

Jesuit Madurai Province
Ignatian Year 2021-22
Inaugural Day Celebration on May 20th 2021
A brief Report

Considering convenience and maximum participation of our collaborators, the Inaugural celebration was rescheduled from 6.30 am to 9.00 am on 20th May, 2021. The celebration was a pre-recorded programme for one hour and thirty minutes online by Loyola TV Madurai.

The programme started with an introductory speech by Fr. Vincent Sekhar, IGY 21-22 Convener for Madurai Province. A soul-stirring interfaith prayer on *Magis* (“இன்னும் அதிகமாக”) was prepared by St. Mary’s team, Madurai, coordinated by Fr. Stephen L. Pragasam, and the prayer covered the salient sayings and reflections from six religious traditions. It ended with an Ignatian song composed by Fr. Robert (SRI) and choreographed by the Arul Kadal junior theologians.



Fr. Vincent Sekhar SJ (Convener)

Fr. Stephen L. Pragasam SJ (PCF)



Interreligious Prayer on *Magis* (in Tamil: “இன்னும் அதிகமாக”)

Nothing could be a greater blessing than to watch our senior (“முத்த குடி”) fathers’ sharing from their personal life, and wishing the province a happy start of the Jubilee Year. For this time, Fr. Thamburaj James (82) and Fr. Varapasadam Arul (97) spoke from their heart their feel in the Society starting with their vocation to Madurai Province.



Fr. Thamburaj James SJ (82)



Fr. Varapasatham Aru M SJ (97)

Thereafter, there were felicitations from one of the long-serving collaborators from St. Joseph's College, Tiruchirappalli, Prof. Alexander Pravin Durai. He was amazed at the Jesuit style of management, particularly their search for a "third option" in solving problems. The example he narrated was humorous and interesting. Both Sr. A. Mary Stella FSAG and Sr. Cecily Savariar SJL, Provincial of Aloysius province of Gonzaga Congregation and Provincial of St. Joseph Province of St. Joseph of Leon Congregation, respectively, narrated the ways in which the Jesuits of MDU province had journeyed with them, both in direction as well as in collaboration. Bro. M. Velankanni Ravi SHJ, General of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Palayamkottai, highlighted how their Jesuit Founder Fr. Adrian Caussanel nurtured them in Ignatian spirituality and charism.



Rev. Br. M. Velankanni, Superior General, SHJ



Prof. Alexander Pravin Durai, SJC, Trichy



Sr. Stella, Provincial, FSAG.



Sr. Cecily, Provincial, SJL.

General & Provincials of Ignatian Families and Collaborators



Fr. Danis Ponniah, S. J.
Provincial, Jesuit Madurai Province

After these speeches, Clive House, Tiruchirappalli, barged in to take the participants to another level of watching. The story of their *Shadow Play* on the theme “Seeing Everything New in Jesus Christ” was fitting to the Covid pandemic situation. The scholastics of Clive House under the guidance of Fr. Arul Oli deserve our appreciation. Followed by the Shadow Play, there was a happy gathering of young Jesuits from Beschi Illam, Dindigul, at their front-pavement, singing a song of joy and sending colourful wishing with balloons. It was moving to see the community photo of Beschi Illam with all senior and ailing Jesuits.



Shadow Play by Schoastics from Clive House, Tiruchirappalli



Senior and Juinor Jesits greeting the Province on the occasion

Madurai Provincial Fr. Danis Ponniah’s addressing the gathering was casual and friendly, clearly focussed, spirited, and all-embracing. He invited the whole province to focus during the Ignatian Year on the individual, community, and institutional conversion, aptly described by the Jesuit General Fr. Arturo Sosa in his first letter from Rome, dated September 27, 2019. Fr. Danis thanked everyone participating in the online programme, particularly the IGFA confrères and Jesuit collaborators. The last and the fitting finale to the event was the *Ignatian Year anthem* “இனிகோ எங்கள் தந்தையே” composed by Fr. S. Mani Valan (lyric) and Fr. Vincent Sekhar (music), and rendered well by Arul Anandar College professors.



Ignatian Year Anthem composed by Fr. Mani Valan SJ & Vincent Sekhar SJ



The whole Inaugural Day celebration, event by event, was concisely and pleasantly introduced by Fr. Godwin Rufus, Principal of Arul Anandar College. The oft-repeated refrain “இனிகோ எங்கள் தந்தையே!” sandwiching events seemed to have captured the minds and hearts of the participants, thanks to the rendering of Fr. Vincent Sekhar. The whole celebration came to an end with a happy note of thanks from Bro. P. Arockiasamy, IGY team member from Thoothukudi St. Francis Xavier Hr. Sec. School.

Over 2780 viewers and 136 likes and 36 comments (as of now, 28th at 12 noon)! Isn't it amazing? As the convener of the Ignatian Year 2021-22 along with my team, I extend my heartfelt thanks to Fr. Xavier Antony, Founder-Director of Loyola TV Madurai and his able team. They were the brain behind launching the programme online. I would also like to acknowledge all those who worked behind the screen – actors and editors of various events related to the Inaugural Day celebration – for its great success.

There was an evaluation of the inaugural day celebration, held on 21st at 4.30 pm. All appreciated the programme as something unique and spiritually enriching, emotionally participatory, and technically smooth-running with a variety of items, inclusive of various types of people including Jesuits and their collaborators, and IGFA members. All appreciated the Novena booklet, thanks to the contributors, editors, press people, especially Fr. Selvaraj Soosaimanickam (Editor of *Thoothan* magazine), which set a mood to prepare us and IGFA members to celebrate the inaugural day in a worthy manner. There were suggestions to include more of the Cannon Ball experiences in MDU province in the course of the Ignatian year.

Reported by

Fr. Vincent Sekhar SJ, *Convener of Ignatian Year 2021-22 (for the Team)*

