



Vidyajyoti Today

Pilgrimaging Theologically in Corona Time



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RECTOR'S INAUGURAL ADDRESS VIDYAJYOTI ACADEMIC YEAR 2020-21

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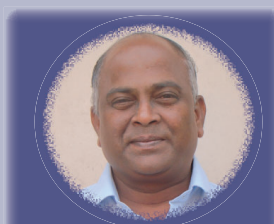
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FR. MICHAEL T. RAJ, S.J.
Rector

Respected Fr P. R. John, Principal, Vidyajyoti College of Theology, dear Fr. Tony Raj, Registrar, esteemed members of the faculty, staff and dear students, it is my privilege and joy to address all of you at this auspicious moment as we set foot on the academic year 2020-21. We have aptly chosen the theme for this year: Pilgrimaging Theologically in Corona Times. To situate ourselves meaningfully at the onset of our academic year, allow me to borrow a set of four words from Fr Adolfo Nicholas, the former General of Jesuits - four words beginning with the letter C: Context, Content, Competency and Charism.



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Our Context: 'Contextual theology' – is a phrase very dear to Vidyajyoti family. We begin the academic year with no actual classroom teaching, no face to face interaction between the professors and students, no weekly field work to reflect in groups, no seminars or rallies to attend. The pandemic calls for an alternative pedagogy a substitute methodology: the virtual learning, the online classes. The context of

your theologizing this year will be more localized to wherever you are, to whatever situation you are in, to the pandemic affected families and groups in your locality.

The content of our teaching and learning process this year will be dealt with in such a way to address the above-mentioned context. You will have 'input' and 'output'. The 'input' comprises of the sacred texts, the scripture, the dogmas, the theses, the encyclicals, the church laws, the teaching by the professors, their class notes and PPTs, etc. The 'output' will be the consequent discussions, the reflections, the sharing, the assignments, the exams, etc. The interplay between the input and output this year will have one common thread - Covid19 - that will run through the texture and fabric of our theologizing process.

The competency in our theologizing process this year will include technical skills and conducive lifestyle needed for virtual teaching and learning. It is important to remember that e-teaching is as new to our teachers as e-learning to our students. Most of us may go through similar feelings while adapting to this new medium.

The Charism: In my homily on the feast of Mary, Mother of the Church, I had quoted a dialogue between Mother Mary and Apostle Peter from a film called 'Full of Grace'; a film with a story situated ten years after the resurrection of Jesus. It shows the life of Mary and the apostles in the early Christian community. It shows how Peter struggles as the leader of the Church, facing various crisis situations like persecutions, fears, Jewish-Gentile conflicts and controversies, and dogmatic debates. Apostle Andrew suggests to Peter to meet the Mother – they all call Mary, 'Mother'...

I request and recommend to each and every student and professor of Vidyajyoti to take the local corona context as the arena of theologizing; to sharpen the content of theology by choosing and articulating inputs and outputs diligently; to enhance the competency required for the new normal; and to do all the above let us personalize a convincing charism that will carry us along. All the best.

PRINCIPAL'S INTRODUCTORY WORDS AT THE INAUGURAL MASS

Monday, August 10, 2020



FR. P.R. JOHN SJ
Principal

Dear Archbishop His Grace Anil J. T. Couto, Fr Michael Thanaraj, Rector of VJ College of Theology, Fr Antony Raj, Registrar, my esteemed staff-colleagues, technical and administrative staff, students and dear new comers, a warm welcome to each and every one as we begin the academic year 2020-2021 invoking God's blessing. I am glad, that in spite of COVID-19, some have braved to be physically present here and about 135 students joining this Holy Eucharist online. Vidyajyoti derives its motto from the Katha Upanishad which reads:

न तत्र सूर्यो भाति न चन्द्रतारकं नेमा विद्युतो भान्ति कुतो यमग्निः
तमेव भान्तमनुभाति सर्वं तस्य भासा सर्वमिदं विभाति || 5.15 ||

*tameva bhāntam-
anubhāti sarva* —

"everything reflects the one who alone shines." We seek this eternal light as pilgrims. We begin, our journey quite simply, from where we are, very much like St. Ignatius of Loyola, a pilgrim, who pilgrimed from the moment of his conversion towards a vision of God, "who loves us, creates us and wants to share life with us forever. Our only desire and our one choice should be this: I want



and I choose only what is most conducive for me to the end for which God created me" (Sp. Ex. 23). So, the theme for the Eucharistic celebration: "Pilgrimagining theologically during Corona Times" is an apt one presided over by the Patron of our College Archbishop Anil J. T. Couto here at the Sacred Heart Cathedral, Delhi. The patron's presence is always an occasion of grace for all of us.

In the context of Corona Virus affecting human life and the reassertion of the right wing ideologies

and brute majoritarianism in our Mother land, we are called to pilgrimage engaging in a critical theological formation which is “contextual” by a life of prayer, serious study, and neighborhood involvements and thus reminding ourselves that God journeys with the poor, healing and guiding them. This is beautifully captured in the three pedagogical principles of Vidyajyoti’s academic curriculum: God within History and the Response of Faiths, God in Jesus Christ, Church and Sacraments and finally, Christians in the world.

In the words of late Fr. George Gispert-Sauch SJ, theology is really a *sariraka mimamsa*, an intensive reflection on the Incarnate Lord, who “for us and for our salvation took flesh of the Virgin Mary – became *sariraka* – and was made human.”

May I commend all of us to the maternal care of our Blessed Virgin Mary!

EVENTS

The Inaugural Mass



Yesu Babu ADL
III B.Th.

The academic year 2020-2021 with all its ups and downs finally started on 10th August. Archbishop Anil J T Couto was glad to preside over the Holy Mass at Sacred Heart Cathedral. Fr. P R John SJ, the Principal welcomed everyone to the Holy Eucharistic celebration. While welcoming, he said that we are called to pilgrimage and engage in critical theological formation by our life during the pandemic. His grace Archbishop Anil Couto assured us in his homily that God is with us and travel with us in all these miseries and sufferings.



Rev. Fr. Valan Antony SJ gave a broader understanding on perspective. He illuminated that life is all about perspectives. He helped the college fraternity to comprehend what the real theological contextualization is at this point of time. He expressed, “The walls of the hospitals have heard more sincere prayers than the walls of the temples, mosques and churches. Covid – 19 is for us yet another Locus Theologicus, calling for deeper pilgrimaging in the realms of Ethics, Theodicy, Christology, Eucharist, Ecclesiology and Eco-theology.” Fr. Michael Thanaraj SJ, the Rector proposed the vote of thanks. The liturgy was assisted by the Brothers from Pratiksha through singing. Even though we all were scattered in different parts of the country, all of us were united in one Spirit of Jesus. Though the fear was prevailing in our minds, it was God who assisted us assuring, “Fear not for I am with you, be not dismayed, for I am your God, I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.” The liturgy was assisted by brothers from Prateeksha and sisters.

Experience of VJ-5, Patna



Rajeev Ranjan SJ
III B.Th.

“For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them” Mt. 18: 20. This is what we (Fr. P.R. John, Schs. Amul Jacob and Savariappan M. of I year B.Th. and Schs. Jeevan Isaac and Rajeev of III-year B.Th.) the five members of VJ Family experienced when we gathered around the altar of the Lord to share our life during Covid – 19 pandemic. We were happy and fortunate to have Fr. P.R. John, the Principal of Vidyajyoti in Patna. As we five gathered to share our experience with one another we could feel the presence of the VJ Community. On 14 September, 2020 we had Holy Eucharist along with sharing of

our experiences. We shared our joys and sorrows. The abrupt end of our emersion experience was disappointing for Jeevan and myself. Even the closure of the college was not a happy ending. However, we realized that it was a need of the hour. When we came back to the province, our right to freedom of movement was curtailed due to spread of corona virus. We were helpless in several aspects of our lives. Being the first-hand experience for Amul and Savari with Fr. P. R. John, they too were happy to share their experience of being the members of VJ Family. Though they are not physically present, they feel the vibration of the Community through online classes. Life has not been easy as we would have thought during the normal days. Everything is uncertain. There is fear and anxiety in people. The suffering Christ is visible on the streets, markets and slums. Therefore, we cannot afford to hold on to our comfort zones. Corona virus has become blessing in disguise for all five of us. We could experience the suffering Messiah closely in the form of migrant labourers, slum dwellers, homeless, the poor and the hungry people. We got an opportunity to heal His wounds in our own capacity. Though there were fear and hesitation to reach out to the suffering people, the assurance of God's protection "Do not fear!" encouraged us.

COVID-19 curtailed our religious freedom but it kindled our faith in Jesus our saviour. The suffering people became our source of prayer. Corona virus attacked human beings but it stirred up humanity in us as well. Thus, we could reach out to many needy people providing them with material needs. The pandemic created a worldwide threat but reminds us we are a global community. St. Ignatius of Loyola enjoin us to "find God in all things," yet, in moments of crisis like the present, we may find ourselves wondering, "Where is God in all this?" At one point of time we felt that God is simply absent. But we realized that God is journeying, suffering and labouring with us during this pandemic. We felt that in unexpected ways God might be working in the crisis. As Pope Francis highlighted in his recent "urbi et orbi" blessing, the Scriptures repeatedly assure us not to be afraid. We need not be afraid because God does not desire our suffering but rather is constantly working to turn our suffering to joy. This is our hope. "Hope does not disappoint us, because God's love is poured into our hearts by the power of the Holy Spirit that has been given to us."



COVID - 19 RELIEF WORK

COVID – 19 Relief Work, Arul Kadal, Chennai RTC



**Joe Livingston SJ
III B.Th.**

The fear of uncertainty due to Covid -19 pandemic loomed large and this forced us to think of the plight of the poor. This triggered and anchored our faith in God. We felt one with the vulnerable migrants and poor. It helped us understand our mission in a better light. During the hectic days of coronavirus, we identified some very deserving people in need in our weekend ministry places and around our neighbourhood ministry places and helped them financially. We tried to console them by our little monetary help along with our prayers. We also



distributed dry rations to some families with mentally challenged children at Teynampet and Pattinappakkam. We also honoured the sanitary workers who work tirelessly these days around our place with a token of appreciation. We have helped around 250 domestic workers from Mylapore along with Sr. Valarmathi with dry rations. It was providential that God gave us this opportunity to help these vulnerable people. Life during this time of suffering and uncertainty calls one to reflect back on

certain fundamental questions of faith and God. I always look back on the crucified God who gave meaning to life through His suffering and cross. I am reminded time and again that Good Friday is not the end. There is resurrection. I ask God to give me and this world the ever-flickering optimism soaked in hope!

COVID – 19 Relief Work, Patna



M. Savariappan SJ
I B.Th.

As soon as the lockdown started, we were instructed by our provincial, Fr. Donald Miranda S.J to undertake relief work around our localities in the Patna province. In the first Phase, We, Sanjeevan Community with the collaboration of our Parish Priest (Kurji) surveyed the localities and identified first fifty families who were in dire need of our help. Since it was lockdown situation, we decided to help them first with some financial help i.e., Rs. 500 each per family. All fifty families were the members of our parish. We, the scholastics in the community, went to their respective houses to help them. In the second phase, we again identified 500 families without any discrimination. We decided to give them dry ration, i.e., rice, beaten rice, jaggery, salt, dal and aata. We distributed the coupons. On 24th April, we distributed the dry ration to the families in our community. Scholastics were fully active in this relief work. They collected the data, visited the families personally and packed the dry ration. I could experience their struggle and anguish during this pandemic. I was a messenger of Christ who could give my hands to our suffering brethren. As follower of Christ, I got an opportunity to respond to the unsettled realities of today that is covid-19 pandemic. I could see and experience Christ in these suffering people. I follow Him in responding to the greatest needs of our day with love and compassion.



COVID-19 Relief Work, Northeast



Jojappa SJ
II B.Th.

Our hearts pained to see thousands of migrant workers walking for miles to reach their home without food and water. Many of them lost their lives. During the first phase of the lockdown I was in Guwahati, Assam. The fear of the virus, both real and unreal, psychologically overwhelmed the people in the city. It turned friends and neighbours into strangers. Without work and money, many struggled to make their both ends meet. Seeing the sorry plight of the unfortunate neighbours, the Guwahati Jesuit community ventured out to lend a helping hand to them. The Jesuit community did its level best to be Good Samaritan. Inspired by the words of Jesus – “Give them



some food to eat” (Mt: 15:16), we took turn to cook food, pack it and distribute it to the needy. Despite the rapid spread of corona virus, we ventured into the city to distribute the food packages and

groceries to the poor. One day, when we were carrying out our work, I had a profound experience. I encountered a beggar while distributing the food packages. While receiving the food packet, he looked at me with gratitude, and said in a feeble voice, “Thank you”. I saw a glow of joy on his face and it brightened up my spirit. It was both humbling and spiritually satisfying experience for me. Perhaps it is the meaning of “Blessed are the poor for theirs is the kingdom of God.”

The Catholic Church and many other NGO’s in the North East plunged into action and they did a commendable work in this regard. The Church has been responsible in making every possible effort to save people from starvation. Many Christian schools have also been turned into quarantine centres

to contain the dreaded virus. The fight, of course, is not over. May the Lord who 'came to serve' continue to inspire and challenge us.

COVID-19 Relief Work, Varanasi

The Indian Missionary Society (IMS) is an indigenous Missionary Congregation of Priests and Evangelist Brothers. The main Charism of Congregation is pioneering evangelization.

The entire world is going through a very distressing situation due to Covid-19 pandemic. It has changed the lives of people. RTC Varanasi (run by the IMS congregation) made this an opportunity to serve the people of God closely during this pandemic. Fathers and Brothers have shown their generosity by contributing to their various needs. We, the RTC students went to different villages conducting an awareness program for the people regarding the pandemic. Many people came to our institution to get some help and they were provided with basic essentials.



**Arun Ekka JSR
III B.Th.**



**Abhijeet Guria IMS
III B.Th.**



Under the guidance of Fr. Anand, IMS we distributed cooked food and dry ration with collaboration of Ashmita (one of the wings of the IMS social organizations). Within a week 1200 families were helped by the Ashmita. Each family received 5kg rice, 5kg wheat flour, 2.5kg potato, 2.5kg pulse, 3kg onion, cooking oil, salt, soaps, masks etc. Cooked food was provided to cancer patients and people residing in slum near railway station. It was a very painful experience we ever came across. At the same time, it gave us inner joy and peace of mind.

Some of us got an opportunity to reach out to people staying in the slums and provide them with essentials during the lockdown. We covered almost all the slums in the city of Varanasi. It was an enriching experience

to spend time in the slums distributing food items, talking to them and listening to their challenges and struggles they faced during the lockdown. During this time, getting involved with people was challenging. However, we learnt to see things in new perspective and our vocation got strengthened. The words of Jesus, "Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me" indeed inspired us.

COVID – 19 Relief Work, Ranchi



"When the people outside are suffering, how can we (religious, men for others) remain in our comfort zone?" This was provoking statement given by the Provincial of Ranchi Jesuit Society as the lockdown started in March. Two types of works were started. First, shelter home for the migrant workers coming back from other states. They were sheep without shepherd. Some of us went there and stayed with these people for two weeks. It was a heart touching experience, as we



**Prakash Baskey SJ
III B.Th.**

listened to the painful stories of these people. Most of them were emotionally and psychologically broken and shattered, as their future look dark. We accompanied these people. Suffering Messiah was visible in these people. Second, XISS in collaboration with the district admin-

istration of Ranchi, started giving away dry ration. Initially, we were involving in making packages of dry ration which included Rice, Dal, Potatoes, Grams, sugar, tea, spices, oil, sattu, salt and soap. We prepared around fifty thousand packages. The work went on almost one and half months. We were also involved in loading these dry rations in the vehicles for the distribution in sealed areas of Ranchi district. There was a sense of joy and happiness, as we worked. Our involvement in the work, gave us the feelings that we belong to the sufferings, poor and marginalized. We became the part of suffering Christ. It was a demanding and risky task, sometimes hectic and tiring, but we felt happy and satisfied. God was journeying with us in this noble task.

COVID – 19 Relief Work, Delhi



**Denis Kumar SJ
III B.Th.**

It has been a great blessing, an awesome opportunity to involve myself in the Relief Works and to actualize the Contextual Theology here in Delhi. Different field-work experiences and various exposures have taught me to be more open to the situations and to ever avail myself for it at any cost. The wounds of Delhi riots were not even healed and not even one month was over, COVID – 19 pandemic knocked the door of the humanity. It disturbed me to get into the field. Initially I was hesitant and afraid but the Word of God encouraged me saying, “Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go” (Joshua 1:9).

Eventually some of us came out of our comfort zones and reached out to various kinds of suffering people and extended our little help and support during the Covid-19 pandemic. We helped the homeless and hungry people on the roadside. Many middle class and poor families had a shortage of rations and basic facilities to fight with the situation. The aged and ailing people had gone through unthinkable mental stress and fear of the pandemic. Migrant factory workers were left with empty hands and most of them were abandoned by their owners. Rickshaw Pullers, Porters in the markets, Cycle Rickshaw pullers, E-Rickshaw drivers and Share auto drivers were found in miserable conditions. In the scorching sun, the women and children of migrant labourers were found in unending lines to collect the cooked food served at government school premises and other allotted places. Thousands of factory workers and construction labourers were fighting for their unpaid salary and human dignity. The standard Nari Kuravan Tribe sellers, fruit and Vegetable vendors, Chat vendors and small shopkeepers were also affected. Poor Farmers at the outskirts of Delhi, Noida, Ghaziabad, Bhawana, Balaswa, and beyond Buradi have lost the fruit of their hard labour. There was no one to buy their vegetables, green leaves, and seasonal fruits. Students from other parts of our country staying in the rented flats and hostels and those who depended for food on Mess and collage canteens also faced a lot of hardships.



We joined our hands with many religious groups to provide the most needed things and console the deserving people through our material help. At the end we were joyful for we showed solidarity with the suffering Christ.

Sex workers at Garstin Bastion (GB Road) during Covid-19 Lockdown: GB Road is in the ruins of the old walled city of Shahjahanabad in central New Delhi, stretching for a kilometre or two from Ajmeri Gate to Lahori Gate. GB Road is one of the largest red light areas in India, with more than 100 brothels located on shabby floors above the street-level hardware shops. It is one of the most important ministry places of Vidyajyoti. Therefore, we cannot close our eyes to the realities of GB Road.

During the last week of April, we gave a short visit to these people. It was a heart touching experience for us. “Our life is worse than any animal sir,” these were the words we heard from them and witnessed

the ground reality. Sometimes I thought even the people who were in the shelter homes would have a better life than these forgotten people. "What would we tell you, Sir? The world and the life that you live is different from ours. We have a different life in the four corners of the wall and every day we come across gods and demons in our life." said one of the sex workers.

We all know that what they are doing is not by choice. No one knows the reality of how they were trapped and forced and trafficked into this way of life. After the National Lockdown, most of the sex workers staying back were above 50's and 60's age group. Among them, some are sugar patients, a few BP patients and many were lacking other medical aids. Most of the young and beautiful girls moved to different places and pockets of Delhi in the first phase of the Corona outbreak. These people do not even have proper documents like Aadhar Card, Ration Card and Domestic Gas Cylinder facilities. As a result, they do not get any benefit from various government schemes which they deserve for free of cost. They are depended on kerosene stoves and mini gas cylinders to cook their meals but now even these shops and refilling stations remain closed. During these days having any vegetable dish for meals was a luxury for them. Some of them have babies and getting milk and other dairy products was a difficult task. At this juncture, our team took courage to venture in and assessed the situation with the help of an animator in that area. She was kind enough to extend her generous help to carry out our project. Many sponsors came forward to provide them with dry rations, refilling gas cylinders, milk products for children, medicines for the sick and sanitizers for all of them. Some of them managed to go back home with the hope of restarting a new life. While receiving various help from us we could see a kind of joy and happiness on their faces.

As we concluded the Covid-19 duty, I felt a kind of change in me. I was able to feel with the suffering people out there on the road. "This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us"(1 John 5:14). Throughout this journey, I realized that God would never let down His people and whenever we knocked at the door for any help many doors were wide open for His work. Finally, I feel that it was worth taking a risk to bring smiles on people's faces.

RTC BROTHERS, NEW FACES OF VJ

Arul Kadal, Chennai RTC

I am Williams Charles SJ, of Chennai province. I was born in Pambar in Kerala, brought up in Palayamkottai in Tamil Nadu. Youth ministry has always been my area of interest. Social analysis and project making are a few areas that I have developed in the recent times. Politics is another area of interest of mine. I love games. I envisage my country to be open to all cultures, races and ideologies and everyone has the freedom to live peacefully with love. I dream of a church where Social Justice is given importance and understands the modern youth and directs them in the right path. I love to see this college an institute for better learning. An institute to be a den of opportunities to develop critical thinking for the good of the Church and the Society at large.



I am Paul Raj Arockiasamy SJ of Madurai Province, you can call me Paul. I am from T. Sindala Cherry, Theni, Tamil Nadu. I love listening to Music, Electrical and Plumbing Works and Computer. I would like to see the Church that practises what it teaches; that goes beyond the self-contradictory policies. My expectation from the college this year is to complete the academic year considering the unprecedented situation, through innovative measures that do not compromise the studies as well as not pushing the students to extremes.



I am Manickam SJ of Chennai Province. I hail from Pullicat, Tamil Nadu. My hobbies are reading books, sports, editing videos, socializing, dancing, acting, organizing events and volunteer work. My

areas of interest are photography and reading books. I feel that I am good at creating good rapport with others; sensitive towards others, team work and entertaining others with fun and frolic. The Church needs to be inclusive towards the excluded, the promote the least, the common good and the care for the creation. I need to be the voice of the Church and bring the people from periphery to primary irrespective of all the social sectors that I am bound by. The vision that I have for the country is to treat equally every human being with dignity and respect. I wish the leaders of the country to honestly commit themselves in serving the poor and the needy.



This is Joe Livingston S. SJ of Madurai Province. I hail from Thoothukkudi, Southern Tamil Nadu. I have a passion for creating videos and spending time with nature. I love travelling as well as listening to music. I love the Church that is for the poor and with the poor. I enjoy being with lovely and free Church. I wish to enjoy the diversity of India through cherishing them with the people around and learn from them in my life. I am realistic with a focus on the bright side, and I send you loads of positivity to continue being an inspiring person, as God always is.



Hey Buddies, Hearty Greetings to you all. I am Sch. Arul SJ. I am from Dindigul (Tamil Nadu) close to the Kodaikanal Hill station. I belong to the Jesuit Madurai Province. I am a student of English literature. My passion is English literature. I am also interested in theological studies. I am inspired by the missionary church and servant-leadership of Pope Francis. This inspiration enthuses me to commit myself in the mission of solidarity and fidelity of Jesus. My hobbies are reading and writing books, listening to music, and editing videos. I have written two books up to now: Mementos of Moments and English Made Easy.



Hey Friends. Hearty Greetings to you all. I am Jayaraj SJ of Jesuit Chennai Province. I am from Dindigul (Tamil Nadu). I have done B. Ed in biology. My hobbies are reading books, listening to music, travelling around the world and involve myself in thinking and entering into dialogue with others for the promotion of justice. I am inspired by the Church and Pope Francis for the humble leadership and innovative mission. I like contextual theology that places the marginalized and poor as its focus. I like to read biblical commentaries and theological articles which enlighten me with knowledge and wisdom to understand today's world and prepare for the future priestly ministry. I desire to serve the poor and the oppressed in the society. I have a deep love for them.



Tarunoday, Ranchi RTC

I am Stanislaus Murmu, SJ of Dumka-Raiganj Province. You can call me Stany. I am from Manjra Bari, Pakur, Jharkhand. I love playing football and also watching football matches. Besides, I am keenly interested in social analysis and political affairs of my State. I would like to envision Catholic Church that uplifts the poor, needy and the downtrodden. Church should take along the people of good will to promote justice, peace and equality in our country. My expectation from this college is that this be a place to grow in spiritual life as well as critical thinking.



Hi this is Tobias Tigga SJ, belonging to Madhya Pradesh Province. I was born in Singibahar village and brought up in Kunkuri, (Jashpur) one of the towns in Chhattisgarh state. Pastoral ministry has always been my area of interest. I also love teaching and being with the young and old members of society. I would love to see the Church being opened for all the poor and marginalized people, stand by them in their struggles and fight for their rights. My expectation from VJ family is to equip us with knowledge of Christ so that along with my friends I may become better instruments in the vineyard of Christ.



I am Libin Kerketta SJ of Ranchi Province. I come from Tongo Parish of Gumla district, Jharkhand. I love listening to music, games, making friendship and learning new things. In this unprecedented situation of Covid-19, I would like to see the Church as caring, compassionate, loving and the servant of people of God. I envision my country and government to respect all the religions, cultures and traditions in spite of diversity. The online class is a different and a new experience for me. Therefore, my expectation from the college is to provide concrete study materials for the better theological learning.



I am Sandeep Kujur SJ of Ranchi Province. I was born in Jharkhand and brought up in Delhi. Social work is my main area of interest. I have worked two years full time in this area. I love to work among the least of the society. I expect the Church to accompany the least of the society irrespective of caste, colour, religion, culture, language and race. I love Social justice. I am interested in automobile and electronic work. I love watching movies. I update myself with the latest news about the Indian Politics. My expectation from the college this year is that it helps the students theologize on the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.



I am Johny Kujur SJ of Ranchi Province. I am from Punri, Gumla, Jharkhand. I love listening to music, singing and composing songs. I also love games. I would like to see the Church grow in the grace and knowledge of God, and to become more and more like God in character, thoughts and habits to bring love, justice and peace for all the people. My expectation from VJ is to provide us an opportunity to develop our critical thinking for the good of the Church and the Society.



I am Satya Prakash Baskey SJ of Hazaribagh Province. I was born and brought in Giridhi, Jharkhand. My strengths are my analytical approach, sociability, and my human touch to the situations. In my free time, I enjoy being with my friends, sometimes gardening, listening to music, reading, travelling, and playing outdoor games. I wish the Church to be open, transparent and welcoming to the people of different castes and creeds. My expectation from the college is to impart the theological teaching and learning without compromising quality and depth of knowledge while making use of the technology.



Gyan Bharati, Varanasi

I am Bikash Nayak of Buxar Diocese. I was born and brought up in Tiangia Dist. Kandhamal, Odisha. Charismatic movements have been the area of my interest. Apart from this I developed new skills during the lockdown such as cooking, reading, listening to music and games. I wish India to be a place of unity among all the religions irrespective of class, creed, culture, language and ethnicity, where everyone shares equal rights. It would be my joy to work for the well-being of the poor and stand against unjust practices in society. My expectation from the college is to help us to be more committed and dedicated for the service of the Lord.



I am Robert Sahotra of Shimla-Chandigarh Diocese. I was born and brought up in Rampur, Uttar Pradesh. I am very much interested in social work helping poor and work for justice especially the poor. During the lockdown I was completely engaged in the relief work, supplying food material to the migrants and poor. I am keenly interested in reading books, cooking, gardening and computer skills. When I look at India as a whole my vision for India would be to build a dignified human society where all are respected and cared irrespective of class and creed. I would expect from this institution to produce vibrant missionaries for the church of India.



I am Arun Ekka from Gumla (Jharkhand), belonging to Jammu-Srinagar Diocese. I love reading books, games, cooking, travelling to different places and photography. I love the Church very much. I'm inspired by the Holy Father Francis. His humble lifestyle, leadership and his pastoral care especially for the poor inspire me. I would like to help people by reaching out to the poor, broken hearted, those neglected by the society and to assist them to uphold their identity. In order to relate myself more with people, Contextual theology will be of great help in my ministry. Hoping this contextualizing study will help me know the reality of people in the streets and the function of the administration of the country and help me to integrate Pope Francis thoughts in my apostolate.



I'm Rijo Joseph, belonging to the Indian Missionary Society (IMS), Delhi province. I hail from Kerala, Tellicherry Archdiocese. Some of my hobbies are reading books, listening to music and people, driving and travelling to different places, and helping out the needy. My vision for the Church is that it follows the footsteps of Jesus, who was always available for the people in their joys and sorrows. The Church should be "the Shepherd who knows the smell of the sheep". Church that is the voice of the voiceless, strength of the weak, an advocate for the marginalized community especially in today's dire Indian situation to promote inclusion, equity and justice through a process of empowerment of the poor and marginalized.



I am Sumit Tirkey, belonging to the Third Order Regular of St. Francis (TOR), Ranchi province. I'm from Chainpur, Gumla, Jharkhand. My aspirations of serving Christ began from early childhood. Hoping to fulfil my dreams, I've been forming myself in all the aspects of humanities and religiosity in my Franciscan formation. Novitiate was the best formation periods to discern my life and vocation to walk in the footprints of St. Francis. Being a seeker, I feel that doing theology is the best part of my life to seek God. Cooking, socialization and studies are the areas of my special interest. I expect that our local Chota Nagpur Church becomes more dynamic and vibrant.



I'm Amit Kumar Beck belonging to the Third Order Regular of St. Francis (TOR), Ranchi province. I was born in Bhukumunda, Jharkhand and brought up in Odisha. I love listening to music and playing football. My expectation from the college is that I may receive as much help as possible that will enhance my ability to do well in my Theological studies. This Theological study must help me understand the pain and sufferings of the poor and downtrodden and work for the betterment of the society at large. I would like to enjoy my life in every possible way through the various opportunities given to me.



I'm Mangal George Toppo. I belong to the Indian Missionary Society (IMS), Delhi province. I'm from Archdiocese of Ranchi, Mandar Parish. I like reading, listening to music, doing yoga etc. I enjoy traveling to different places, witnessing different cultures, life style of people and to promote them. I would like to see the Church that becomes voice for the voiceless, advocates social justice, works for the welfare of people who are victims of crime and traumatic events. I would like to enhance and enrich my knowledge of Sacred Scriptures with the help of the faculty and resources available at VJ.



I'm Parmesh Dalbehera belonging to the Indian Missionary Society, Varanasi Province. I hail from Sagada, Rayagada district, Odisha. My hobbies are reading books, dancing and sports. I also have a passion for art and paintings. I like to spend time with children and the poor. To me the Church must be inclusive, irrespective of caste, culture and language. All should be respected and treated with love and care as brothers and sisters, especially the poor, marginalized and those treated as least in the society.



I am Tarcus Ekka belonging to the Indian Missionary Society (IMS) Varanasi province. I'm from Jharkhand and belong to Hazaribagh Diocese. My parish is Mandair and village is Koywatary. My hobbies are reading, writing, dialogue and communication, enjoying nature, and listening to music. I look forward to serving the poor and needy, to bring justice, peace and harmony in the life of people and in the society at large. I am good at community building and holding good rapport with the people. According to me the Church needs to incorporate various cultures, to build the kingdom of God. The Church needs to be inclusive in nature.



Hi friends, I am Abhijeet Guria belonging to the Indian Missionary Society (IMS), Ranchi region. I hail from Katukona village, Simdega, Jharkhand. I am interested in singing, playing musical instruments, and conducting programs. I also very much interested in singing and teaching on social media. I'm a social person and good at relating with people and able to understand them. I have always been dreaming to share the God's love to the people in different ways. My vision for the Church and the country is to integrate Christ values in the lives of people and contribute in the upliftment of the vulnerable people in society at large.



I'm Noble Baby, belonging to Little Flower Congregation (CST). I hail from Cherupuzha, Kannur, Kerala. My hobbies are playing games, travelling, driving, and cooking. I dream of a Church that responds and avails herself to the most vulnerable and acts in the best interest of these people regardless of caste, creed and colour.



FRESHERS, I YEAR B.TH. STUDENTS

I am Sch. Parciush R Marak, SJ, of Kohima Region. I, a Garo tribal, hail from Meghalaya. I've completed my B. Ph. and M. Ph. studies at JDV, Pune. I had a beautiful experience of one-year regency at the Basilica of Bom Jesus, Goa. I feel blessed to have spent a year with St. Francis Xavier! Besides the Basilica ministry I was involved directly with the Youth Formation Movement founded by Fr. George D'sa, SJ. The other important mission was that of the North East Migrant Ministry. My task was to kickstart the ministry among the NE people in Goa. Presently I'm in Guwahati. Hopefully things would get better and I can come to Delhi soon. I am looking forward to a fruitful life at Vidyajyoti. I wish to be a better human person; and I think that some theological knowledge would help me in this regard. I love studying philosophy, I love playing the piano, and I have quite a funny bone.



I am Prerna Dhurwey belonging to the Congregation of the Sisters of the Holy Cross, Menzingen, of the North Indian Province. I am from Jabalpur diocese, Madhya Pradesh. My hobbies are reading, gardening, cooking, learning language and doing voluntary works. I am good at acting and writing stories. Since November 2019 I was in the formation team. Before joining theological studies, I had been working in a hospital as a lab technician. My vision is: to live in the Spirit of the Gospel and discover joy, peace and brotherhood in the Church and country. My expectation from theological studies is to discover the person of Jesus who is alive within me. I hope that my reading, listening to and understanding of the scriptures will help me to communicate Jesus to the world more effectively.



This is Sch. Savariappan M, belonging to the Patna Jesuit Province. I am originally from Mysore, Karnataka. After finishing two years of regency, I did my B. Ed. studies at St. Xavier's College of Education, Patna. My hobbies are playing basketball, listening to songs and cooking. I love to make



friends. As I enter into one of the important phases of formation, I feel joy. The aim of doing theology is to know Jesus more personally and to experience Him in my theological studies as well as in all my activities. It's a time of going deeper into my call and cherishing my faith that I have been living sincerely from my birth.

I am George Victor and I belong to Gujarat Jesuit Province. I hail from Tamil Nadu. I entered the Society of Jesus in the year 2010. For the last two years, I was assisting the apostolic school's director at Sughad – Gandhinagar. As I taught the basic skills of gardening to the boys, I got the privilege to have a close experience of nature. In Greek the name George denotes, "a tiller of the soil". I am glad that my name adds more credit to my person. At present, I am in Sneh Jyoti regional Theologate house in Baroda. My passion is to accompany children and youth through education. My motto is 'dare to do anything' which brings glory to God. St. George, who killed a dragon, was very daring. I too desire to be daring and courageous and contribute to society by being compassionate to people at the peripheries. I wish that my theological studies would be an aid to my motto and my future mission.



I am Cecilia Bilung, SRA. I hail from Odisha, Rourkela Diocese. I am the youngest in my family. I belong to the Congregation of the Missionary Sisters of the Queen of the Apostles, Varanasi Province. After my first profession I was engaged in proclamation ministry. Last year I was in the formation house, the Pre-Novitiate. I am still waiting for my BA exams. My hobby is to read books. I am good at singing and arts. I am preparing myself for socio-pastoral ministry and formation. I hope that theology studies will help me in this regard.



I am Louis Xavier Lobo, SJ, belonging to Bombay Province. Before joining the Jesuits, I completed my higher education. I'm a graduate in B.Sc. chemistry from St. Xavier's college, Fort (Mumbai) and also hold Master's Degree in Management Studies (H.R). I worked for six years for various multiple MNCs. I come across as a hardworking, caring and friendly person with good listening skills. Before coming for my theological studies, I did my regency at Talasari Mission in Maharashtra for two years. This Mission is inhabited by tribals; predominant among them are the Warlis. The major work that we Jesuits here undertake is Pastoral and Educational apostolate. Robert Cardinal Sarah in the book 'God or Nothing' comments, "The true work of a theologian consists of entering into the Word of God so as to seek to grasp it rationally, to the extent possible, and to share it with the utmost clarity with people." At the end of my theological studies I would like to meet this expectation.



I am Arvind Kujur belong to Madhya Pradesh Jesuit Province. My native place is Duldula, Jashpur, Chhattisgarh. My hobbies are listening to music, watching movies, traveling etc. I am also interested in playing badminton and reading books. Last year I did my regency at Prakash School, Pathalgaon, Chhattisgarh. My vision for the church- "Go, therefore, and make disciples from all nations.... I am with you always, even to the end of this world" (Mt. 28: 19-20). My vision for the country- India should be governed according to the spirit of the constitution. My expectation from the college is to know Christ more intimately and to know the ecclesiastical laws.



I am Amul Jacob belonging to the Patna Province. I am currently in Patna. I am waiting for B. Ed. final exams. I am from Pudukkottai, Tamil Nadu. I love to play cricket, basketball and badminton. I like to read literary books and sometimes love to express my feelings and imaginations through poems. I want to do theology to know God personally and follow him more closely and dearly. I like to

gain a sense of personal conviction about God and deepen my faith in Him. I want to enhance my knowledge and understanding of God and hold on to the dynamic values and morals of the Cristian teachings so as to respond effectively to the changing modern world.



I am John Paul, SJ of Calcutta Province. I hail from Chennai, Tamil Nadu. I like listening to music, reading books and playing basketball. I love to learn about new software. At present I am in a college community attending online theological classes. My expectation of studying B. Th. is to know more about the teachings of the Church and the Bible. I realize how important this study for my future life as a candidate for priesthood. When I face the reality of life as a priest, nothing but the deep knowledge of God and the teachings of the Church would be my help. Therefore, I am enthusiastic to do theology well. Now, I am looking forward to be in Delhi and experience it personally.



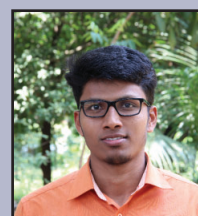
I am Sr. Jenitta Mary Bakkia Samy, belonging to the Congregation of Franciscan Missionaries of Mary, (Ooty Province). I hail from Tirupur district, Tamil Nadu. I completed BSW and attended a short course in geriatric care and computer application. I have an ardent desire to work for the poor and the marginalized. I have worked to uplift widows, single women and transgenders. I tried to motivate them to live a dignified life. Some of my hobbies are reading, listening to music, studying the lives of inspiring personalities, acting, making handcrafts. I hope theology would help me deepen my spirituality and faith that will lead me to understand the Word of God in the present context. I wish to manifest the face of loving God amidst those who suffer, hunger and thirst for justice.



I am David Mao of Bombay Province. I grew up with my family in Manipur. As a young child I wanted to be a priest. It resurfaced in the 2 year of my college studies when my actual discernment to religious life began. One thing led to the other. Before turning to religious life, I was a full-time volunteer for Jesus Youth, India for one year. Later I joined the Bombay Jesuits. As a Jesuit it has been some memorable years of learning to walk in tune with God's will. In the last two years I was doing my regency at Reach Education Action Programme (REAP) and Gunnamatta Adivasi Boarding, Uplat. The major apostolate of both the places was to extend formal and non-formal education to children of the rural and urban poor, underprivileged and the marginalized.



I am Jobin George of Calcutta Province. I hail from Idukki, Kerala. My hobbies and interests include playing games like basketball, table tennis and chess; playing musical instruments like the keyboard and the guitar; and reading books and listening to edifying talks. I would like to see a dynamic and compassionate Church which keeps adapting herself to the changing times under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and which lives "with the smell of the sheep." I want India to be sovereign, socialist, secular, democratic, and republic in their true sense as the Preamble of the Indian Constitution declares. Finally, as for the expectations from the college, I hope it will adequately equip me for the vision and mission of the Catholic Church.



I Maria Angela Mary of the congregation of Franciscan Missionaries of Mary (Ooty province). I am from Dindigul, Tamil Nadu. I have completed five years of my religious life. In the first two years I took care of children and the sick members in one of our communities. My hobbies are reading, doing craft works, listening to music, solving puzzles and playing games. My vision for the Church is that she becomes rooted in Christ's love in order to reveal the human face of God among the poor and the marginalized. My expectation from Vidyajyoti is to widen my understanding of Christ's love and his teachings which may help me to acquire a new perspective in this present era and thus to carry out his mission.



I am Cyprian Soreng of Jamshedpur Province. I hail from Sundergarh, Odisha. Regency was a wonderful stage of formation to experience and explore the mission and the vision of the Society of Jesus. Since my childhood, I have a keen interest in games and sports, reading, listening to music, travelling and gardening. My sole purpose is to become a good Jesuit and serve the Lord in my capacity. As a Jesuit I desire to serve the needy and the poor. My expectation from the theological studies is to strengthen my faith in God and enhance my knowledge about God, scriptures, and the Church.



This is S. Jaya Prakash from Gujarat Province. I am originally from Kumbakonam diocese, Thanjavur district, Tamil Nadu. I was born in a big and a happy family of eight children, out of which three became religious. I have done B.Sc. Electronics and B.Ed. Science and Technology from Gujarat University. I did my philosophy in Satya Nilayam, Chennai. I worked in St. Xavier's School and hostel, Anand for two years. I was also assisting the Pre-Novitiate director, along with my B. Ed. studies in Ahmedabad. I am very much interested in media-communication and I have attended several media courses. My hobbies are music, photography, video and audio making.



I am Hitesh Kumar Parmar of Gujarat Province. I hail from Anand, Central Gujarat. I did my schooling in Anand itself in a Jesuit School. I completed my bachelor's degree and, in 2012, I joined the novitiate in Gujarat. I completed my philosophy in Chennai in 2018. Last year I was in the province infirmary for my regency. I was assisting the infirmarian in taking care of the old and sick Jesuits. At present I am at Sneh Jyoti- a regional theologate in Baroda. I believe that doing a contextual theology will certainly help me respond effectively to the rapidly changing time and situations.



I am Pawan Kumar of Delhi Jesuit Province. Listening to the divine call of Jesus and to mushroom my childhood desire to be a priest, I chose to follow St. Ignatius of Loyola. Having pursued my BBM degree from St. Aloysius College, Mangalore, I was sent to Pune for my Philosophical studies. Both the years of my regency time, I accompanied budding Jesuit candidates teaching them basic English. I keep up cordial relationship with everyone as I believe everyone is important. I always have a desire to learn from others. By the grace of God, I am blessed with many talents and I use them effectively to become more fruitful apostolically. I am indeed happy to come to Vidyajyoti to enhance my Christian faith and to have ever deeper desire to encounter God through scriptures.



I am Alex Mannoor of Little Flower Congregation of Khrist Jyoti Province. I am from Pazhyarikandom, Idukki, Kerala. My hobbies are watching movies, reading, agriculture and electronic works. I am very much interested in traveling, playing football and basketball, talking with friends etc. Last year I was doing my regency at Khrist Jyoti minor seminary Mudikacal, Kerala. My vision for the Church is that the Church may be blessed with more vocations and that our life and activities glorify the name of Jesus. My expectation from the Vidyajyoti College is that it helps me make new friends. For the last eight years I have only Malayali friends but now I will have an opportunity to mingle with friends from different parts of India.



I am Rajesh Katru from Dumka-Raiganj Province. My native is Andhra Pradesh. I just completed my M. Sc., Physics at St. Joseph's College, Trichy. Unfortunately, my final semester exams are pending. Right now, I am at Mundli, Tinpahar, a mission school belonging to my province. My hobbies are reading books, listening to music, and watching movies. I like basketball and dance. What I like most in the Society of Jesus is its trust in young men like me. I truly enjoy the life of 'freedom with responsibility' and the companionship of my fellow Jesuits. I have a dream of empowering youth through education with a focus on their holistic growth.



I am S. Karunakar, belonging to Andhra Jesuit Province. I come from Balijapalle, Kadapa Diocese, Andhra Pradesh. I have two younger brothers. I did my philosophy at Satya Nilayam, Chennai. I have done Master's degree in Mathematics at St Xavier's College, Tirunelveli. I did my two years of regency in educational institutions. I am quite happy and eagerly looking forward to coming to Vidyajyoti which is the last stage of formation before priesthood. It was fifteen years ago that I left my home just to realize this dream.



My name is P Bala Praveen (Balu) belonging to the Andhra Jesuit Province. I am from Vishakhapatnam Diocese, Andhra Pradesh. I finished my M.Com from Loyola College, Chennai. Loyola and two years of regency in a school, a hostel and a Pre- Novitiate. I am glad to come to Vidyajyoti for theological studies.



I am Rakesh Sharma of Montfort Brothers of St. Gabriel, belonging to Delhi Province. I was born and brought up in Sattur, Virudhunagar, Tamil Nadu. I am a friendly and sociable person. I am interested in photography, video making and other computer related activities. I am good at choreography too. I like to spend my time in exploring new things, gardening, travelling to new places, and being with candidates. My expectation from VJ is that it would help me grow in moral and theological thinking. I am happy to be a part of VJ family.



I am Arvind Minj. I belong to the Delhi Jesuit Province. After completing my Bachelor's Degree in Arts (Economics) from St. Xavier's College Ahmedabad, I was sent to Chennai for my Philosophical studies. I did my first year of regency in Bhiwadi (Candidate House), Rajasthan. Here I accompanied young and budding candidates to excel in their studies. For my second year of regency I was sent to Mahwa (Dausa), Rajasthan. There I was fully engaged in teaching in a school. I believe everyone is unique and God has given us different gifts and talents, and that we all are accomplishing God's will in different ways. This belief makes me a sociable person I always make myself available to help others in need.



My name is Mallavalli Srinu (Christu Raju) of Delhi Archdiocese. I am from Eluru, Andhra Pradesh. Last year, I did my regency in Gohana mission station, Haryana. It was a very rich experience for me to be in this mission station which offered me both challenges and opportunities. My hobbies are singing, playing musical instruments and playing games. I feel privileged to do theology in VJ. I have heard a lot about the institution from my friends. I would like to deepen my faith first and would like to help others to grow in faith. I believe that theology will transform and strengthen me to be a more responsible pastor and religious person.

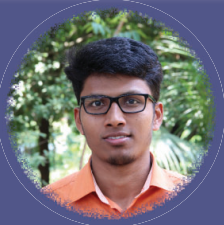


I am Nilesh Kumar of Delhi Archdiocese. I am from Varanasi Diocese, Uttar Pradesh. My hobbies are gardening, reading books, playing cricket, singing songs and playing some musical instruments. I did my philosophical studies in Holy Trinity Major Seminary, Jalandhar, where I experienced the rich culture of Punjab. I am residing in Pratiksha. In theology, I would like to have an experiential knowledge of God's love in and through the studies and ministries.



From First Year Theology Student

Trusting in the Word of God in times of Trial



Jobin George SJ
I B.Th.

Our antidote to the negativity of the daily news: to ponder and reflect on Word of God.

As covid-19 is ravaging across globe, you glance through a newspaper, turn on a news channel, or swipe through social media apps, you will invariably run into topics covering corona virus. So much so that many people like me have become numb to the stark realities caused by this pandemic. But however, you try, you cannot remain uninfluenced by this precarious situation surrounding us. Nevertheless, since I had ample time at leisure during the lockdown period, I could utilize it by reading the entire Bible – a long-cherished desire. As I was reading the Scriptures, I was inspired, moved, challenged, and was prompted to reflect on life in today's context.

"Learn from everything", says Laura Weinblatt. In our present scenario, what better

episode do we have other than corona pandemic to learn something from. First, the one striking feature between corona virus and the Word of God is that they both affirm that fundamentally we are all the same human beings irrespective of man-made distinctions of caste, religion, nationality, etc. The Covid-19 virus does not differentiate between the poor and the rich, the tall and the short, the fair-skinned and the sun-kissed. The same holds true for God in the Scriptures. The scripture testifies, "For God shows no partiality" (Rom 2:11). Again, we read about how we are all one. "There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus" (Gal 3:28).



Secondly, Corona virus kills and destroys human life. However, on the other hand, the Word of God heals and sustains life. "He sent out his word and healed them, and delivered them from destruction" (Ps 107:20). And again, we read, "For neither herb nor poultice cured them, but it was your word, O Lord, that heals all people" (Wis. 16:12). Thus, let us take recourse to the Word of God with faith and trust in the healing hands of God.

Third, this pandemic is not a permanent phenomenon although it may seem so. We learn from history that there have been such pandemics in the past. But the Scripture reminds us that the Word of God is permanent. "Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away" (Mt 24:35). Let us not be worried and disheartened by what is transient but let us hold fast to what is lasting and does not change, which is the Word of God that gives life.

To conclude, Corona virus has made us humans realize how vulnerable and helpless we are. But the Word of God assures our safety if we put our trust in Him. So "Do not fear, for I am with you, do not be afraid, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my victorious right hand." (Is 41:10). There is no situation we will ever face that is out of God's control, so the best place to be, always, is right with Him.

From Second Year Theology Student Journeying with love and pain

We all have had moments of God experience in our life. We are aware that every God experience is the foundation and beginning of theologizing. Doing theology in a particular context does matter to have the right perspective and channelize our energy in the right direction for the greater good. Our experience of God is, in and through Jesus Christ who reveals to us the loving and compassionate nature of God, as the Father who constantly 'labours in His creation'. The God-experience of people differs according to their imagination about God. Our socio-cultural and religious scenario does play a part in forming our idea of God and may reveal various inferences of the same Godhead, but the authentic experience of God is universal. The experience of God demands an appropriate response in return. Our befitting response to God's revelation always has to be as creative as God's action. It is God who reveals Himself to us. We cannot know God unless He reveals Himself to us in and through the experiences of His presence in our lives (Matthew 11:27).

COVID -19 situation might have created great confusion and uncertainty, even raising doubts about God's existence. Our experience of God as loving, compassionate and merciful tells us otherwise. This experience will propel a similar response from us. Our authentic experience of God does guide us on the right path so that we tread together towards the Kingdom of God in love, peace and harmony. All human experiences in life help us to do some soul-searching in our lives and see the presence of God in all circumstances, at



**Sunil Gaikaward SJ
II B.Th.**



all times, just as St. Ignatius experienced and saw God in all things. The authentic response to God's revelation in Covid-19, is the acceptance of the truth of suffering in this world. We cannot imagine the value of life without the experience of suffering, as many other happy experiences that come to us in different forms and in different modes. Thousands of migrant laborers, daily wage workers faced extreme pain and suffering during the lockdown and many more lost their livelihood. Their suffering and their plight have revealed the wickedness that lies in power and greed. Manipulation of the meek and weak sections of the

society is mounting unceasingly. The situation demands a lot from us in this time of Covid-19.

The salvific mission of Jesus reveals the nature of suffering as transforming. The gospel according to St. Mark gives us a profound picture of the suffering Messiah. The Messiah who liberated the whole human race from the bondage of sin and death, went through the cruelty of humans. We all do go through suffering in our lives, be it physical, spiritual or psychological, etc. How does our suffering participate in the salvific mission of Jesus Christ? Our attitude towards suffering can make a lot of difference in our lives and of others. We all have received the nature of God, created in his own likeness and image (Genesis 1:27). To be true to our image we must trust in the providence of the Lord by living an authentic life like Jesus. Following the commandment of love (Mark 12: 28-31), brings us closer to our true nature as loving children of God. In loving one another we walk together; we share together and we work together in building the kingdom of God. Our pilgrimage towards the kingdom of God brings us closer to each other as brothers and sisters. During this journey, our underprivileged brothers and sisters challenge us to see the 'suffering Messiah' present in them. Our pilgrimage of knowing and doing the will of God will lead us to abide in Glory with Him forever (1 John 2:17).

From time to time and place to place, the entire creation is on a pilgrimage. In this pilgrimage, even in

times of uncertainty and confusion, we keep moving towards our final destination, of which we are certain. It is the journey of an individual and of a community, to be a part of the whole, to experience the fulness of life. We journey together with each other, sharing our joys and sorrows. This sharing of joys and sorrows in the times of good and bad, springs up from our hearts and bind us in one accord with a blessing of love, that love which Jesus commands for the neighbour. We are certain of this when we love the people of God, by loving God and carrying out his commandments (1 John 5:2-3). The indwelling of love in us constantly reveals to us our true self. It also opens our eyes to see the Maker of Heaven and Earth, of you and me, indwelling in the history, leading His creation to Himself even during this crisis of Covid-19. Doing the theological pilgrimage in the context of Covid-19 brought to our notice the frailty and limitedness of humans. It also shows us that we have to come to a standstill, reflect, introspect and acknowledge God's graciousness in our lives. By doing this, we do get the strength to walk extra miles with the right attitude and right intention for the good of all. It demands of us the creative response of doing theology in the midst of a troubled world by reaching out to the needy and helpless with hope and faith in resurrected Jesus Christ.

From Third Year Theology Student Life: Worthy of Love, Dignity and Respect



**Thomair Charles, ADL
III B.Th.**

As I began my third-year theological studies, I was very much eager to know how the subjects are going to assist me to integrate the theme of the year 'Christians in the World'. So far, we have completed classes on the Sacraments of Healing, Marriage Law and Bio-medical Ethics. These courses encourage us to promote life so as to experience the love of God in and through the creation. Every life is from God and therefore every life is beautiful and worthy of dignity and respect. These three courses teach us to uphold the same dignity and respect which God has given to each one of us. When we reflect on the sacraments of healing namely, Reconciliation and Anointing of the Sick

helped us to have deeper understanding that is God's Grace actively operative in the sacraments.

They assist us to understand our own human fragility and weakness that is in need of God's healing touch in order to bring wholeness in the relationship between God and man. The course leads us to reflect on the reality of sin and its implications.

It called to bring integral personal and community growth by amending the relationship with God. Laws bind all people living in a community. The Church is an institution where people united in faith. Like every organization, the Church is also governed by laws and regulations that will enable her to fulfil her mission. The course on Marriage Laws helped us to know the natural and the ecclesial laws pertaining to marriage and to grow in pastoral care and prudence. Marriage is an institution of the order of creation. It is raised to the dignity of Sacrament through Christ. It enabled us to understand pastoral issues and how to resolve prudently in view of preserving the faith of the people.

Bio-Medical Ethics deals with the dignity and respect for Human life and analyses the pastoral concerns on ethical issues and dilemmas. The classes enabled us to understand in detail the Church's stand on different ethical issues that we come across today. God is the author and source of our life. We all are created in the image and likeness of God. Hence it is our duty to treat each one equally without any discrimination. The primary concerns of us to care, protect, promote and save life. Life is the precious free gift from God. Therefore, we have no right to take away one's own and others life in any circumstances. We all have our own role to play that's to have respect for each other and assist one another to live their lives to the fullest possible.



INTERVIEW

A Conversation with Fr. Susai Raj SJ (PAT)

1. What was your experience of theological studies in RTC?

The land and people of Bihar in general and deprived groups in particular, was, as it were the prism through which we tried to study all the courses of theology. We were encouraged by the staff members to ask questions from this perspective and search for answers from the books in the library as well as from the living books, the people.

The experiences of apostolic involvement with the Christian community and with the Dalits of neighbouring villages, and periodic sharing cum reflections on the experiences in the classroom as well as outside, and prayers offered for the people with whom we were sharing our daily life, gave us a new perspective of looking at the world in and through the eyes of the faith community and the victims of history or the sub-altern groups.

Sharing of rooms and other limited infrastructural facilities brought about a healthy rubbing of shoulders which 'forced' us to shed our unwarranted sense of privacy and become simpler and more transparent; this facilitated not only personal integration but enabled us to grow as persons of integrity or credibility, reducing the gap between our words and deeds.

Of course, RTC life and methodology had its set of challenges too: but we were able to articulate and handle many, if not all, of these issues.

2. How far were RTCs helpful in doing contextual theology?

Exercises in theologizing on the current and historical issues of the people of Bihar and the country not only gave us a theological method but slowly became a model

for fellow priests and religious as well as members of the local Christian community to evaluate and renew their apostolic and faith life. So RTC was not just a contextual theological methodology but a movement or campaign for renewal of Christian faith in the local Church.

3. If you were the student of theology during Covid-19 pandemic, what would have been your reaction?

Our Christian response to the Covid-19 pandemic, as it is for all other situations, is two-fold:

i) action, and ii) reflection.

i). With all the necessary safety measures in place and protocols followed, being of service to the most vulnerable and weaker sections of people affected by Covid-19 pandemic is the first part of our response. Surely, mobilizing and providing relief to the affected people such as the millions of migrant labourers who walked on our highways would have been the top priority action.

ii). Personal and communitarian prayer, study of all relevant issues, reflection, sharing and discussion on how we theologically encounter this reality of Covid-19 pandemic would be a constitutive part of our response.

Along with action and reflection, weeping with and for our people and pleading before the Lord for His compassion, healing touch and strength to endure this crisis is an integral part our response.

4. What is your comment on the theme of this academic year, "Pilgrimage Theologically in Corona Times"?

It is indeed a contextual theme. We are in for a long haul with the Covid-19 pandemic. Hence, whether students are at Vidyajyoti (VJ) or in their respective places, whether classes are held physically or virtually, the theological pilgrimage in Corona times, I presume, would be on the path of action and reflection. Not being in VJ should not be an excuse for neglecting apostolic engagement and reflections on them.



Fr. Susai Raj SJ is a Patna Jesuit and a theologian. He taught in Gyanoday RTC, Patna for many years and he taught a few courses in Vidyajyoti. He was also the Socius to several Provincials. At present he resides in St. Xavier's School, Patna engaged in prison ministry.

Interviewer
Jeevan Isaac SJ
III B.Th.



Dear Staff and Students

I am glad to place on record that the Bachelor of Theology Comprehensive Exams online were conducted successfully for twenty-five of our students from 25 – 29 August, 2020. This group of students include 14 Jesuits, 1 Montfort Brother, 1 OFM Cap, 2 CST and 7 religious' sisters (2 JMJ, 2 OSU, 2 PBVM and 1 CHF). To be gratefully frank, we were able to achieve this milestone completely because of the funds dispatched from Xavier Stiftung, Switzerland. We were able to acquire the electronic gadgets in order to make the online exam hassle-free. Besides, mention must be made to the fact that their generosity has helped Vidyajyoti to flag off online classes for all the three batches of B.Th. and as well as M.Th. students in the current pandemic scenario. Dear Tony Kurmann SJ, Dana Zumr and Michael Grote, you have been very generous towards us, in our endeavour of forming young men and women for the Church and her mission in India. Vidyajyoti is ever grateful and indebted to your generosity (God loves a cheerful giver, 2 Corinthians 9; 6-7).

PR John SJ



(M TRUDAYA RAJ SJ – PROFESSOR OF SCRIPTURE)



P. R. JOHN SJ
(PRINCIPAL & PROFESSOR OF SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY)



(VALAN C. ANTONY SJ – PROFESSOR OF SCRIPTURE)



(SR. SHALINI PBVM – PROFESSOR OF SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY)

Online Comprehensive Exam....

WORD OF THANKS

Thanks to Your Long Service at VJ

The wheel has come full circle and it's time to begin again. Vidyajyoti will be missing that ever-smiling-face of Mr. Tarcitius Kullu greeting all who entered the College as he retired on September 26, 2020. VJ Parivar is grateful to him for his long service of 24 years. Mr. Kullu worked as the receptionist, linking the outsiders and VJ. In fact, he was the link between the office, officials, staff, students and coworkers as well and, in need extended his helping hand in other works too. VJ appreciates, acknowledges and thanks Mr. Kullu for his selfless hard work with dedication, responsibility and smile. As he begins the next chapter of life VJ wishes him a healthy, wealthy, long and happy time. He will be missed but never forgotten as he is part of the journey of many staff, students, fellow co-workers, visitors and others who spent some moments in VJ.



Fr. Milianus Beck, S.J.

Dear Prabhakaran,

Your three-decade long service at Vidyajyoti Jesuit Residence is coming to an end today. It is a moment of great pride for you. You are retiring from service with a sense of satisfaction and joy, having served scores of staff members and hundreds of brothers. You treated them all with respect, love and fraternal affection. You served Vidyajyoti with all loyalty and dedication. The physical and mental strain involved in your work in the kitchen was your sacrifice of love for us. You came here as a very young person and we are grateful to you for your long years of loving service to us. You cared for us in the way you care for your family and children, perhaps even better. Vidyajyoti has been for you like a second family. You can be proud that you could give to your wife and children a standard of life that your parents could not provide you. Dear Prabhakaran, in the name of a thousand and more Jesuits and the few others who have lived in this house and enjoyed your service in the last three decades, and particularly in the name of the present Rector and Minister, I thank you sincerely and wholeheartedly. May you and your family continue to experience God's abundant blessings in the years to come.

Fr. Poulose Mangai, SJ



Fr. Boniface D'Souza SJ

Fr. Boniface D'Souza SJ was born on 24 April 1956 in Mangalore, Karnataka. He entered the Society of Jesus in 1974 and was ordained in 1986. Initially he was appointed as Socius to the Novice Master and administrator of Ka Rympei Arrupe Jesuit Novitiate, Mawshohroh, Meghalaya and served for three years. Then he became the Novice Master and remained for 10 years. For Two and a half years



he was socius to the Reginal Superior. He also served the young Jesuits of Kolkata in Novitiate and Juniorate. He was student counselor and taught psychology in St. Joseph's College, Kohima for 4 years. He was parish priest in 4 different places. He also engaged himself in Renewal Ministry. He was also a staff member giving programmes for formators in Adhyatma Vidhya Peeth, Bangalore. At present he is our new Spiritual Director in Vidyajyoti. He has spent most of his time in formation houses. He is a very good musician and singer. He is an excellent gardener.

C.S. Mark Wungchang SJ
II B.Th.



The Staff and students of Vidyajyoti condemn the horrific rape and murder of the young woman Manisha from Hathras, U.P. We seek justice for Manisha and her family members

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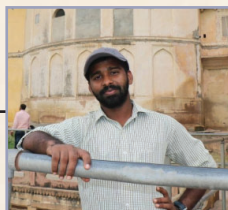


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