing closer and closer to the people of Gujarat making a niche of his own in their hearts. Whether people of the Vadva village of Dediapada during the village experiment of Novitiate in 1984 or people of Charotar and Chashi paraganas of Central Gujarat during regency in 1987 or the Adivasis of Dadhwada and Zankhvav after ordination, Erwin made the people feel that he belonged to them and they in turn to him. He clearly defined his priesthood by closeness to the people. He chose to get ordained not in his native Mumbai but in what was close to his heart, Petlad in December 1996. Erwin clearly left his boats behind on the familiar shores and embraced what was initially alien to him. For this tough hike of inculturation and identification with people, we can surely pay a tribute to him in the same tone: “Dost ko salam karo” (How often we sang this picnic song by the Nakki Lake in Mount Abu accompanied with Erwin on guitar!)

This missionary spirit developed in him a style of ministry which emphasized lay collaboration and participation. Imbued from his Ashadeep days, Erwin developed a great respect for the laity and trust in their abilities. He won their hearts by considering them as equal mission partners, providing them the platform to perform. He did lead them but from the behind. Erwin believed in a life style of sharing and identifying with people, a tradition he cherished from his regency in Ashadeep.

Friend and mentor of the Youth

Already from the days of Sunday ministry to Gandhinagar during the novitiate, Erwin manifested the quality of befriending the local youth. The founding members of the Gandhinagar parish youth club will bear a testimony to this ability of identifying with the youth and their aspirations. In the juniorate he was involved in the AFO (Ahmedabad Find Outs), the group for vocation boys. These seeds flowered in the regency at Ashadeep in a passionate commitment to the youth of “Ankur”, YSM and AGSDM. These were the burgeoning youth groups of various ages and purposes that Ashadeep youth centre in the nineties buzzed with. His orientation to the ministry of youth bloomed into his active involvement in AICUF and later becoming the National coordinator of the Jesuit Youth Ministry in South Asia (JYMSA). His constant visits to the JYMSA units of various provinces across the conference made him a popular coordinator. Erwin led huge contingents of youth representative from South Asia to the World Youth Congresses in Australia and Spain.

Accompaniment was the key principle of Erwin’s youth ministry. He would be found constantly visiting the present and past youth of Ashadeep and the “Ankurias” (Ankur boys and girls) on a rickety Rajdoot and the old Yezdi. Summers after summers, Erwin would make himself available to the youth camps or English courses organized by Ashadeep. Whether sending youth representatives to national seminars or sending them to Taize Prayer movement in France and other international fora for youth, Erwin would ensure that young boys and girls got their wings to fly. Youth have soared to forum of the United Nations with the encouragement and exposure Erwin was instrumental to. Many youths will owe their current



successful careers to the contribution Fr. Erwin made in their lives as their mentor during these accompaniments. An online condolence meeting organized by these grateful friends of Fr. Erwin and attended by more than a hundred participants was a heartfelt tribute to this accompaniment they received.

Passionate social activist

Erwin acquired the taste for Social Action while in Ashadeep during his regency. Coming in touch with renowned lawyers, he humbly allowed himself to be groomed into the area of Social justice. He took a degree in Law as an external student and oriented himself to the Dalits and women of Central Gujarat who came for legal aid to Ashadeep. Erwin would take keen interest in involving himself actively in the incidents of atrocities on the Dalits. The Mahilamandals of Borsad region will ever remain indebted for the support Fr. Erwin provided to them. Erwin had no inhibition carrying with him the papads and pickles prepared by these Mahila mandals and marketing them wherever he went. His blood would boil while speaking of the oppressing elite castes of the central Gujarat. He was a regular and enthusiastic participant of the JESA (Jesuits in Social Action) forum.

Affable to all

Erwin was a simple personality to the core. His straightforward or sometimes upfront demeanor were only part and parcel of this simplicity. He could befriend people young and old, urban and rural, elite and poor all alike. Erwin knew no ethnicity. Beyond all social barriers, he made one and all feel part of his close circle. His circle of friends mostly included people from the constituency he worked for. Those whom he was called to serve and was called to work with formed his innermost social circle.

Indefatigable warrior

A man of music, sports, commerce and law who shouldered the responsibilities as social activist, youth director, pastor, Revisor Arcarum (Internal finance auditor); Erwin was a ‘man for all seasons’ (he played the role of Cromwell in the play during the Juniorate). Seasoned that he was, Erwin was appointed the parish priest of Zankhvav in 2012 where life took a turbulent turn. The journey from April 2013

when the myeloma was detected showed yet another aspect of himself hidden thus far. Undeterred by the pain, he would manifest this new spirit in these words: “I just keep something to look up to and that keeps me going.” He kept hiding from his sister Freida in the daily phone from Toronto that all was well and nothing worth complaining was happening. Erwin’s body was gradually crumbling but the spirit was incorrigible. No wonder, the warrior on a mission thought of taking some fresh breaths of what he most loved, the mission land. He perhaps wanted his last breaths to be those of a missionary and spent five days in Rajpipla. Invincible though he proved himself to the bone cancer, could not keep himself invisible to the Covid. Due to Covid protocol, we could not have his last parting memory. Thankfully, Erwin will continue in our memories as one who lives in Spirit! Live on, my friend and companion!!!

- Fr. Vinayak Jadav, SJ.

FR. ERWIN LAZARADO SJ

Dear Erwin,

I never expected to be writing your obituary. I do feel privileged to put down my thoughts about you and share with the province and others my experience with you.

You came to Ashadeep as a young junior in 1987 to do your studies in commerce. Your superiors wanted you to be formed well to work in the villages and among the simple people. They told me that Erwin was a ‘Bombay boy’ and had no experience of villages. He might not have much interest in Gujarati. So let him learn from Ashadeep. I was happy you were sent to Ashadeep. From the very start, I found you cooperative, open and ready to learn. During one of our first chats, I asked you if the Superiors had told you what they had told me about you; and you replied that nobody had said what I shared with you, you were very grateful. This was the beginning of a relationship that lasted a lifetime.

You easily involved yourself in the work and environment of Ashadeep. You were available to teach

and motivate the secretarial students; you immersed yourself in the legal section; ready to go to the villages to help in the awareness programmes and the organization of people. You tried to understand the socio-cultural reality of the then Kheda district and learnt about the Parganas. Every engagement of Ashadeep became a part of you that you even changed your line from commerce to legal work and you completed your LLB studies and got involved in the problems of the people. That was a real transformation Erwin from which both you and the people associated with Ashadeep profited greatly! You were appointed to Zankhvav after your ordination. Later in 2003 you were appointed to Ashadeep where you continued to work till 2011.

During those eight years you built up Ashadeep, strengthened the youth work particularly the AGSDM and ANKUR. Your enthusiasm and accompaniment of the youth was noticeable by the growth of AGSDM units all over Gujarat especially in the interior villages of Khambhat and Borsad. Ashadeep became a light of hope for people of Kheda and Anand. During this time, you brought up Ashadeep as a centre for the Dalit and Christian communities of Kheda. Your guidance and support helped many Ankur and AGSDM students to excel in their studies and their involvement in the marginalized communities like getting into creative politics, being elected as the international president of Pax Romana and being role models in various fields.

Your involvement in AICUF exposed you to the wider socio- cultural reality of the country; you too contributed much to AICUF as one of the National advisors, and this fact would be gladly testified by AICUF students and those associated with it. Along with many responsibilities of Ashadeep, you carried out the works of responsibility of Jesuit youth ministry as the Coordinator of for South Asia, organizing meetings and programmes at Assistency level.

After eight years of extraordinary service, you were required by the province in 2011 to give leadership in the Zankhvav community and to work there as the parish priest. As you were getting hold of the situation and providing effective leadership, you





realized the Lord has given you the Cross of the deadly cancer (multiple myeloma). You took it very courageously and carried it very graciously. You were brought back to Ashadeep in 2014 after Fr. Amalraj's untimely death. In spite of the deadly sickness and your difficulty to move around you worked as the Acting director of Ashadeep. You also worked as the Revisor of the province.

During these years after 2014 you had undergone several operations, chemotherapy and other painful treatment which never deterred you from your work. I remember when you suffered for a period acute pain every night after 10 pm and I sat with you till it subsided, even

with that pain we shared about the work and the people you were serving. Erwin, you reminded me of St. Ignatius lying on the bed when stuck by the bullet yet with courage thinking of what you could do for the people in future. You showed enthusiasm in spite of your difficulty in moving around. It was like you going through your passion and suffering, but you always had a joyful attitude borne with great courage. So certainly, deserve the eternal peace and joy you now experience as the part of your Resurrection.

Dear Erwin, you very much associated with Ashadeep (right from the first appointment till your death). It was never a long separation. Finally, the fall that caused you to be convalescing in Jeevan Darshan did not allow you to go to Rajpipla Social Service Society but led you to your final surrender into the hands of God.

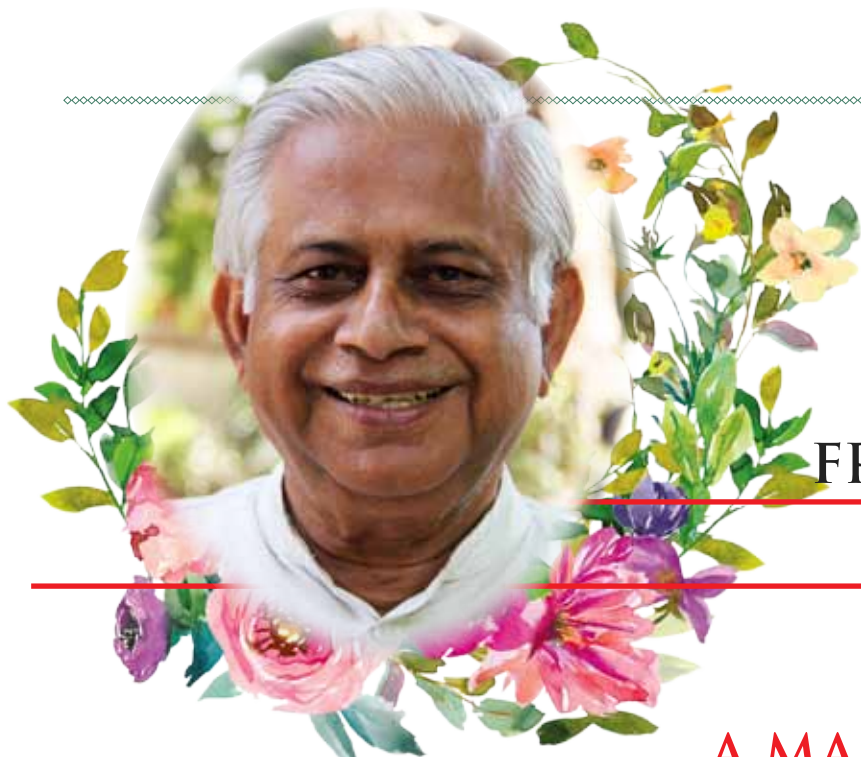
You certainly changed the opinion of your formators: you did not remain as a city boy but became a man for the village people, a friend of the marginalized and a full Gujarati. Please continue praying for Ashadeep, guiding those entrusted with the work and the people you have loved and served very closely, intimately and happily.

- Fr. Xavier Manjoran SJ



*a call to
conversion...*

The Ignatian Year opens on May 20th, the 500th anniversary of when Ignatius was injured by a cannonball in the Battle of Pamplona. The Year will conclude on July 31, 2022, the feast day of St Ignatius. The peak of the celebration will fall on March 12, 2022, the 400th anniversary of the canonization of St Ignatius and St Francis Xavier.



FR. JERRY SEQUEIRA, SJ (25.05.1947 to 18.04.2021)

A MAN FOR ALL SEASONS

Fr. Jerry Sequeira, SJ breathed his last, all alone, in Civil Hospital, Sola, the 5th Gujarat Jesuit, victim of the dreaded coronavirus pandemic, in less than a year.

Jerry, known to many as an educationist, was a versatile person. In 1965, at a tender age of 18, this eldest among three brothers and two sisters, hope of his parents, came to Gujarat, along with a number of his country-cousins to serve God and His people of Gujarat as Jesuits. The three who survived in the Society were all together since class 8. They spent a year in the Apostolic School at Loyola Hall and were enrolled in St. Xavier's College. Lack of knowledge of English and any other north Indian language was a big hurdle. In the aftermath of the Chinese aggression, NCC was made compulsory for all college-going youth. On the parade ground, poor Jerry didn't know how to respond to Mr. Saigal's commands, given in Hindi. Fortunately for him, he didn't understand the abuses hurled by the commander. But this experience instilled in the mind of little Jerry the need to study the language of the place.

A year later, in 1966 he marched off to Mt. Abu for his Novitiate training. The Novice Master, recognizing his leadership talent, made him the Beadle and recognizing his skills with fingers put him in-charge of book-binding. There he also proved to be a good teacher, training another Novice in that art. Little did he know that he would end up in

school education and after retirement in Gujarat Sahitya Prakash, not just mending books but publishing them.

Jerry was a highly sensitive and duty-conscious soul. One of his duties as the beadle was to ring the bell to wake the community up. One day he over-slept and was pulled up by the Novice-Master. That stayed with his sensitive mind the whole day and next morning, at an unearthly hour, he got up from his bed, quite asleep still, rang the gong and went back to bed!

Jerry may not have been adept at oral communication, but had an uncanny sense of direction. While climbing Pudding Hill on the Villa-day, he would invariably find the right path and anyone who opted to follow another leader through another path had to eat the humble pie, face a cliff and come back to the route proposed by Jerry. During major holidays in 1968, he led the whole group, walking through the jungle behind St. Mary's, all the way to Abu Road, using an old, unused, overgrown trail, relying on his uncanny sense of direction.

A concerned, sensitive soul, he had no hesitation to jump in the water at the Kodra Dam to save a fellow-novice struggling to keep afloat and in the bargain losing his pants!

Jerry could take life as it came, making the best of the situation. During his theological studies in Delhi, he and his room-mate failed to get up for the Christmas mid-night Eucharist, in spite

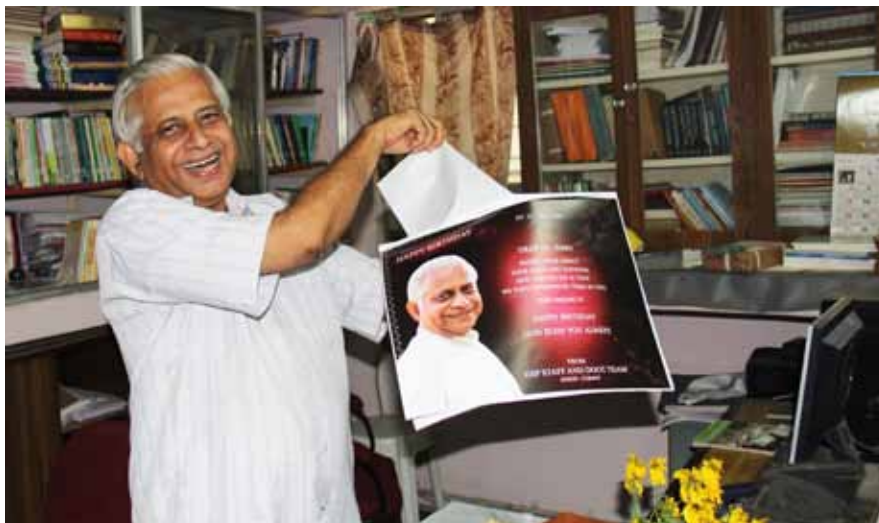


of two alarms blaring, only to wake up with the last hymn. He got up and joined the group for hot cocoa!

He was ordained on 29th January, 1979, ahead of his companions since his mother was ailing. Soon after his ordination and theological studies, recognizing his simple, unassuming, inspiring life, he was appointed in-charge of the Pre-Novitiate. As a scholastic he had got his B.A. in Psychology standing first in MS University, Vadodara (1973-75). During his studies in MS University, he and his companions lived simple life in a rented house. Now, when the pre-novices went off to college, he had ample time and he used it well, equipping himself with MA in Psychology, now through Gujarat University. He showed his mettle when he stood 1st in the University, with distinction (1979-81).

He was destined to be an educationist. In 1981 he was appointed teacher and Vice Principal at St. Xavier's, Gandhinagar. During his three years there, he saw that there was unused infrastructure available. He proposed his plan to get Catholic boys from central Gujarat to stay and study at Xavier's at the higher secondary level. It was a bold move for a young priest to take up such a challenge in a so called elite, city school. His plan was approved and he stayed with the boys, taking care of them. Of the 18 boys in three batches that he took care of, two, Frs. Ashok Vaghela and Francis Macwan became Jesuit priests, three became medical doctors, two engineers and one, a professor. Others too did well in life. He also kept up his own studies and got M.Ed. (1982-84) from MS University, Vadodara, once again, standing 1st in the university. He had done B.Ed. as a scholastic, through SP University, Vidyanagar (1976-77). He prepared himself for his educational ministry by studying in three different universities of Gujarat.

With good experience at Gandhinagar, under the watchful eye of a senior Jesuit-Priest-Educationist, he was well prepared and took up the reigns of St. Joseph's School, Vadodara as its Principal and served there for 6 years. Here he also got a firsthand experience of a large Parish, working with a charismatically endowed PP, little knowing that one day,



he too will be asked to take care of a city Parish. He spent 8 long years (1990-98) as Principal and Rector of St. Xavier's, Loyola Hall.

As Principal, he realized the need of collaboration (when the word and the idea had not caught the imagination of the Society) and so formed a Registered Trust of Parents and Teachers. This not only gave a sense of keen participation to important stakeholders in our great educational enterprise, but also harnessed their cooperation and support in facilitating contacts with the Governmental bodies in obtaining the requisite permissions for starting a Higher Secondary School.

One fine afternoon in 1998, he was told that Fr. General had appointed him the Provincial Superior to lead the Gujarat Jesuit Province. It was a big surprise for him and he kept on voicing it for quite some time. His simple, straightforward ways, talking freely of matters that some would consider confidential, amused some, endeared him to a few and irritated others.

As Provincial, he compiled a set of guidelines into a handy 'Bluebook', 'Our Way of Proceeding' based on his experiences of visitations. It became a frequently consulted tool as a reference point for Jesuits of the Province, both for their personal and communitarian life. It helped clear misunderstandings and helped to forge stronger bond for fostering union of minds and hearts in communities.

After completing his terms as Provincial, he didn't opt for any break but ploughed on, accepting to take care of Jeevan Darshan as administrator and superior (2004-5). Here was a man for any ministry, anywhere and so after a short stint of a year, off he went to Fulwadi as Superior and PP where he spent 5 years (2005-10). He had come to Gujarat to be a missionary and finally he was appointed to one such mission station. It was at this time that the

mission of Fulwadi was divided and Paraspada-Borpada was started with a resident priest there.

In 2010, he was back in Anand where he had done his Regency (1975-76), but now as Rector of the community and Director of GSP. As Director of GSP he played a crucial

role in the centenary celebrations of Doot. Another of his noteworthy achievements during his tenure as Director of GSP was to bring out a digital version of the Bible in Gujarati, a fruit of hard work of four long years. After 8 long years, he was back in Loyola Hall in 2018 as Superior and PP and breathed his last here.

Jerry had an uncanny sense of financial management. He used it in all his ministries for the Greater Glory of God.

Amid all these activities, he found time to spend with his companions. Since 2014 he coordinated the annual gathering of his Novitiate batch mates. He tried to get the group together to re-member companion, late Felix Gonsalves and Novice Master Joe Aizpun, but couldn't succeed. This year too he did plan but the Lord called him to be with them in His Kingdom.

Here was a good and faithful servant, ready for any ministry, anywhere, a Nathanael, without guile. The Lord must have had to have a lot of patience to let Jerry complete his version of how he landed in the other world! All said and done, we'll miss you, Jerry and keep recalling some of the anecdotes of your life! Rest In Peace! Do keep on interceding for us!

- Fr. Francis Parmar SJ

THANK YOU FOR BEING JERRY!!!

Fr Jerry died in the early hours of Sunday 18 April 2021. To us community members, his death was not only very sad, but came to us as a great shock- totally unexpected.

A little after he died the Socius whilst communicating the death of Jerry to the province via a WhatsApp message, attached a very rare photo of Jerry. In a way that photo is quintessential Jerry: the smile is enigmatic. It



simultaneously radiates and typifies the simplicity, warmth and openness which Jerry radiated all his life.

Jerry was a simple person: there was no doubt about that. He did not put on airs nor did he thrive on his positions, medals and other laurels of the past. He did refer often to what he did or achieved in this place and that, but when he did so, he used to say it in such a matter-of-fact way that one accepted it on face value or one was just amused! It was his naked simplicity that always won the day! One also noticed it in his lifestyle: simple to the point of austerity; happy with what he had: ordinary clothes and not too many possessions;

Jerry was a warm person: most of the photos that one sees of Jerry are those with a big warm smile: it came from his heart – it was not artificial! His warmth translated into a love for others; here in the Loyola Parish the parishioners found him available and accommodating even to a fault. Be it in Fulwadi and in recent years in Loyola, as a Pastor he truly cared for and smelled of the sheep he was entrusted with. In a very sensitive case of one of his Parishioners, he openly pledged his wholehearted support to someone, he was convinced was a victim of circumstances. His warmth endeared him to one and all; it helped him transcend the narrowness of ethnicity and any other division.

Jerry was an open person: he could be read like a book. When he began speaking, in most cases, one could easily fathom what the following sentences would be. He spoke as he felt; he did not bother to craft his words nor say anything which he did not mean. In that sense, he was throughout a very likeable person; his candour, openness and tolerance to the opinion of others also brought him many friends. His companions sometimes revelled when he shared tales of his past. That was Jerry!!

Jerry was a visionary: I cannot help smile when I write this because some of those who knew him better, might perhaps even laugh at this! But I am convinced of what



I write: both as local Superior and Provincial Superior, Jerry thought out-of-the-box and he encouraged others (particularly his fellow Jesuits) to think and do differently; to respond to the signs of the times; to take a stand on critical issues. He supported pioneering works in the Province, very different from the traditional run-of-the-mill ones! He provided leadership for lay collaboration, vocation promotion and even in the formation of scholastics for other ministries. Thankfully the 'Blue' and 'Green' books which he brought out towards the end of his tenure as Provincial, is a testimony for posterity, of his significant contribution to the Society of Jesus.

Jerry was intuitive: he had an uncanny intuition on situations and even people. When he was found to be COVID positive and in isolation he called and texted several of his old friends and even parishioners. - literally saying a 'goodbye'. On the day he was being taken to the hospital he texted his family saying "we will meet in heaven"; similar words were sent to another friend, "my lungs are damaged. Now I am unable to talk to you. If I am not able to come back, we will meet in Heaven!"

It is certainly not easy to accept that Jerry is no more. On Tuesday of Holy Week, I had a fairly long conversation with him in his office on several issues. I also mentioned to him that he was not looking too well and that he should take more care of himself. He gave me a standard reply, "don't worry! God will look after us!". Yes, he was a man of deep faith! Even when he tested COVID positive on Easter Monday and was kept in isolation – we in the community were hopeful, that with all the care and

attention he received from doctors and others, given his determination and positive attitude in life, he would soon come out of this. On Friday 16 April, he could be heard telling one of our collaborators who spoke to him from a distance, "I am perfectly okay, though my oxygen level is a bit low". When he was rushed to the Civil Hospital very early morning on Saturday 17 April, we hoped and prayed that would be just something passing!

It was not to be! A little after midnight 17/18 April there was the call from the Civil Hospital saying that Jerry was no more! We all sat stunned in sheer disbelief. But the Lord knows best.

*Dear Jerry, Loyola Hall feels empty without you; yet that smiling face of yours continues to look at each of us in the Chapel, in the refectory and the notice-board; it gives one the feeling that you are still around. It has been a difficult exercise to write this obituary: for the simple reason that there is so much to say about you but **"the thing is..."**! Fr Agnelo suggested the words **"A Good Happy Jesuit Priest!"** to be inscribed on the marble plaque which would be placed on the niche where your mortal remains would rest; the community however finally preferred a scriptural text. However, Agy's epitaph for you is the sum and substance of your whole life, you were certainly a good happy Jesuit priest! I miss you Jerry and so do many more! Thank you for your life on earth! For being simple, warm and open! Till we meet in the next! Thank you for being Jerry!*

- Fr Cedric Prakash SJ





POPE'S WORLDWIDE PRAYER NETWORK



The World of Finance

Let us pray that those in charge of finance will work with governments to regulate the financial sphere and protect citizens from its dangers.



St. Joseph

the carpenter of Nazareth, reminds us of the dignity and importance of labour, work is part of God's plan for the world;

by responsibly cultivating the goods of creation we grow in dignity as men and women made in God's image.

- Pope Francis

GREEN CORNER

GJEM'S ENVIRONMENT EXHIBITION

Gujarat Jesuit Ecology Mission (GJEM) has been designing and developing a 'Bio-reserve for environmental education' at Martinwadi, XTI, Sevasi. The bio reserve consists of a herbal garden, a kitchen garden, a butterfly garden and a permanent Environmental exhibition.

Bro. Martin's workshop has been transformed into a 'hands on learning' and exhibition centre on the environment. The exhibition consists of the following sections:

1. A visual presentation of GJEM's four networks
2. 26 themes on Environment through Warli paintings of Warli artists from Talasari
3. Artworks on Environment contributed by more than 17 Nationally known artists
4. Traditional Biodiversity: a display of 19 'varieties' of paddy from South Gujarat accompanied with relevant information
5. An interactive dashboard about trees, organic farming and solar energy
6. Display of working models on water harvesting

- some of the salient features of this exhibition:
- Optimum use of natural light and air ventilation
 - Adaptive reuse of the building for exhibitions
 - Walls and floor have been mud-plastered
 - Earth-friendly materials (terracotta pots and bamboos) are used for installation

The exhibition will be inaugurated (online) in May 2021. Individuals/groups can visit with prior appointments made through our website: gjemsj.org

(Fr. Lancelot D'Cruz SJ)

BIRTHDAYS & DEATH DAYS 2021

02 Fr Luis Dastis – 2015+	Patrick Arockiam	Ukken George
04 Joseph W. Parmar	Thomas Chamakala	Fr Erviti Ramiro – 1986+
Leslie D'Souza	Fr Vincent Gimenez – 1955+	Fr Juan José Morondo - 2020+
P. M. Gnanaraj	13 Fernando F. Franco	22 Peter Kozhikkadan
Fr Zavala Luis Maria – 2000+	Fr Ramon Grau – 1978+	Br Martin Macwan – 2009+
06 Coelho Paul	Fr More Joseph – 1992+	24 Arul Rayan
Kamlesh K. Raval	14 John Rose	Fr Osset Alfredo – 1986+
William Santosh	Lawrence Dharmaraj	26 Manuel Díaz Gárriz
Fr Raphael Chakkumpidy – 2018+	15 Jose Luis Arana	Br Jordana – 2004+
07 Snehal Parmar	17 Thomas Thannipara	30 Joyson Rayappan
Victor Davamani	18 Fr Pedro Pou-Montfort – 1958+	Sanjay Parmar
Vinayak Jadav	Br Benito Letosa – 1969+	Stanny Jebamalai
Fr Carlos Bastons – 1984+	Fr Narciso Mendiburu - 2012+	
Fr Iype Palaparambil – 1989+	20 Ashvinkumar Pandav	
08 Malcolm Rodrigues	Durai Fernand	

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