

2020/03  
72<sup>ND</sup> YEAR

**CENTENARY CELEBRATION**  
1921-2021

March 2020

# Ganga Lahar



**Patna Jesuits  
News letter**



## FR. PROVINCIAL'S MESSAGE



Dear Brothers,  
The Peace of Christ!

On 16 March, we begin the hundredth year of the arrival of the first five Jesuits – Frs. Edward Anderson, Patrick Troy, William Eline, Henry Millet and Thomas Kelly - in Patna, from the Missouri Province, USA. Earlier, in 1919, the Holy Father had already assigned Patna Mission to the Missouri Province Jesuits.

Although, collectively, as a Province, we will be inaugurating this Centenary Year during the Province Days in May (28-30), a deep sense of gratitude to God, for this singular grace, can already begin to pervade all our prayers, masses, activities and relationships. God has truly done great things for us; and like Mary, we too, can proclaim our Magnificat (Luke 1:46-55) of Thanksgiving. Besides a forty-fold increase in our numbers from 5 to 200, there has also resulted an increase and diversity of ministries in the vineyard of the Lord.

In the first 50 years, from 1921 to 1971, more than 150 American Jesuits from Missouri, Detroit and Chicago Provinces were missioned to Patna. We are grateful to God for the presence of the last of these missionaries still among us in this Centenary year – Fr. Theodore Bowling, at 96 years. Several Indian Jesuits from Patna Province have also journeyed to the USA, particularly to the mid-west, to continue this relationship and deepen it.

As we begin this Centenary Year, I recommend that in keeping with the spirit of the Lenten season, we enter into an **Examen** of our individual lives as Jesuits, our community lives as “friends in the Lord” and our apostolic lives “as men sent on mission”. The instrument of the Spiritual Exercises, the mode of Spiritual Conversation and the Universal Apostolic Preferences (UAPs) are beacons for us to reflect on our personal, communitarian and apostolic lives, respectively. An audit of the history of our institutions and apostolic works, in association with our collaborators, would put into perspective, God’s journey with us during these years.

Furthermore, I encourage Jesuits of Patna Province to connect with Jesuits in Delhi Province and Nepal Region in their Novitiate/Ordination groups to pray, reflect, share and celebrate together. These informal gatherings can be organized in Patna, Delhi or Nepal, in consultation with the Major Superiors, during this Centenary Year. Some novitiate groups have already initiated this process.

I join you in praying that this Centenary Year will be for us a time of personal renewal, deeper friendships and bonding among us, and a sign of greater vitality in the apostolate for mission.

United in Jesus Christ

*Donald Miranda*

Donald Miranda, SJ  
Provincial

## OFFICIAL.....

### Fr. General has appointed

Fr. Miguel Nuno Maria de Siqueira de Almeida – Provincial, Portugal (POR)

Fr. Marc Desmet- Provincial, Region of the European Low Counties (ELC)

Fr. Michael Zammit Mangion – Provincial, Near East and Maghreb (PRO)

Fr. Mieczyslaw Smyda - Provincial, Brazil (BRA)

Father General has called **Frs. Christu Savariraj, Rajan Lakra, Anand Kerketta** and **Dominic Kurichathuputhenpura** for the final incorporation into the Society of Jesus.



### Fr. Provincial has appointed

Joseph Ullattil – Xavier Bhavan

Mathew Manoj – Sanjivan Niwas, Asst. Land/Building



Fr. Provincial has appointed **Frs. Prakash Louis (L)** and **Johnson Kelakath** to evaluate our mission at Xavier Nilaya, Bangalore and KRCH, Bettiah

## Provincial's Programme

### March 2020

- 02 – Province Office
- 03 – Jubilee St. Thomas, Ratanpurwa
- 04 – 07 – Budget Meetings
- 11 – Danapur Visitation
- 14 – KHFH Ex. Board Meet
- 16 – 18 – Gyanoday, Juniorate Visitation
- 19 – Asha Deep, Inauguration
- 23 – 24 – Prov. Consult
- 25 – 28 – Chennai Visitation

### April 2020

- 01 – 04 – Apost. Plan. Atmadarshan
- 05 – Palm Sunday (Holy Week)
- 10 – 12 – Easter Triduum
- 20 – Preview Prov. Days Planning

## CONGRATULATIONS

To **Rajesh Somepalli** on his Diaconate Ordination on Saturday, 22 February 2020, at 3.00 p.m. The Diaconate was conferred by His Grace Anil J.T. Couto, D.D., Archbishop of Delhi, in the auditorium of St. Xavier's School, Delhi.



## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

**PROVINCE DAYS 2020:** Fr. Provincial has called for the **Province Days on 28, 29 and 30 May 2020 at XTTL, Patna**, inaugurating the Centenary of the Patna Jesuit Mission. The theme of the Province Days will be “Apostolic Planning and Re-orientation for Mission”.

A Province level Meeting with representatives from different ministries/institutions is scheduled from **01 to 04 April 2020** at Atmadarshan for the Province Apostolic Planning.

**Fr. Anand Kerketta** will pronounce his final vows in the Society of Jesus at Prabhat, Sakri, on 22 April 2020

## LOCAL REPORTS

**Gyanoday, Juniorate:** The month of February kept us busy with many activities. On 02 February, we, the juniors and **Fr. Joseph Antonymsamy**, went on a pilgrimage to Mokama. We helped out in the parish ministry. The whole day and night the juniors were busy with the spiritual activity of blessing people. It was a faith inspiring and moving experience for all of us to see the Christians and devotees from other religions participating in the Shrine Feast. **Fr. Peter Ignatius** took a course on Introduction to Pauline Letters from 03 to 08 February. We are grateful to Fr. Peter for sharing his knowledge with us. We staged our One Act Plays both in Hindi and English on 23 February in St. Michael's school Hall. On the next day, we had evaluation of the plays and of our team work. On 25 February, we left for a study tour. We visited historical monuments at Gaya, Rajgir and Nalanda and learned about Buddhism. Thanks to **Fr Lawrence** for sharing his knowledge with us. We were joyful to welcome Fr. E.P. Mathew, Kerala Provincial, and Fr Soosai Mani, the PCF of Delhi. We are waiting for our Research Methodology in the coming week.



- Arockia Nelson

**Jeevan Sangham, Bodhgaya:** In February 2020, the Jeevan Sangham Jesuit Dialogue team trained 600 students in MDP (Mind Development Program) so that the students could develop their Mental Concentration and Character formation. It was a touching and consoling experience for **Fr. Eucharist Lawrence** when he conducted Meditation for 110 youth inside Observation Home, Gaya (which used to be called Juvenile Remand Home earlier). We are happy that we will continue to train these troubled youth so that they can transform themselves in





order to make their future bright and honorable to make the statement true that EVERY SAINT HAD A PAST AND EVERY SINNER WILL HAVE A FUTURE. On 24 February, A PEACE EDUCATION WORKSHOP was conducted by Jesuit Dialogue team for 15 Professors and 120 students of the Department of Education, Magadh University, Bodhgaya. It is commendable that the entire faculty and the students of the Department of Education, Magadh University, were very co-operative and appreciative of the relevant and meaningful Workshop for our times.

- Lawrence Eucharist

**K. R. Campus, Bettiah:** The month of February was a busy one for the Schools as they had board exams of class X and XII and the Annual Examination of the schools. After the exams of Class XII, **Fr. Christopher Kerketta** made a short home visit as his brother was seriously ill. On 21 February, **Fr. Joe Maripuram** and **Br. Tom Mannaramattathil** went to Atmadarshan, Patna, to make their North Zone Retreat based on Universal Apostolic Preferences. **Fr. Albert Abraham** was out for a month to write his exam. The staff and students of St. Xavier's Higher Secondary School were moved to tears as the school family bade farewell to **Fr. George Nedumattam**. We expressed our deep appreciation for his dedicated service as principal and wished him God's blessings in his new mission. We were glad to have Fr. George Peter (DEL) with us on 29 February. Ashish Paul

**Kurji Parish:** The month of January brought blessings of hope, newness and new energy. The arrival of **Fr. Prashant Michael Pius** as new Parish Priest brought warmth in the community and in the parish, in the midst of the chilly weather. On 12 January, the members of the Parish Council welcomed **Fr. Prashant Pius** Michael and bade farewell to **Fr. Susai Raj**. On the same day, the Parish Council in its meeting discussed the preparations for the pilgrimage to Mokama Shrine. The Republic Day was celebrated on 26 January along with the parishioners and the students of Hartmann School. **Fr. Prashant Pius Michael**, as the chief guest, hoisted the National Flag and addressed those present. The speeches and dances of the Hartmann School children, centred on democracy, left us spellbound and awakened in us the true spirit of patriotism. On 27 January, all the pilgrims intending to walk to Mokama were called for a meeting and were given spiritual instructions by Frs. Pius and Junas. With meticulous preparation and hearts filled with devotion, on 31 January, nearly 103 parishioners started their pilgrimage to the Mokama Shrine on foot. Fr. Pius walked with the pilgrims till Fathuwa and offered Eucharist for them.



The month of February brought us the blessings of Our Lady of Mokama. On 02 February a large number of faithful from Kurji Parish participated in the feast day celebration of Our Lady of Mokama. The catechism Children who made creative and meaningful Christmas cribs were honored with prizes and certificates by the SSVS Society Team on 16 February. **Fr. Junas** went to Atmadarshan to make the retreat based on UAP. On 23 February, a meeting was held for all the members of Kurji Parish by the All India Catholic Union to discuss CAA, NRC and NPR. On the same day, the parish choir went to Rajgir for a picnic. The Kurji church witnessed a sea of people gathered on Ash Wednesday in preparation for the season of Lent. The help rendered by the Jesuit communities in the neighbourhood on Ash Wednesday is much appreciated. The demolition of the out houses for the construction of the new presbytery is in process.

- Nicholas

**Loyola Sadan- Novitiate, Lucknow:** We, the Loyola Sadan family, joyfully began the month with the celebration of the feast of the Presentation of our Lord. In the evening, we had a solemn procession with the recitation of the rosary for special intentions, conducted by the novices. We also celebrated other feasts such as

those of Saints Blase, John de Britto, Paul Miki and Gonsalo Garcia. All these feasts helped us in our spiritual growth. Two fathers from Karnataka Province and Sr. Gaetana, UMI, visited us and inspired us by sharing their God experiences with us. Our spiritual and academic lives are progressing well under the guidance of the fathers here. We enjoy our classes on the Constitutions and on Scripture and languages. We are very eager to equip ourselves through the special yoga classes conducted by Fr. Christopher. On 09 February, we had the chance of visiting the Defense Expo Program through which we got to know the value and strength of our Defense forces. On 24 February, we enjoyed a day of relaxation which helped us to grow in companionship and creativity. On 14 February, **Fr. George Ayyankanal** returned from his home visit after meeting his doctor. Now he has recuperated well from the fracture of his ankle. On 17 February, **Fr. Vimal Kishore**, Novice Master, went to Atmadarshan, Patna, to guide the North Zone Retreat along with **Fr. Prakash Louis** from Banaras. On the same day, one of the novices from MP, who had decided to leave us to serve the Lord through another way of life, left for home. We had a special Benediction for his wellbeing and for his bright future. We commenced our Lenten observance with a fruitful recollection guided by Fr. Christopher who invited us to lead a better and more virtuous life.

– Felix Richard

**Prabhat, Sakri:** During the first week of February SECs (Supplementary Education Centers) and CRC (Child Resource Centers) were opened under MANOS project. A month long residential programme for girls was held from 02 February. **Fr. Anand Kerketta and Sch. Ravi Bhushan** took the residential girls on a two-day educational tour of Patna. It was the first time these children got an opportunity to leave their home town and see the outside world. They thoroughly enjoyed the tour. An awareness programme on Right to Food was organized at the panchayat level. In different villages, 'Suposhan Mela' was conducted by our staff who highlighted the need of consuming nutritious food; they also gave some tips on health and hygiene. A day of training was given to kishori group on menstrual health management. Capacity building programme for the selected members of Dina-Bhadri team was conducted on 18 February.



- Ravibhushan Kumar

**Sanjivan Niwas, Patna:** There have been a number of joyful and grace-filled moments in the month of February. We, the B.Ed. students **Punit, Savariappan** and **Amul**, joyfully extended our help to the Aurangabad community in taking interviews for the selection of students for class one. It was learning and enriching moment for us to know the selection process of students. We were also glad to meet our Jesuit brethren and visit the mission station. We celebrated the 30th Annual Sports Day of St. Xavier's College of Education. The chief guest of the event was Md. Tanvir Ahmed, the senior DSP of Sonapur, who is an alumnus of our college. We scholastics received a few awards for winning different games. We enjoyed the team-spirit and learnt the techniques of conducting sports in future as teachers. **Fr. Andrew** went home for the funeral of his younger sister. **Fr. George**





**Karamayil** went to Latonah with his team to preach a retreat to the parishioners. **Br. Marcus** went to Atmadarshan to make his retreat. **Fr. Sushil Bilung** accompanied the staff of Prabhat Prakashan on their annual picnic to Rajgir on 21 February. We were also happy to help our Juniors with the make-up for their annual one act plays. Their performance was very enthralling and entertaining.

-Amul

**Sasaram:** The month of February was a very hectic one. On 08 February, **Sch. Arockiasamy** went to Aurangabad to interview the children for admission to the school. It was a wonderful experience to come to know the proper selection process of students for our schools. On 15 February **Fr. Isidore Kerketta** and **Fr. Richard D'Souza** attended the meeting of the Principals in St. Xavier's school. On 16 February, we conducted the entrance test for the new admissions. Students came in large numbers and took the admission test. On 20 February, **Fr. Benny Moolan** left for Patna to attend the pastoral commission meeting. He also participated in the zonal retreat at Atmadarshan. On 26 February, we started our final exams. The students are preparing for the exam in the main papers, which is scheduled to begin on 04 March. On 29 February, we bade **Fr. Richard D' Souza** farewell as he is leaving the school to take up his new assignment. He addressed the students and invited them to imbibe good virtues which will help them to build a humane world.

- Arockiasamy

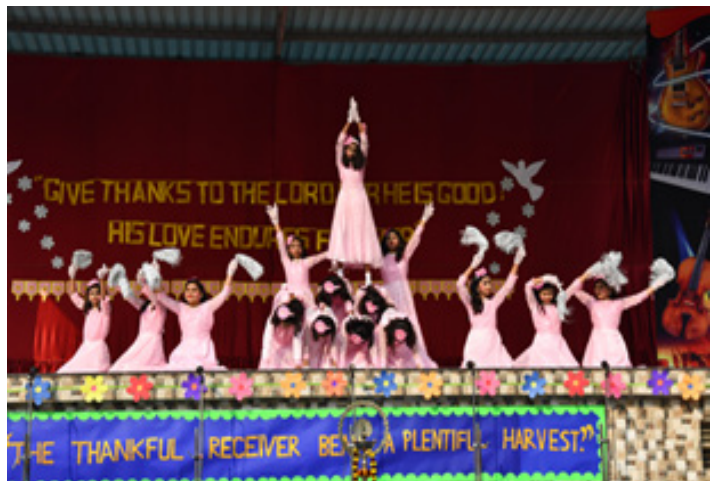
**St. Michael's, Patna:** We welcomed the New Year 2020 with new hopes and dreams and hopes for our mission at St. Michael's with the perspective of UAPs and PAPs. The school reopened for the regular classes much later and, due to the severe cold, the district administration ordered us to close the school for Classes I to VIII. However, we held classes for the students of Classes IX, X and XI. The XIIth class students had their pre-board exams. **Frs. Seraphim, Thomas Perumalil** and **Armstrong** went to St. Joseph's College, Tiruchirappalli, to attend the National Congress Meeting of the Jesuit Alumni Association of India (JAAI) from 17 to 19 January. About 250 students and 50 Teachers of our school participated in the Human Chain (Manav Shrinkala), a state level awareness programme to save Jal, Jivan and Hariali (Water, Life and Environment). We had the Graduation Ceremony for the students of Class XII on 25 January and Mr. Sanjay Srivastava was the chief guest for the occasion. He was our student, teacher and now a parent. We had a colourful cultural programme on Republic Day. Mr. Manish Kumar, IAS, who is also one of our parents, was the Chief Guest on the occasion. St. Michael's Alumni Association had their Annual General Body Meeting on 09 February 2020 in which they celebrated the FESTIVAL OF FRIENDSHIP. **Fr. Mathew Chemplany** joined St. Michael's Jesuit community on 15 February 2020. He is appointed as counselor in St. Xavier's College of Education. The 30th Annual Sports Festival of St. Xavier's College of Education took place on 16 February 2020. Mr. Muhammad Tanvir Ahmad, Deputy SSP of Sonpur, was the chief guest. On 21 February, a celebration of Thanksgiving Ceremony was organized by the school for Mrs. Roselyn Jerry for her 33 years of dedicated service to the school as a teacher. She retired from the school on 01 March 2020. The teachers and office staff went on a picnic to 'Ghora Katora', Rajgir, and



relaxed themselves before the Annual Examinations. It was a moment to cherish the joy of being together as a family. The staff and the management felicitated Mrs. Roselyn Jerry on 29 February 2020 and a fellowship meal was arranged in her honour. St. Michael's High School is ranked first by the Times Group among the top 20 schools in Patna. We are now having the school annual examinations and the CBSE Board Examinations. Many of the community members have started shifting to the new Jesuit Residence, which will be soon blessed and inaugurated. **Fr. Ignatius Topno** has been sanctioned a project by Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) titled "Digital Awareness Self Esteem and Soft Skills of Secondary School Tharu Students of West Champaran." This project is for two years.

-Francis Chinnappan

**St. Xavier's, Patna:** The Months of January and February were packed with a lot of activities. We bade farewell to the students of Class X and XII on 25 January with a colourful and meaningful cultural programme. The students of Class X, present with their parents, were also given the Report Cards on the same day after the cultural programme. Republic Day was celebrated on 26 January in the campus. **Fr. Devashish** hoisted the flag and gave a short inspiring speech. The students of class VII felt energized and happy after going to Pandu Pokhar, Rajgir, for their outing for the first time on 11 January. 'Thanks Giving Day', a unique event, was organized on 08 February. Mr Anand Kumar, the Founder of 'Super 30', was the Chief Guest for this event. Awards were given away to the students from Primary and High School for their academic excellence. Mr Anand inspired our students through his motivating speech. The main attraction of the event was 'the Musical Gratitude' which focused on thanking everyone for making the whole academic year a successful one.



It was a refreshing and relaxing day for all the Teachers and Staff as they went on a picnic to Pandu Pokhar and Ghora Katora, Rajgir, on 22 February. **Fr Vinoy** went home on 06 February to spend some time with his ailing parents. He also made his Annual Retreat in Kerala. Br Tony Dias was taken to KHFH for blood transfusion. These days, our students are busy writing their Annual Examination.

- Fr. Devashish Prasad

**St. Xavier's Colleges, XTTI Campus:** On 04 February 29 students under the guidance of Mr. Ajay Kumar and Ms. Bela attended Heartfulness Retreat in Hyderabad. On 08 February, one day National Seminar on the theme "Human Development: Contemporary Issues and Challenges" was conducted. Dr. Mihir Bholey, senior faculty member, NID, Ahmadabad gave the key note address and Dr. Vivekanand Pandey, Pro Vice Chancellor, Amity University, Patna, chaired the conference. 80 research papers were presented in the seminar. On 9 February, 200 students took part in walkathon organized by GAIL India Ltd. in Gandhi Maidan. On 11 February, smile competition was conducted to encourage positivity in the life of students. Drs. Emmanuel and Priti from Akshat Dental gave certificates to the winners. On 18 February, poetry competition was conducted. Mr. Abhishek Shankar, Co-Founder of Thoughts 'n' Ink addressed the students. 02 March, College Annual Day was celebrated with great excitement. Dr. Chan-





chal Kumar, IAS, Principal Secretary to the Hon'ble chief Minister, Govt. of Bihar, was the chief guest. Dr. Dharendra Kumar, General Manager, NABARD, Bihar, was the Guest of Honour and Sr. Mary Jessy, SND, Principal of Notre Dame Academy, Patna, was the special Guest. Drama, group singing, Mime and grand finale were focused on the annual theme, "Gandhiji's India: Together Towards the Well-being of One All". The cultural event was well appreciated by the invited guests.

- Sebastian Alphonse

**Vidya Niwas, Varanasi:** Anil Almeida of Karnataka Province, a member of Vidya Jyoti, Delhi, staff, who is doing his doctoral studies in Boson University on Ramcharitmanas and Bulke, is with us for 4 months. **Fr. Raymond** was busy giving retreats to SRA sisters at Francispur, Baliya, and Missionaries of Charity sisters at Lucknow. **Fr. Prakash Louis** was one of the resource persons for the Youth Animation Program organized by the Youth Commission of the province at Atmadarshan. He was the Chief Guest at the Republic Day program at St. Mary's Hospital in Varanasi, while **Fr. Raymond** was at St. Francis School, Ramnagar. Being commissioned by the Provincial to do an evaluation of the KR Candidate House and Xavier Nilaya, **Johnson Kelakath** and **Prakash Louis** visited KR in the first week of February and met the various stakeholders, prepared a report and submitted it for the province's consideration and action. Being commissioned by the Provincial, **Frs. Vimal Kishore** and **Prakash Louis** directed a retreat for 29 North Zone Jesuits at Atmadarshan from 21 to 29 February, 2020. The theme of the retreat was, "Seeking God's Will in and through the Spiritual Exercises, Poor, Youth and Creation: Ignatian Retreat through the Horizon of the Universal Apostolic Preferences".

- Prakash Louis

## DIASPORA

**Kandy, Sri Lanka:** After a month long Experiment all the Tertians came back on 04 January 2020, to Arrupe House, Kandy, with rich experiences. Most of us were in Mercy Homes, helping and serving the aged and the sick. We had class presentations on the History of the Society. The study of the History of the Society instilled in us a proud feeling of being Jesuits. Almost after a month and a half long study of the Constitutions of the Society of Jesus, we imbibed the spirit of the Society and also came to know the heart and mind of St. Ignatius. The Provincial of Sri Lanka, Fr. Dexter, visited us on 14 February and had



fruitful interaction with us. It was really a moment of grace for us. Tertianship Program at Kandy, Sri Lanka, came to an end with a very meaningful Triduum. Thanks to our two Tertian Instructors Fr. Baylon and **Fr. Thomas Antonysamy** for their loving accompaniment. The Tertians expressed their gratitude to Br. Lalith, the minister of the Arrupe House, who took care of all the needs of the Tertians with great affection. The Arrupe House, Kandy, is very grateful to **Fr. Thomas Antonysamy** for his dedicated and selfless service. He was like an elder brother to the Tertians. He rendered two years of his service in Arrupe House, Kandy, as Co-Tertian Instructor and seven years in Goa as Tertian Instructor. He is going back to his Province to take up a new assignment. The Arrupe House community wished him all the best for his new mission. After having gone through various experiences for six months the Tertians have graduated in the School of the Heart.

- Michael Ekka

**Vidyajyoti, Delhi:** There were a lot of ups and downs in our thoughts, feelings and emotions through various activities and incidents. Ad Auds exams kept the third years on their toes. They kept themselves totally busy with the preparation and appearing for the exams. Many of them said that it was a time of grace because they



learnt many things about the Church and her laws through several case studies. An Endowment Lecture was organized in honour of Profs. S. Arockiasamy, SJ, and Samuel Rayan, SJ, on 17 February, where Fr. Dr. Michael Amaladoss, SJ, was the chief speaker. He dwelt on 'Seeking God Experience: the Goal of Theology' as the theme of the Endowment Lecture. He challenged us to experience God amid poor people by coming out of the four walls of our religious houses and celebrating the Eucharist in slums. There was a two day national seminar on 17 and 18 February on the theme, 'Concerns and Perspectives of New Evangelization'. Regional Theology Centers of Madurai, Ranchi and Varanasi participated in the seminar. Each of these RTCs along with the NTC, Vidyajyoti, shared their own experiences of evangelization and concerns of new ways of evangelization while doing theology in their respective places. The sharing and group discussions challenged all the participants as to how to engage in new ways of evangelization in India today. We had every reason to smile and feel happy about the diaconate ordination of 28 Scholastics of 10 different Jesuit provinces by Rt. Rev. Anil J.T. Couto, Archbishop of Delhi, on 22 February. Congratulations to **Dn. Rajesh Somepalli** who was among the 28. The presence of **Fr. Donald Miranda**, the Provincial, on diaconate ordination day doubled our joy. He was one of the main concelebrants. The communal violence on 24 February in Northeast Delhi disturbed us deeply. It deeply affected our thoughts, feelings and emotions. Many of the community members, including our Principal, visited the riot affected areas to show empathy to the victims. At various places peace protests were organized in which many of us took part. The third years are busy with completing their dissertation papers and the second years are busy with their class project which is to be presented in a form of drama scheduled for 25 March.

-Rajeev Ranjan

**Xavier Nilaya, Bengaluru:** It was a month fully occupied with feasts and celebrations. We celebrated the feast of the Presentation of Jesus in the temple followed by the Purification of our Blessed Mother. Thus



the days ahead moved hastily. As the days neared the mega event, both the formators and the formees didn't leave any single stone unturned. Right at this time, the Regents Meet was held in Mundgod and Br. Ashwin joined them. Thereafter a series of events followed in Xavier Nilaya. It was a pleasant surprise for us when Fr. George Ayyankanal, the Socius to the Novice Master in Lucknow and **Most Rev. William D'Souza**, the

Archbishop of Patna, visited us. We attended the funeral Mass of our benefactor Mr. Conrad Alvares in St. Patrick's Church. We celebrated our Annual Play & Thanksgiving 2019-2020 on 23 February in the Good Shepherd School Hall in the evening. A good number of Fathers, Sisters, Brothers, Uncles and Aunties were present to watch our play. In turn we too didn't disappoint them with our play. It was a comedy play. The title of the play was, "A rhyme in Time saves nine", directed by Mrs. Ashu Desai. We are deeply indebted to Mrs. Ashu, the directress of the Play, without forgetting Mrs. Carina, Ms. Vilina and the rest who showed their love towards us. We thank you **Frs. Daniel Raj** and **Mani Poovakot** and Br. Ashwin for your constant guidance and accompaniment. On 24 February, we candidates had our first Hindi Mass at Xavier Nilaya and also the thanksgiving Mass for the Delhi candidates who passed the Xth Class. On the following day all Seven of them left for a short home visit with unbound happiness on their faces. With this high note the Holy Season of Lent knocks our doors.

- Candidate Rohan

## VARIA

The meeting of the Province Education Commission was conducted on 15-16, February, 2020 at St. Xavier's, Patna. In the first half of the program, the Principals and Vice-Principals, along with the chairperson of the Education Commission, **Fr. Norbert Menezes**, attended a Conclave on Principals' Leadership Programme at Lemon Tree Hotel, Patna, on 15 February, 2020. The conclave was organized by Patna Archdiocesan Education Council and conducted by Tata Class Edge. The PCE coordinated the participation of Jesuit and Buxar Diocesan schools. This conclave was attended by 72 leaders from various Christian schools in Bihar. In the second part, the province education commission took up the theme, "Resource Mobilization through Jesuit schools" for deliberations. There was an informative input session on "Resource Mobilization", which was given by the staff members of Assistancy Development Office, New Delhi. The speakers spoke about the need to awaken and co-operate with the development offices at the province, zonal and Assistancy levels, for effective continuity of Jesuit ministries. On the second day, one of the major agenda of the meeting was Perspective Plans of the Schools and of the Education Commission, for 2020-2025. All the members spent time in spiritual conversation in groups and deliberating on what else can be done in future in line with Universal and Province Apostolic Preferences of the Society. We also had an evaluation of the current academic year 2019-2020 and the proposed budgets of all the Jesuit schools were presented in the meeting. The members spent fruitful and quality time in evaluating the activities/events of the current academic year and in planning for the coming session, 2020-2021. The theme of the coming session will be; "Save: Life & Environment". In the business session of the meeting various practical matters related to different schools were discussed. The Province education commission is grateful to St. Xavier's community for their hospitality.

- K. P. Dominic

### REQUESTING YOUR PRAYERS

#### For the Sick:

**Fr. Rajesh Jacob** was admitted to KHFH with High BP and is recuperating at Xavier Bhavan.

**Br. Joseph Ullattil** was admitted to KHFH with breathing difficulties. He has been discharged and is in Xavier Bhavan now.

**Fr. Prakash Antony** was admitted to Apollo Hospital, Chennai, with stomach pain. He underwent a laparoscopy procedure to remove a block in the intestines.

#### For the Departed:

Fr. Edwin Rasquinha SJ (BOM 91/60) died on 20 February 2020 at Andheri, Mumbai

Mrs. Jyothi (66), *younger sister of Fr. Andrew James, SJ*, expired on 24 February 2020

Fr Felix Tirkey SJ (DUM 52/28), passed away on 02 March.2020 in Bathbanga, Sahibganj, Jharkhand.

Mrs. Chinnamma (95), *elder sister of Br. Abraham Chempothanadiyil*, died 03 March 2020 in Kerala

Fr. Geoffrey Michael Meagher SJ (HAZ 77/59) died on 05 March, 2020 in Tata Medical Centre, Kolkata

Mrs. Elikutti Mathew (82), *the elder sister of Fr. Joseph Pulickal, SJ*, expired on 07 March 2020



## Silver Jubilee of St. Thomas School, Ratanpurwa

It was a memorable occasion in the history of Seva Sadan, Ratanpurwa as it celebrated the Silver Jubilee of St. Thomas School on 03 March 2020. We gratefully remembered Late **Fr. Thomas Chakalakal**, the founder of Seva Sadan for his tireless work with Jesuits companions and FSMA sisters educating the oppressed through Non- Formal Education. The Chief Guest, Most Rev. Peter Sebastian Goveas, Bishop of Bettiah Diocese, Guest of Honor, Provincial, **Fr. Donald Miranda**, Special Guest Sr. Ishpriya, Provincial of FSMA Congregation and **Fr. Joe Maripuram**, the Secretary of the school, lit the lights and garlanded the photo of Fr. Chakalakal. On this joyful occasion, we also remembered **Fr. Joy Karayampuram** who began the formal School in memory of **Fr. Chakalakal**. The life and vision of Fr. Chakalakal was depicted on the stage through a skit by children. **Fr. Stephen Raj** welcomed the guests and the gathering. The students staged a colourful cultural program enthralling the audience with their confident performances. **Fr. Maxentius**, the Headmaster, presented the annual report. The Chief Guest and special guests appreciated and reminded us of the eventful history of the place and inspired us to continue the legacy, charism and vision of the founding members of Seva Sadan. The winners of various competitions were given prizes by the Chief Guest. The religious who served at Ratanpurwa and were present for the function were honoured with gamcha as a token of our appreciation and gratitude. A good number of priests and religious from far and wide were participated in the Jubilee Celebration. FSMA Sisters with their Provincial came all the way from Rajasthan showing their spirit of commitment and love for our people. **Br. Vijay Cherubim** along with FSMA Sisters toiled quietly behind the curtain ensuring the success of the event and making it a joyful and memorable one for all. We acknowledge, appreciate and thank especially KREA, Bettiah and others for their generous support to celebrate the jubilee in a grand manner.



– Stephenraj

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### **“Your health in your hands”**

The following items are available to make “Your health in your hands” possible.

1. Amritdhara oil – it can be applied for over 33 ailments.
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## Ganga Lahar Supplement, March 2020

[Begun in March 1921, the Patna Jesuit Mission is entering its centenary year in March 2020. Beginning this month the Patna Jesuit Newsletter, Ganga Lahar, plans to serialize an account of the antecedents, origins and development of this Mission in Bihar.-Editor]

### **Centenary History of Patna Jesuit Mission - 1**

**- Jose Kalapura, SJ**

The American Jesuit Mission in Bihar was not started in a virgin land. The coming of the American Jesuits to Patna in 1921 and the managing and development of Patna Diocese ever since, were related to two earlier missionary undertakings in Bihar: the first Jesuit Mission to Patna in 1620 and the Capuchin Mission in 1703. Thus the three phases of the Catholic Mission in Bihar are inter-linked. In this first installment of the series, we focus on the first Jesuit Mission to Patna.

#### **The First Jesuit Mission to Patna, 1620**

Historical evidences show the presence of Armenian Christian traders and military persons in Bihar from 13th-17th centuries, prior to the arrival of the first Christian missionaries (Jesuits from Bengal) at Patna in 1620.

Patna occurs in the Jesuit Annual Letters from Malabar under whose jurisdiction Bengal and Patna were included. Bengal Jesuit historian Henry Josson has noted in the letter of Jesuit Superior Father Pereira, written in 1620, in which is mentioned the circumstances of the arrival of the first Jesuit mission to Patna. The Mughal Subadar (Governor) of Patna, Nawab Muquarrab Khan had learnt about the Jesuits of Bengal from the Portuguese visiting Patna. The Nawab then wrote to Father Superior to send some priests to Patna to discuss religious matters with him. In return, he would help the priests to construct a church and would pay for their maintenance. The Subadar also wrote to the Faujdar of Hughli and two other influential inhabitants to influence Pereira.

Khan was earlier physician of Akbar and was raised to the high position by Jahangir. While serving as the Governor of Cambay, he was baptized in 1610 by Father Pimenta under the name of Jean Toutefois. He was transferred to Patna sometime before 1620.

The Nawab was not a practicing Catholic. He had not renounced polygamy; he kept a harem and had publicly declared himself a Muslim. When Father Superior had remonstrated to him about his way of life, he did not want to submit to the laws of the Church and preferred to abandon the idea of making a confession, as insisted by the Father.

Nevertheless he wanted some Jesuit priests to be in his capital. The priest understood that the Nawab wanted the Portuguese Jesuit priests at Patna to draw more Portuguese merchants with whom he would trade. This was also in line with the Mughal policy of patronizing Jesuit missionaries, beginning with Akhar in 1580 and continued by his successor Jahangir and others.

Father Pereira left for Patna from Hooghly with Father Figueiredo and some Portuguese and arrived at Patna after a journey of sixteen days. Escorted by the procession of the Europeans who wanted to honour their religion, as well as by the troops of the Nawab, Pereira went to the palace. The Nawab received them with most profound respect and placed at their disposal certain houses situated along the Ganges consisting of luxurious apartments covered with most beautiful carpets. The next morning the Nawab came to the house of the missionaries. The priests then learnt that the Nawab was a Catholic, which would explain their warm reception and honour. The Nawab constructed a church and gave an excellent house with a beautiful garden. He gave him a present of 100 rupees and assigned the revenue of a village amounting to Rs.500 annually for maintenance.



Sometime later he asked forgiveness of the Father for asking the latter not to preach Christianity openly in public for fear of his losing the Subadari.

Father Superior decided to go to Hooghly, leaving Fr. Figueiredo at Patna. A little later a young Muslim noble, disgusted by the preaching of the missionaries, wanted to end the affair. He went to their residence with an open sword and killed a porter and a young man. Alerted by the cries of the victims, the priest rushed to the scene where he also received some cuts from the sword. When the attacker was on the point of giving a final blow, people got hold of his hand. Obviously this was an expression of the resentment of the Muslim orthodoxy against the patronage given to the Christians by the Nawab. The Nawab ordered the attacker to be trampled under the feet of an elephant and ordered the dead body to be thrown into the river.

The patronage to the Portuguese Jesuits at Patna was to further his own trading prospects with the Portuguese as he confessed, but also to prevent the English from taking over the trade of Patna. He was partly successful. But the Subadar did not stay long as he was transferred from Patna in 1621, perhaps due to the displeasure of the orthodox section of the Muslims and the occurrence of the violence in the house of the missionaries. He died at the age of ninety at Panipat without supporting the Christians once again.



Documents on what happened to the Patna mission thereafter are few. That the programme of the priests continued, which shows that Jahangir had not embarked on a clear anti-Christian policy. Although there is no definite evidence, it seems that the Christian priests at Patna could make some conversions there. In a letter of 28 August 1623, written by Father Joseph Castro from Bengal, it is mentioned that there were 200 Christians in Bengal, which, inter alia, would also include Bihar. It seems that after this and it is merely a surmise, that the Residency was withdrawn from Patna. It is quite possible that the conquest of Hughli from the

Portuguese by the Mughals in 1632 had an effect on Patna Residence and it was withdrawn after that. Francois Bernier reported later that the anti-Portuguese policy of Shah Jahan turned into an anti-European one. The letter of Father Marc Antonio Satrucci, written in December 1678, mentioned his arrival at Patna, which he considered a 'new area'. At the same time, references show that the Patna centre was looked after or visited by Jesuit missionaries from elsewhere. The defunct Patna centre continued to be part of the Bengal Mission till the arrival of the Capuchins.

The coming of the Capuchins to Patna en route to their mission destination, Lhasa was not unrelated to the Jesuit venture at Patna. In 1701, Father Gui Tachard, a French Jesuit priest who had access to the French court and who was ousted from Siam along with other Frenchmen, proposed the need of an extension of the activities of the Jesuits in Bengal, Bhutan and Patna among others. This was also the period when the Jesuits in India were fighting with the French Company officials in India for establishing their superiority over other Christian religious groups, such as the Capuchins for example, at Pondicherry and Chandernagar. Rome immediately acted on the proposal but ordered the Italian Capuchins to start the mission in Tibet which was not the original intention of Father Tachard when he had proposed it. Perhaps because Bihar was part of the Bengal Mission of the Jesuits, the Capuchins were assigned a new mission area (Tibet/Nepal), in 1703. The Capuchins landed at Chandernagar in 1706 and then went to Lhasa via Patna and Kathmandu after opening a transit house at Patna, at the very place where the Jesuit centre once stood. The Tibet Mission was wound up in 1745 and the Kathmandu Mission, in 1769. However, the Capuchin Mission at Patna expanded to the whole of Hindustan (north India) by the end of 18th century, In our next section we shall deal with the Capuchin Mission (1703-1919) in Bihar.

While the Capuchin Mission in Bihar was indirectly linked to the earlier Jesuit Mission, the erection of Patna Diocese in 1919 and handing it over to the American Jesuit Mission was directly linked to a political crisis suffered by the Capuchins in Bihar.



**PRESIDENT**  
*Jesuit Conference of South Asia*

**Godavari Statement**  
**JCSA - Feb 2020**

We, the Jesuit Major Superiors of South Asia, gathered for our Annual Conference in Godavari, Nepal (23-29 Feb, 2020), are appalled to learn of the recent communal violence in the capital city of Delhi where at least 47 people lost their lives, hundreds have been wounded and many more are made homeless with huge property losses. The various accounts of the apparent complicity of the police forces in the violence, and the inexplicable postponement of legal procedures for four weeks are deplorable.

The concerned citizens know that the hate speeches and divisive politics of the recent elections in Delhi, the all-pervasive hate-politics and mob lynching of the last one decade and the attempts to appropriate 'nationhood and religion' for majoritarianism would all lead to inconceivable consequences for the body politic. We urge the Central Govt to immediately withdraw the hastily enacted discriminatory Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), National Population Register (NPR) and the proposed National Register of Citizens (NRC), and initiate a process of dialogue with all concerned.

Meanwhile we invite all concerned citizens, especially the Indian Jesuits and our Institutions i) to initiate processes of reconciliation among peoples and religions, ii) to continue serious study and research on the ramifications of CAA and NRC for the conceptions of nation, citizenship and the Constitution, iii) to join peaceful protest movements opposing CAA, NPR and NRC whenever and wherever possible, iv) to support rescue works in the areas affected by communal violence.

We pledge to protect the integrity of the Constitution and to preserve the ethos of our nation that was shaped by the founding fathers and mothers of our motherland after prolonged struggles and sacrifices for independence, and has been nourished by sages and saints of many religions from time immemorial. Now is the moment of reckoning for India to reassert its soul of diversity, variety and the eternal quest for the Ultimate.

We believe that anti-CAA Movement will sustain itself as long as it remains non-violent yet courageous, resistant yet listening, audacious yet non-divisive, fearless yet compassionate.

Fr George Pattery, SJ  
President, Jesuit Conference of South Asia

5<sup>th</sup> Mar, 2020