



DARING TO BE AUDACIOUS IN SOUTH ASIA



JCSA e-Newsletter

| Issue 01 | February, 2017

CONFLUENCE OF STREAMS IN SOUTH ASIA

~Fr. George Pattery, SJ, Provincial of South Asia



Rivers and mountains give character to the land; they even form and define civilizations. In our growing eco-awareness, we begin to notice their 'personality'.

Looking at South Asia through post-GC 36 lens, one notices a confluence of three streams on South Asian landscape: i) Restructuring process resulting in the consolidated report (Restructuring for Greater Apostolic Effectiveness - REGAE), ii) demands of GC 36 decrees on mission and governance and iii) prospects of the Assistancy Development office opening up new networks. These three streams look different and even disconnected. But they seem to flow into each other influencing

and contributing to each other.

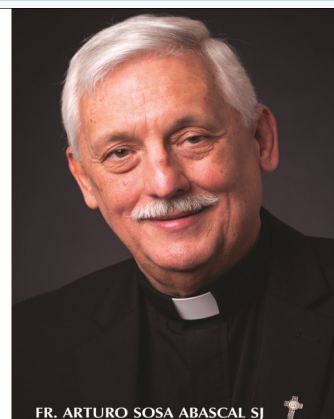
REGAE stream speaks of a success story of the spiritual animation process wherein nearly 3600 Jesuits of South Asia went through a dynamics that enlivened them to the deliberations of the First Fathers. It speaks of a greater collaboration at the level of the four zones in mission and governance. The sense of belonging to a 'universal body for a universal mission' has been the voice of our young men in formation.

GC 36 stream invites us to go back to our roots and be strengthened by the sources. The Governance document suggests that we renew our governance structures with greater sense of collaboration and net-working. The mission of reconciliation poses a deeper challenge to the increasingly polarising socio-political situation around us.

A third stream is emerging from the intense sharing among secretaries of some of the commissions identifying five major priorities of mission, namely Ecology, Non-formal Education, Entitlement/Lok Manch, Migration and Peace Initiatives. The Assistancy Development Office with its focus on 'development and sustainability' plans to create a Jesuit brand across the assistancy based on these priorities.

These three streams have to be aligned with the universal preferences of the Society; their confluence could form a river that nurtures South Asia and flows across new landscapes of other Conferences. We let the Spirit lead us on in this flow, to that 'audacity for the improbable' that we heard at GC 36!

SAAJN (South Asian Assistancy Jesuit News) is the new venture of the Assistancy to share our news and views electronically to Jesuits across the Conferences. The Logo represents the national flags of the countries of South Asian Assistancy. We hope that SAAJN becomes the medium for greater collaboration and networking among us.



FR. ARTURO SOSA ABASCAL SJ

*A hearty welcome to
Fr. Arturo, SJ, the
Superior General of
the Society of Jesus, to
the Jesuit Conference
of South Asia*

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

~Christian Muslim Dialogue in Pakistan	2
~JFFSA - Combined search for a richer educative experience	4
~Jesuits help teachers, students and poor in Pakistan	6
~I was a street kid	7
~Beyond the boundaries	9
~A New way of promoting Vocation for Global SJ	14
~Collaboration between Assistancy Development Office, and JAAI ..	15
~Administration to Animation ..	18
~Spaniard turned Indian Jesuit, Fr. Sopena passes away.....	20
~Fr General in India's Capital Delhi (photos).....	23



Jesuit Conference of South Asia, 225 Jor Bagh, New Delhi-110 003:

<http://www.jcsaweb.org/>

CHRISTIAN MUSLIM DIALOGUE IN PAKISTAN

Loyola Hall Research Center is known today in every nook and corner of Pakistan. It was an inspiration of late Jesuit Father Robert. A. Butler, who was a pioneer in promoting Christian-Muslim dialogue in Pakistan over fifty five years ago.



Over the last five decades, this Research Centre has created an open space for people of both the faiths – Christian and Islam to come together. Through the center, they experience mutual trust, enriching insights, understanding, and respect. Here their perspectives & attitudes towards each other are changed. They are challenged to build on the elements shared by both traditions amidst the political upheavals and religious tension existing in society at large.

In recent times, Loyola Hall Research Center has continued to realize its foundational aims of promotion, critical thinking, scientific study, and

theological reflection on events and people in Pakistan. The Research Center is keenly working on revitalizing and reorganizing its library, which is a resource for those who are interested in deeper study and research projects. At present, there are over 18,000 books on Islam, Christianity, South and Central Asia Studies. Over the last few decades, the center has been equipped with numerous journals. Close to the library is a well set study room which provides the readers with a comfortable, calm, and quiet environment to study at leisurely.

Currently the center is in the process of cataloging the books and in the future, it will develop and create an electronic database library of its resources. The Research Center also organizes an annual Symposium called

the “Loyola Hall Symposium” which aims to create an academic space for reflection and encounter between national and international scholars of different religious traditions. With a view to extend the findings of the research papers to those who cannot participate in these symposiums, the Research Center has published the proceedings of the first two symposiums.

The first of these publications went under the heading of “Mysticism in the East and the West -- The Concept of the Unity of Being”, while the second was “The Sacredness of Creation -- Spirituality responsibility of Muslims and Christians to care for our common home-Planet Earth.” The Research Center has reached out to students through providing academic workshops to help them to deepen their awareness and knowledge about particular topics of interest and to encourage research methodologies and enhance their study skills. Currently, publication of the third symposium “Search for Holiness -- Exploring the Meaning and Significance of Sacred Space for Muslim and Christians” is underway. Furthermore, we have other events lined up: the 4th Loyola Hall Symposium, which is to be held in the 2nd week of February 2017; film days, and



organized visits to the library.

Network with other organizations, libraries and institutions is another plan we have in mind. We also look forward to organize the annual Fr Robert A. Butler's Memorial Lecture.

All in all the Loyola Research Center is a good effort to build peace in Pakistan.

| Jude Deluxion, SJ.

JFFSA - COMBINED SEARCH FOR A RICHER EDUCATIVE EXPERIENCE

Jesuit run Philosophy and Theology faculties of South Asia met on January 15, 2017 for a stock taking. The meeting was held under the aegis of JFFSA (Jesuit Faculty Forum South Asia) which was constituted on May 13, 2015 by Fr. George Pattery, SJ, the Provincial of South Asia (POSA). JFFSA Forum was in response to a felt need and a follow up of the discussions that took place among the provincials during JCSA meeting of 2014.



The main tasks of JFFSA forum as contained in the founding letter by Fr POSA are: “i) to advise on and coordinate the functioning of the three faculties viz., Vidyajyoti – Delhi (Faculty of Theology), Jnana Deepa Vidyapeeth – Pune (Faculty of Philosophy and Theology), Sacred Heart College – Satya Nilayam – Chennai (Faculty of Philosophy); ii) to provide further clarity on their orientations, especially to foster greater sense and ethos of a South Asian Conference; iii) to discuss policy matters on recruitment and transfers of the staff; iv) to assist the faculties to respond to the challenges of the times; v) to explore possibilities of liaising with Higher Education Institutions; vi) to further develop philosophical and theological studies in keeping with the times and its need.”

The forum intended as an advisory body,

comprises of important officials of all the Faculties under him, viz., Vidyajyoti – Delhi (Faculty of Theology), Jnana Deepa Vidyapeeth – Pune (Faculty of Philosophy and Theology), Sacred Heart College – Satya Nilayam – Chennai (Faculty of Philosophy), a couple of experts and the ADF, Socius, and Fr. POSA. Fr Raj Irudaya (ADF) is the coordinator. So far this Forum has met three times - JDV - Pune 17 Aug, 2015; JDV - Pune 24 Jan 2016; SN-Chennai 15 Jan 2017.

In the short span of a little over two years with only three sittings the Forum has forged a new alliance between the three faculties; initiated a forwarding looking agenda for them; injected new enthusiasm into the task of ecclesiastical education and formation. The meeting held at Satya Nilayam on 15th Jan, 2017 was noteworthy because each faculty participated actively,

delivering on earlier agreed upon presentations, within the given timeframe and showed remarkable openness and willingness to implement the plans and suggestions made during the meeting. Interaction during the meetings have been frank, critical, constructive, exploratory. In sum positive.

Vidyajyoti (Faculty of theology) under Frs. Mike Thanaraj & Leo Ferando, fine tuned a process on Staff Appraisal (SA), they had presented earlier on during the Pune meeting (Pune – 2016). They assured the protocol developed would be utilized in the 2017-18 academic year. Other faculties were asked to follow a similar process at arriving at a workable SA protocol for their faculties, taking into account their specific situation and needs. In Satya Nilayam (Faculty of Philosophy) Frs. E.P. Mathew and Albert Muthumalai led a team of experts who suggested a plan for an academic audit of all the faculties. This proposed plan was whetted at the meeting. Once finalized the audit process will be mandatory for all three faculties. It will consist of a detailed questionnaire to be filled in by the faculty – staff and students. An audit team would then visit to the faculty and submit its report. Such an audit was visualized as a periodic process every four years.

Jnana Deepa Vidyapeeth (JDV) (Faculty of Philosophy and Theology) coordinated by Fr. Selva Rathinam, and reported by Frs. Mohan Dass (SVD) & Kuruvilla Pandikattu, presented before the forum the ‘Teaching-Learning

Seminar’ that was conducted for them by Fr Frazer Mascarenhas & Prof. Viven Amonkar. The animators provided a new framework to bear on the teaching-learning methods employed at the faculties; they emphasized the need to constantly review and update both the Learning and Teaching methods being used. The other faculties took note of the important insights from the JDV presentation for application to their own centers.

The day was spent in presentations, responses to



the presentations and some silent time in between to check where the Spirit was leading each individual and the entire process. At the end Fr POSA expressed satisfaction at all that transpired during the meeting. He thanked all the participants for their enthusiasm, active participation, and willingness to implement the decisions made at the Forum. The next meeting is scheduled for the 21st Jan, 2018 at Vidyajyoti – Delhi.

| Keith Abranches, SJ

JESUITS HELP TEACHERS, STUDENTS AND POOR TO GAIN INNER PEACE IN PAKISTAN



Jesuits in Pakistan introduced Non-Violent Communication in 2012 and today it has become a people's movement. People in Pakistan strongly believe NVC helps them to get inner peace. NVC has become a movement too.

Non-Violent Communication (NVC) was introduced in Pakistan by two Sri Lankan Jesuit Fathers Maria Anthony, and C. P. Rajendram in 2012. The Jesuits began first by training volunteers in NVC. Ms. Eva Rambala, an international renowned NVC facilitator helped them in this process. Subsequently the program was taken to schools and parishes.

Fr. Maria Anthony formed a core group of

They consisted of Sr. Helen Patras, Sr. Naziz, Sr. Tresa, Mrs. Shagufta Asaph, Ms Naseem Sadiq, Ms Zakia, Mr Rafaqat, Mr Asghar and Mr. Anmol. This group underwent intensive NVC training before they were certified as trainers. September 24, 2016 was a red-letter day for NVC Pakistan. The Urdu translation of the NVC manual was launched. Yet another milestone was 10th October 2016, when Fr. Maria Anthony, S.J. officially began the Nonviolent Communication and Community Building office, at Loyola Hall, Lahore, Pakistan. Ms. Naseem Sadiq was appointed its first coordinator.

The core group promotes NVC with indomitable enthusiasm because the people of Pakistan are really in need of peace. A peace they will eventually discover, within their hearts. The animated core group strongly believes that NVC can help people attain inner peace. Their first goal is to train school teachers, and through them introduce NVC to the school children and later parishioners. The first NVC training program for Teachers, by the core group, was held on 19th November 2016. The NVC



training is spread over three sessions that fully equip the teachers to become able communicators of NVC. The entire course of teachers training program will get over by March 2017. Thereafter NVC is planned to commence in the parishes. The first program will be held at the Mary Immaculate Church Anarkali, Lahore.

So far as it appears, the NVC program has made appreciable progress and it is hoped it will reap richer fruits in the future.

| Jude Deluxion, SJ.



I was a street kid...

| Nematullah Ahangosh

I started working when I was in first grade, at the age of eight. My job was weaving carpets. When I was about 11, I worked as a street vendor. This was very hard. I didn't go to school for



one year and I missed my teachers and classmates. I remember one day I stood in front of a shop, my wares in my hands, but no one bought even one gum or cigarette. It was lunchtime, but I had no money, so I stayed hungry and tired. I felt this to be the longest day ever. For me, working at that



age was neither welcome nor wanted. I pushed all memories to the back of my mind, but they are never forgotten, and won't be, ever.

When my family's financial situation got better, I went back to school. My parents decided that one of us should graduate from school and I was chosen. When I got older, I started teaching street kids English and other basic topics. After two years of lessons, they were able to go to school. In 2015 I called some friends for a meeting and convinced them to volunteer to teach street kids in District 13 in Kabul. There are four of us and, after three months, we taught 24 kids to read and write.

We want to prevent street children from being used by extremists, perhaps for suicide attacks, and from falling prey to human traffickers. On the positive side, we believe that children are the future of our country, and that we can change our lives and theirs through education. Now we are teaching them non-violence too.

Recently my health became a big concern. With the help of JRS, I came to India for tests and was diagnosed with a muscle disease, for which there is no treatment. I am worried; this is natural. But I find myself confident and peaceful because although I received nothing I wanted, JRS helped me to receive everything I needed. The support I got from the people of JRS changed my life: their hospitality, friendship and commitment taught me to follow their way, which is nothing but helping human beings. JRS will also support our project to change the lives of street children who work for their mere survival but only wish to study. We are honoured to be supported by JRS. We'd like to start teaching computer programs, and to build a small library.

My life has changed. I was illiterate but become literate, was poor but became better off, was a street kid but became student, teacher, peace activist. I want to help other street children to change their life, because I know, more than anyone else, what they face.

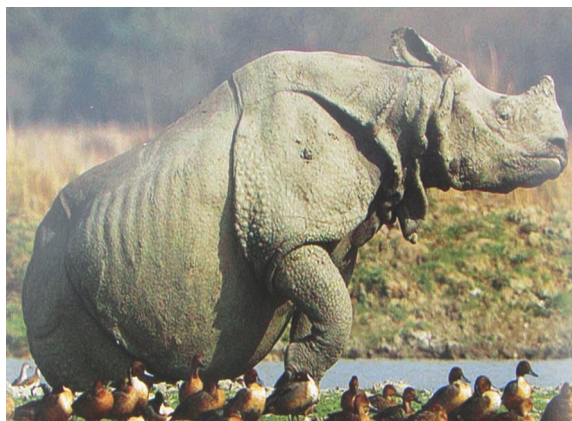
Courtesy: JRS/Servir, Dec 2016, Issue 62



BEYOND THE BOUNDARIES, INTO THE DEEP; BEYOND PHYSICAL SPACE TO KINDLE A FIRE

The sparks that ignited at the General Congregations and through many letters of Generals of the Society of Jesus have not just remained as decrees or pious desires but have spurred the imaginations of the Jesuits in South Asian Assistancy. It has empowered them to launch out and steer the course beyond the cross roads and, where others have frightened, to reach out into the unknown. Surely the 'Call of the Master' has a 'burning desire' in-built into it to all those discern and follow.

The sons of Ignatius never said no to the discerned invitation of the Church



throughout the world. The story is the same in the South Asian Assistancy. Each province, in spite of the shortage of men

and means, never said no when the Lord beckoned. Afghanistan, many African countries, China, Cambodia, Egypt, Guyana, Japan, Myanmar, Kazakhstan, Russia and many more realms have become their 'karma bhoomi' (land of service) in recent years.



Within the country, it was a joyful mission when they ventured into the seven sisters of Northeast India forty-five years ago. This was the third coming of Jesuits. In 1626 two Portuguese Jesuits, Cabral and Cacella, were the first Christian missionaries to set foot in these hallowed land at Hazo near Guwahati on 26

September 1626. They were the guest of the king. They had set their sight beyond the boundaries – Tibet. The second coming was circumstantial. World War I



forced the German Salvatorian Fathers out of India and the Jesuits from Calcutta Province looked after the missions in Assam and Meghalaya for seven years. As their missions of Calcutta Jesuits were expanding into Chotnagpur, they handed over the mission to the Salesians of Don Bosco in 1921.

The third coming was planned not by the Jesuits but by Bishop Hubert Rosario SDB of Dibrugarh, a Jesuit Alumnus, Mr. Hosishe Sema, the Chief Minister of Nagaland, and John Baptist Jasokie, the

Education Minister of Nagaland. They wrote to Fr Arrupe, the General of the Society, and Fr Arrupe asked the Indian provinces to take up the challenge. The lot fell on Karnataka Province of South India. Ever since the history of Karnataka Jesuits has never remained the same.



Nagaland welcomed the Jesuits with their traditional hospitality, but with a keen sense of observation watched every movement of the Jesuit pioneers, Fr Stany Coelho, Fr Ligoury Castelino and Br Raymond D' Souza. The new target groups in the Church and in the Society were already identified - the rural masses, the tribal and the dalit communities, the subjugated women and the youth. The Jesuits instead of establishing their edifice in the urban areas launched into the rural districts and the Nagas supported them totally. The planting of the seed and the blooming of the mission through

development and education of the tribal people took different spheres. The Lord took them on His wings and today after 45 years the **Kohima Jesuit Region** has bloomed where it was planted, setting its roots deep in the lives and cultures of the people and stretching its branches into all the seven states of Northeast.

Though education was their primary mission, development of the people through economic progress and also cultural evolution through research and empowerment was considered the way forward. As the people from different tribes and the bishops from very many dioceses invited the Jesuits to begin service, they ventured into new centers, always keeping in mind the rural masses in **Nagaland, Manipur, Arunachal, Assam** and **Meghalaya**. The longing of the developing communities for higher education was a felt need. St Joseph's College at Jakhama in Nagaland, St Xavier's College at Balipara in Assam and Loyola College at Dengagre in Meghalaya and St Xavier's College at Langpui in Mizoram all have these trademarks, to engage the rural people at the service of tribal groups.

The Kohima Region realized that it is beyond them to cater 240 odd tribal

groups with multi-ethnic and multi-cultural heritage. Vast populations in the tea gardens of **Assam** on the northern bank of Brahmaputra were under the yoke of the tea



plantation industry with little hope of any great development. The Catholic Church was already into it. **The Jesuits of Ranchi province** who had a close relationship with these displaced tribal groups of Chotanagpur felt the pain of these tea garden labourers and ventured into the tea garden areas for education and development. They have started besides

schools, a college and many social action centers to better the lives of the people. They are deeply entrenched among the displaced Adivasi population known as tea garden tribals.

Mizoram, the home of an educated tribe of northeast with its rich culture of song and dance, beauty and grandeur was looking for men of the 'Black Robes' for higher education.

They have heard of St Xavier's College and school in North Point, Darjeeling. How could the **Darjeeling Jesuits** say no to a



tribe so insistent and their bishop so persuasive to come and be with them? The Darjeeling Jesuits accepted the invitation in 2016 and are on a fast track with total cooperation of Government of Mizoram and the Diocese of Aizwal. The new college at Langpui Village, 30 kilometers from Aizwal, is their new institution dedicated to the people of Mizoram.

Tripura, with its magnificent palace, has a rich culture of Viashnavism in the south and of tribal traditions in the north. It is a wonderful place to be. The credit should go to Bp. Lumen Manteiro, CSC, again an alumnus of a Jesuit school, who kept on knocking and never lost hope. **The Jesuits of Gujarat** with a great tradition of education and development of the people, especially in the tribal areas, have

jumped generously to respond to Bp. Monteiro. The stage is set, the floor is ready, and the music is on for the Jesuits for a rendezvous in the hills of Tripura. The indomitable spirit of Bp. Monteiro has surely rubbed into the Jesuits of Gujarat who are ready for a dance of love and service for the greater glory of God.

Arunachal Pradesh, as the name suggests, is the land at the 'horizon of the rising sun' in India. Lost in years of tradition, hidden in the deep valleys, concealed often in the thick mist and fog, you hardly notice its presence. It always remained as a frontier shielding India from China with the high natural wall of Himalayas. The snow-capped mountains, the ripples of the flowing streams, the songs of the birds, the swaying of the orchids and the murmur of the breeze through bamboo thickets makes it a magical place. Thinly populated and thick with forest, it is one of the best known biodiversity hot spots in the world. There were some who did not want Arunachal Pradesh to change. They wanted it to remain a 'human zoo' so that the rest could watch them in their primitive setting.

Wisdom prevailed and the people of Arunachal catapulted into modernization. They sought good education that was imparted by the Church with dedicated men and women. They fought the draconian laws



and triumphed in bringing in a new change with in their society. With a sixth sense only the tribals have between the good and the bad, they invited Jesuits into their lives for education. The traditional songs and the dying subaltern cultures and languages are finding new meanings. With the association with Jesuits they are redefining themselves through myths, language, song and dance.

In Northeast India, the boundaries that are held formidable are broken, physical space is shrunk, the spirit of togetherness is held high. The “song of the Lamb” is now sung in unison in Northeast people. ‘Service of faith and promotion of justice’ finds tremendous meaning here. The Jesuits as bearers of ‘Good News’ are breathing a new spirit into everything. In the southern parts of Northeast in Mizoram and Tripura by Darjeeling and the Gujarat Jesuits; in the northern and eastern boundary of India by the Kohima Jesuits, and in the vastness of Assam tea gardens by the Ranchi Jesuits. All this is for the ‘greater glory of God’, and ‘in all things ‘to love and serve’.

| Hector D’ Souza SJ

A New Way to Promote Vocation for Global SJ



The Assitancy Meeting of Vocation Promoters & Directors of Pre Novitiates was held in Jharna Retreat Centre, Ranchi from February 2-8. The Vocation Promoters deliberated upon the creative and effective methods of Vocation Promotion not merely to one's province but to other needy ones too. The Pre-novitiate Directors had a workshop on counselling skills and they were also introduced to professional assessment of the ones to enter novitiate. Also it was a time to discuss the different concerns of these states of formation. Thanks to Ranchi Provincial and the Jesuits of the communities of Jharna, Manresa, St. John and St. Xavier School & College for their warm and excellent hospitality.

| Fr. Raj Irudaya, SJ, Assitancy Delegate for Formation.

Collaboration Between Assistancy Development Office and Jesuit Alumni Association of India



The Jesuit Alumni Association of India held its 8th National Congress from the 27th to the 29th of January at St. Xavier's School Doranda, Ranchi. The theme of the Congress was **“SYNER JAAI – Networking for Empowerment”**. The Assistancy Development Office of the Jesuit Conference of South Asia, established for Collaboration on Sustainability and Development, identified this as a wonderful opportunity to explore possibilities with JAAI for synergy towards empowerment. The Jesuit Educational Association was instrumental in initiating this association between the ADO and JAAI.

In the recent past the single most important topic being discussed by world leaders is Ecology, Environment and Climate Change. “Mother Earth – our Home” and life in all its forms is threatened by the abuse and degradation of nature – air, water, forests. There is great urgency to both, stop the processes of over exploitation of natural resources and to restore nature-the planet as a source of sustenance for all life. While this has been highlighted in the past currently key global organisations are moving to provide this issue the importance it rightly deserves.

The thrust to preserve our home was led by Pope Francis' encyclical "Laudato Si" – On the care of our common home. The United Nations in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) had,



goal 13 and 15 dedicated to this area. Goal 13 on "Climate Action" states "Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts by regulating emissions and promoting developments in renewable energy. Goal 15 on "Life on Land" – "Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss." The recently concluded General Congregation 36 of

the Society of Jesus also draws attention of Jesuits across the globe to preserve our ecology and environment.

One of the four causes supported by JAAI is an Environmental Drive, which "is simple yet effective locally as well as nationally. JAAI actively participates in the environment day organized by the Jesuit institutions. Related skits are performed by students. Experts are invited to highlight the importance of protecting and enhancing our environment starting locally. In the spirit of think local act global, saplings are planted on the campus.

The Environment drive has taken the form of Community composting for disposal of Dry and Wet waste in the Jesuit Bombay Province.

The Jesuit institution benefits by the green cover, the students get fresh air, a green pollution free environment, learn about saving water, campus cleaning, and carry this basic important knowledge back home, thus contribute to their households. Alumni members also get to know how they can enrich their societies with green cover, water management plans, cleanliness drives etc. It also serves as a platform for a unified student-staff-management-parent-alumni bonding session along with academic knowledge about the global warming causes and

remedies, water management, greenhouse effects, and basic nature.” (from JAAI website)

The ADO also has identified Ecology and Environment as one of its thrust areas for the South Asian Assistancy goals. It has identified the over four decades of work of soil and water conservation and management for livelihoods and ecology of Social Centre in Ahmednagar district in Maharashtra, the work of Shramik Abhivruddhi Sangh (Jana Jagaran) in Belgaum district in Karnatak, the work of Fr. Walter Fernandes on “Development Induced Displacement” across the country, that of Fr. Tony Herbert in Jharkhand on the effects of mining on ecology and lives of marginalized communities, of over three decades of work of Tarumitra on awareness and campaigns on ecology, environment and biodiversity and in the recent past of Gujarat Jesuit Ecology Mission on Awareness, alternate energy, herbal medicine and eco spirituality and that of De Nobili College in Pune on awareness on ecology and environment among school children.



Some of these programmes were presented in two stalls. The ADO & Tarumitra representatives, participated in a panel discussion on “Empowerment on Ecology, Environment and Sanitation”. Fr. Robert Athickal shared on the work of Tarumitra: Mr. Lourdes Baptista shared on the works of Social Centre, Shramik Abhivrudhi Sangh and that of Fr. Walter Fernandes and Tony Herbert. Both panellists invited JAAI to collaborate in these programmes. The participants of JAAI were quite enthused after the panel discussion, and approached both the panellists to gather further information on future areas of collaboration. The New management committee of JAAI has also expressed its interest in furthering this collaboration which will be consolidated in the coming months.

|Mr. Lourdes Baptista, Director, Assistancy Development Office

From ADMINISTRATION TO ANIMATION: A New way for Jesuits in schools

In my opinion, many Jesuits in our schools are imprisoned by the administrative chores in which they spend more time than in teaching and they do not have time to think innovatively about learning. Polanco, Secretary to St Ignatius of Loyola, wrote in 1560 that “every Jesuit must bear his part of the burden of the schools”, the burden was the responsibility of being unique and different, innovative and revolutionary.



When St Ignatius chose ten Jesuits - four priests and six scholastics - to found a college in Messina he wanted them to chart a **unique course** in the entire canvas of education system in Italy which was dominated by hierarchical the Latin Schools. That course was that the Jesuits had “the faith in the **formative powers** of good literature promulgated by the humanist movement.” Promoting a deep sense of justice and depth of imagination in the minds of students are the principal characteristic of Jesuit education. *Justice and imagination* are the axis around which Jesuit schools’ education revolves, and these two characteristics guide the

entire curriculum.

Jesuit schools must employ **a process in which there are three key parts: being attentive, being reflective, and being loving.** It results in the kind of good decision-making that Ignatius called “discernment.” The goal of Jesuit education is to produce men and women for whom **discernment is a habit**: In every way, the discerned action must lead us to be creative and innovative in the choice of mission; ***as Jesuits we must not be running schools as everybody does, but they should be unique and different in the world of education.***

A discerning Jesuit school must teach differently and students must be able to learn differently. “Ignatian apostolic partners, partnership in mission, companions, collaborators, co-workers, and colleagues. The common aspiration is apostolic companionship based on discernment and oriented towards service.” The very **act of collaboration demands sharing of responsibility and power with partners** for which generosity and mission-focused approach is needed.

Networking within Jesuit schools and with the schools that share the ideals of Jesuit education will enhance not only the quality of education provided but also the unity of purpose and relevance of education. This network should be able to network groups like students, teachers, parents, and administrators between schools and these networks

groups must be able to interact as often as they could to discuss the curriculum, joint programme, and joint annual cultural and sport events.



Knowledge sharing between the groups becomes major attention of the networks, in some places, such networks share innovation and best practices for replication and reproduction in other places, this is **“to support the emergence of collaborative bottom-up innovation for the universal Mission within the Jesuit apostolic body.** Every Jesuit should realize that he belongs to an organization and so he is answerable to someone and that he is only a trustee and not

the owner. Because of this, he needs to get the approval of the community under the leadership of the Local Superior; Usually, a mission is given to a community and every mission is owned by the community, on behalf of the Society. Thus, no one can function on his own, except when some pioneering mission is specifically given to one particular individual; this sense of common ownership will bring about team spirit, collective ownership, accountability and transparency of administration, financial management, etc.

We need to search continuously for God’s will and God’s mission, before we launch any mission; we need to check periodically, if we are moving in the right direction; we need to explore constantly if God wants us to move to something else or something new, rather than blindly holding on to the existing situation or way of functioning, as that culture of being satisfied with the existing situation or practices is against the spirit of discernment and against our way of proceeding.

The physical presence of Jesuits in any of the mission is NOT absolutely essential, while the Jesuit approach and way of proceeding is absolutely essential in order to make it a Jesuit mission. This implies that any mission can be headed by anybody – Jesuit or others – provided the Jesuit thrust and the Jesuit way of proceeding are faithfully carried out.

Every Jesuit school should give more importance to extra or co-curricular activities and programme, in addition to the basic or mandatory syllabus. This implies that we should not be merely result-oriented. Instead we should focus on the all-round formation of the young mind in different aspects – academic, emotional, psychological, skills, character, social, ecological, etc. This is not possible if we remain merely as administrators. Therefore, like the early Jesuits, let us all make ourselves animators rather than administrators in our schools in South Asia.

| Sunny Jacob SJ, JEA Secretary



SPANIARD
TURNED
INDIAN
JESUIT,
FR. SOPENA
PASSES
AWAY ON
THE EVE OF
INDIA'S
REPUBLIC
DAY

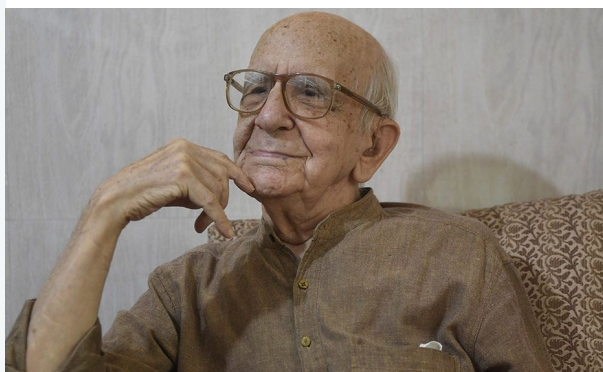
| By Fr. Joe Feliu, SJ

Today, on Republic Day in India, maybe at this very moment Fred Sopena is swearing the Heavenly Constitution. He succeeded last year in becoming an Indian citizen. He has now succeeded in becoming a citizen of heaven for ever. And we, who have walked with him, are now invited to come forward as qualified witnesses, through faith, when he swears loving fidelity to God for eternity. In a way, today Fred is divinized and finds his full identity in becoming one with God.

I wish to talk to you as Fred would; so I am thinking only of your good: what will help you at this moment, spiritually; what will give you joy; even, if possible, what will help you in your material needs.

I met Fred for the first time when he was fourteen and I eleven, and I can say that the life of Fred Sopena has been a success all through. But why that much? - because the amount of good he has done is not normal. It is a mystery how one single man can touch so many hearts and do it so deeply. Fred joined the Jesuits when he was fifteen. But even at that early age he knew what he wanted, though he was not fully aware of that; and this slight shadow of doubt and uncertainty accompanied him always. Call it relativism, or invitation to search further, or sense of humour when nothing seems to be clear, but one has to live and move forward.... Still, this relativism or uncertainty did not come from lack of knowledge. No! for Fred was extremely intelligent, he could have easily been a professor of any matter. It was not to be that way. Fred was appointed as a formator of

young Jesuits, but understandably he lasted only a short time in the job. He was meant to grow and become a full fledged man in places like Achanak Colony, Tara and finally in the fertile retirement of Vinayalaya, in a room next to the porch and open to all, a place that he turned into a public square. Then, what is the secret of the success of Sopena, of his magnetism, of his power? It seems a platitude, but it is not; it is the same secret of the unbelievable success of the carpenter of Nazareth.



Fred had no other Ego but Christ, who is the centre of the life of any Jesuit. And so his identity was outside himself, as Christ's was. 'Get out of yourself!' He got out of Spain and came to India; So also, did he get out of the prospect of a brilliant future in the world to turn himself into a source of light as a poor Jesuit. And so his greatest wealth was to

have found the way to the poor and to be one with them. And this exposure to the poor made him "religious" in the best sense of the word. This was the secret of Fred's magnetism. A lady from Madrid wrote two days ago that she was thirteen when, accompanied by her parents she met Sopena for the first time and was enraptured by him. Now she is sixty-five and the experience of this relationship is still constantly renewed.....

The gospel of today had to be the Beatitudes. I want to imagine that Jesus had Fred in mind, or someone like him, when he pronounced them for the first time. **Blessed are the poor.** Fred's lifestyle, giving away things, no timetable; ready to meet anyone any time.

Blessed are those who mourn. How many tears have dried up perhaps in your own eyes, talking and listening to Father Sopena! **Those who are meek.** Have you ever seen Fred angry? Always gentle, to the level of the impossible.

Those who hunger for justice. The great hunger and thirst of Fred.... Our Jesuit

companion Tony Dias calls Sopena a “gentle revolutionary”: strong convictions, daring plans, but always far from violent confrontations. **Blessed are the merciful.** Never a condemnation from his lips; encouraging, doing good of any kind.

The pure in heart. No room for ambition or power, no self-righteousness. Even, I would say, no religious certainties, for even his faith had a margin of doubt; even the best faith has room for darkness. ‘If there is God...’, he would say with his mischievous look and with that inimitable gesture of his hand.



The peacemakers. Anything to be said about this? Yes; his passion for dialogue at any level. There is no Jew, no Greek, says the Bible. Fred said: there is no Christian, no Hindu, no Muslim, no unbeliever. All are children of God.

The eighth beatitude is perhaps the only one that hardly fits Fred, for he was never persecuted. Who would persecute Father Sopena? True, there were some misunderstandings with zealots of the law, for Fred seemed to be sometimes outside the law. He was not; he was above the law, for the Bible, too, reminds us that there is no other law for those who love.

I was trying to put a few thoughts together for this moment, I realized that men of the caliber of Fred Sopena are in short supply. Maybe. It is up to us to multiply their number. Will you? **This would be the kind of funeral Fred expects: a change in our life for the better.**

One of the messages just received says this of Fred: “even when he died, he has not gone, for he took possession of our hearts here on earth and he will remain always with us.”

I invite you to look at the sky tonight. I know it is difficult in Mumbai. But if you try, you will see a new star. It is Fred Sopena looking at you, twinkling at you like stars do, and above all guiding each one of you. The way he has always done.

~~~~~

## Fr. General in India's Capital Delhi



Jesuit Family receives Fr General at Airport



Vidyajyoti College welcomes Fr General



Interaction with VJ staff & students



Fr General smells the rustic beauty



Addresses Delhi Jesuits



Fr General with Jor Bagh Jesuit Community