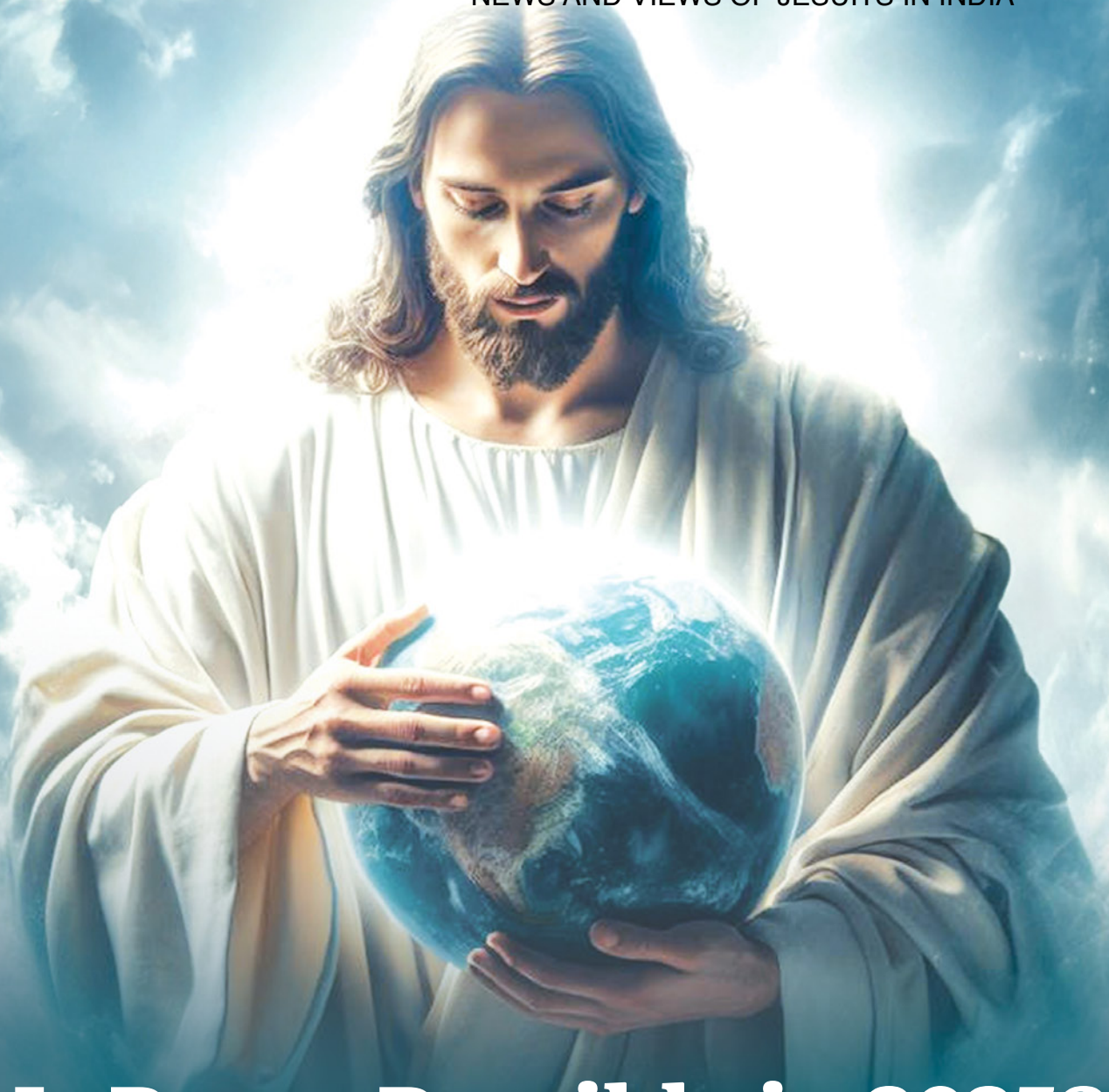


January, 2025

# JIVAN

NEWS AND VIEWS OF JESUITS IN INDIA



## Is Peace Possible in 2025?

Design Thinking & Jesuit Innovation

International Year of Quantum Science

## Not a day in all the year

We walk on starry fields of white  
And do not see the daisies;  
For blessings common in our sight  
We rarely offer praises.  
We sigh for some supreme delight  
To crown our lives with splendor,  
And quite ignore our daily store  
Of pleasures sweet and tender.

Our cares are bold and push their way  
Upon our thought and feeling.  
They hand about us all the day,  
Our time from pleasure stealing.  
So unobtrusive many a joy  
We pass by and forget it,  
But worry strives to own our lives,  
And conquers if we let it.

There's not a day in all the year  
But holds some hidden pleasure,  
And looking back, joys oft appear  
To brim the past's wide measure.  
But blessings are like friends, I hold,  
Who love and labor near us.  
We ought to raise our notes of praise  
While living hearts can hear us.

Source: <https://poets.org>



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## Beacons of Hope

The thought-provoking article, 'What I have learnt as a formator' by Anush D'Cunha SJ, resonates as a beacon of hope. The formator plays a noteworthy role as a potter. The candidate should humbly accept that he is the clay. The formator has to be mindful of the spiritual needs of the candidate as well as his psychological problems. Youngsters look for an exemplary life style in a formator, who should model what he asks of the candidate. The candidate should totally trust the formator and let him guide and mould him.

| Sch. Jayanth Christy, SJ | Trivandrum

## Captures the essence

I refer to the article, 'You are wonderful!' by Wesley D'Costa, SJ in the August '24 issue of *Jivan*. The article beautifully captures the essence of true friendship. It is inspiring to know the author's Jesuit journey and his relationship with Fr. Feliu. This very well resonates with me, because it highlights that friendship is not just about companionship but about being there for one another with love, compassion, and acceptance. I was moved by the way the author expresses Fr. Feliu's gentle encouragement, reminding us that true friendship is not about perfection but about accepting each other with our limitations and helping each other grow. This kind of friendship, rooted in the teachings of Jesus, is truly transformative and a gift we are all called to share with one another.

| Sch. Pradeep D'Souza, SJ | Chennai

## This article has challenged me to...

Fr. Fiorello Mascarenhas, SJ's article, "How Can We Pray the Rosary Fruitfully?", inspired me to reflect on how I pray the rosary—mechanically or contemplatively. As Pope Francis noted in one of his recent addresses, many of us, including myself, tend to pray the rosary like a parrot, merely reciting the prayers without truly understanding their meaning.

This article has challenged me to embrace the rosary as a tool for prayer in an Ignatian contemplative manner, rather than simply keeping it in my pocket or under my pillow.

| Sch. Jefrin Martin, SJ | Trichy

## To love them as they are


I was inspired by reading the article 'You are wonderful,' by Fr. Wesley D' Costa in the August '24 issue of *Jivan*. It has broadened my perception of friendship. It has made me take efforts to get rooted in all my relationships. It reminded of my pre-novitiate where I had an enriching friendship. True friendships last forever. Genuine friends are ready to support and lift us up even when we are put down. The statement, "Friendship is about setting aside all our prejudices, biases and judgments to love people as they are," made me examine my biases and prejudices. Jesus calls us his friends. If we experience his friendship, we will be able to be and find true friends in our life.

| Sch. Avin Fernandes, SJ | Thiruvananthapuram


Prayer Intentions for January '25


For the right to an education.

Let us pray for migrants, refugees, and those affected by war, that their right to an education, which is necessary to build a better world, might always be respected.



Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network





Pic courtesy: flickr.com



## WHAT DO YOU SAY?

STANY D'SOUZA, SJ  
President, JCSA

### The best way to live 2025

When Bangladesh hit the headlines recently, with violence, destruction and death, I quietly slipped into Bangladesh to know our men and ministries there.

The Bangladesh Mission which was just an idea for me so far not only became real but also made me meet a band of enthusiastic Jesuits who are creatively engaging in Christ's mission. Although the Jesuit presence in Bangladesh is as old as the presence of Catholicism which started in the sixteenth century, the present batch are the successors of those Jesuits who re-entered Bangladesh in 1994.

The Bangladesh Church has a tryst with the Jesuits. The Jesuits built not only the first Church but also died as the first martyrs in Bengal. The first martyr of Bangladesh is Father Francesco Fernandes, SJ (1550-1602), who came to Goa at the age of 24 (1574), and then moved to the Bengal Mission, which was opened in 1598. He taught the faith to the people and built churches. However, in November 1602, he was arrested and imprisoned. On 14 November 1602, after being tortured in prison for seven days, Father Francesco passed away.

The history of the Society of Jesus is one of passion and glory, sweat and blood. Our men passionately served the Lord and bore him a remarkable witness in their life-mission.

We badly need this passion today! Passion for God, passion for humanity, passion for the poor. Recently, I visited a province which was once a second name for pioneers in almost all ministries. To my surprise, I found it in an ordinary state with very few luminaries, who are also in the age group of eighty and above. It is symptomatic of the state of all the provinces and regions in the Conference. We have very few pioneers, trendsetters and pathbreakers.

I think we need to revisit our history to reinvent, redefine and redirect our life-mission. We need to return to our history and our spiritual sources to reclaim our identity and revitalize it. We need to revert to our founding charism to recover the fire of apostolic zeal. Only a rereading of our history will really help us read and respond to the signs of the times creatively and constructively; to enthuse, empower, and elevate both Jesuits and our mission partners; to reinvent, revitalize and reposition our identity and mission.

I think it is the best way to begin and live the New Year 2025. What do you say?



## WHAT DO YOU THINK?

M.A. JOE ANTONY, SJ  
Editor

### How do we receive 2025?

A precious gift has been placed on our hands yet again - another year. How we receive it and how we use it depends on us.

Can we welcome 2025 with optimism? With no end in sight for the senseless war that Putin initiated against the innocent people of Ukraine in February 2022, with the Netanyahu-led Israel, ignoring the repeated pleas of the world community and continuing its retaliatory attacks in Gaza, with American voters opting for a man who has more than once promised to do things that are against the values the U.S. has upheld in the past, is optimism possible?

Read Ella Wheeler Wilcox's poem on the Garden page. It says, "We walk on starry fields of white/And do not see the daisies;/ For blessings common in our sight/ We rarely offer praises." Why do we miss the daisies? Why do we fail to see the blessings right in front of us? Because "our cares are bold and push their way/ Upon our thought and feeling."

If we manage to put aside our cares and worries and cast the net on the other side, we will catch a lot to thank God for. The autocratic ruler of Bangladesh and the cruel despot of Syria have both been driven away. And look at the Cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris. Five years ago it was destroyed by fire, but now, miraculously restored, it stands majestically, inviting all to see its new splendour.

Even if you can't summon optimism to welcome the new year, you can take the help of hope. Scholars distinguish between optimism and hope. Optimism is the thought that things will turn out well. Hope is continuing to act to improve the situation, even if we can't foresee how the future will unfold. Thomas Aquinas described hope as what motivates us to struggle in order to reach goals that are arduous and difficult to obtain.

By the way, do you know that the U.N. has declared 2025 as the International Year of Quantum Science and Technology? This issue carries an article by Francis P. Xavier, SJ that explains why Quantum Science and Technology are important. Interestingly 2025 is also the Year of Cooperatives. If we hope and help, if we cooperate and work together, 2025 can be a better year than 2024. It has to be because, for us, it is also the Jubilee Year.

## PWPN and EYM meet in Lucknow



PWPN (Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network and EYM (Eucharistic Youth Movement) had their annual meeting and training at Navinta Pastoral Centre, Lucknow, on 11-13 Nov 2024. Archbishop Raphy Manjaly of Agra and Auxiliary Bishop Joseph Susainathan of Bangalore and Fr Stanislaus D'Souza, President of JCSA, and Fr Cristobal Fones, SJ, International Director, PWPN & EYM, Rome, Ms. Bettina Raed, Deputy Director, PWPN and EYM, from Argentina, Fr. Jagdish Parmar, National Director of India and Continental Director for South Asia, and Fr Denis Naresh Lobo, Vicar General, Lucknow lit the ceremonial lamp. Fr. Jagdish welcomed all.

Fr Denis Naresh Lobo introduced and welcomed the Provincial Superiors residing in Lucknow Diocese presented them with a shawl and a sapling, while Fr. Jagdish presented them the mementos. Archbishop Raphy Manjaly released the booklet, Pray with Me, compiled by Fr. Michael Pugal SJ. Fr. Stan D'Souza sj released the online annual e-bulletin, fruit of the hard work of Fr. Chrysostom Hembrom SJ. Bishop Joseph Susainathan, Auxiliary Bishop of Bangalore released the online brochure of the PWPN and EYM, prepared by Fr. Michael Pugal sj. Fr. Vijay Joseph, Diocesan Director, Archdiocese of Hyderabad proposed a vote of thanks.

The rest of the day and the next day were shared between Fr. Cristobal, Mrs. Bettina on the main theme, 'EYM and the Way of the Heart,' 'EYM



Pedagogy' and other topics The sessions brought to us the sense of being a worldwide family that networks with so many other groups throughout the world and enjoys the special identity as a pontifical work directly under the Pope. On the last day we had 2 business sessions consisting of the annual report by Fr. Jagdish, Discussion on the keynote address by the POSA on reimagining and restructuring the PWPN, information on the upcoming pilgrimage to Paray le Monial, France at the conclusion of the Sacred Heart Jubilee, affiliation of all parishes and shrines dedicated to the Sacred Heart to PWPN, process so far followed for the appointment of the Regional Directors by the CCBI, deliberations on the monthly zoom meetings etc.

The next meeting will be in Mangalore on 4-6 Nov 2025. The participants were divided according to the CBCI Regions to make their plan of action followed by the general reporting session. After the lunch all went by two mini buses for 'Lucknow Darshan' ending with a sumptuous dinner at Cathedral Parish Hall. We had 4 such programs in Ranchi, Dindigul, Trivandrum, and St. Xavier's College, Thumba.

| Jagdish Parmar, SJ (DAR)



Pic courtesy: unrwa.org

## The Middle East: Is Peace Possible in 2025?

Anyone familiar with or observing the Middle East - encompassing Israel, Palestine, and neighbouring countries such as Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Jordan, Egypt, Libya, and Iran - over the past 75 years might conclude that war has become an unfortunate inevitability in the region.

Indeed, no country in this part of the world has escaped the relentless cycle of violence and war. For decades, the region has been marked by widespread destruction, profound suffering, and even famine, often recurring with alarming regularity.

**“Pope Francis consistently expresses his opposition to war, emphasizing that it can never bring a just and lasting solution to conflicts. He describes war as a failure of politics and humanity.”**

Since 7 October 2023, this cycle has reignited with unprecedented intensity. The violence, which initially erupted in Israel and the Gaza Strip, quickly spread throughout Israeli-Palestinian territories, Lebanon, Yemen, Iran, and beyond. This latest escalation has claimed nearly 50,000 lives - most of them women and children - and resulted in the abduction of Israeli hostages, approximately 130 of whom remain held in Gaza.

Advocates of the hard-line policies of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu argue that

this time, the conflict must be resolved decisively through force. They propose dismantling the military capabilities of Palestinians and their allies, wherever they may be—whether inside or outside Israel - in an effort to ensure the permanent security of Israeli territory. This approach is framed as a battle between good and evil, civilization and barbarism.

However, I firmly believe that such reasoning will only perpetuate the cycle of violence and hatred, further fuelling

their story and suffering, leading to mutual acceptance, respect, and the recognition of their rights.

**“Anyone familiar with or observing the Middle East over the past 75 years might conclude that war has become an unfortunate inevitability in the region.”**

In the Middle East, despite the long-sown seeds of hatred, there are men and women of goodwill on both sides. A leader like Yitzhak Rabin understood this when he committed to negotiating peace with the Palestinians. Moreover, peace in Israel-Palestine is key to peace throughout the Middle East.



the desire for vengeance. Pope Francis consistently expresses his opposition to war, emphasizing that it can never bring a just and lasting solution to conflicts. He describes war as “a failure of politics and humanity.”

If we are to build a lasting peace, we must explore alternative paths - the paths of dialogue and reconciliation. While these may seem utopian, they are the only routes that uphold human dignity. They begin with listening to the other, embracing

The vision of a “celestial Jerusalem” - city of peace - may seem eschatological or idealistic. Yet, it is precisely this vision that inspires us to reclaim our shared humanity and unite us as children of the same God.

Could 2025, a Jubilee year celebrating the three monotheistic religions and encouraging a fresh start, be the year that sets us on this path? ❖

*Victor Assouad, SJ is a General Counsellor, who resides at the Jesuit Curia, Rome.*





# 2025: The International Year of Quantum Science

## Quantum Science helps us explore life's mysteries

The United Nations is celebrating its centenary by designating the year 2025 as the 'International Year of Quantum Science and Technology' with the expectation to increase public awareness of quantum science and its applications.

What is quantum science? It is yet another milestone in our perception and understanding of the world, as well as of the universe.

Max Planck proposed in 1900 that energy is not continuous but is made up of discrete units (quanta). This was endorsed by Albert Einstein in 1905 proposing that radiation, as well as energy, is quantified (as packets of energy). This was further confirmed by Louis de Broglie in 1924 that there is no fundamental difference in the make-up and behaviour of energy and matter, as both can act as if they are formed of particles or waves at the atomic and subatomic levels. This theory was known as the principle of wave-particle duality.

Confirming this theory experimentally, Werner Heisenberg, the father of quantum science, published a paper in 1925, laying the principle and foundation for modern quantum science and technology.

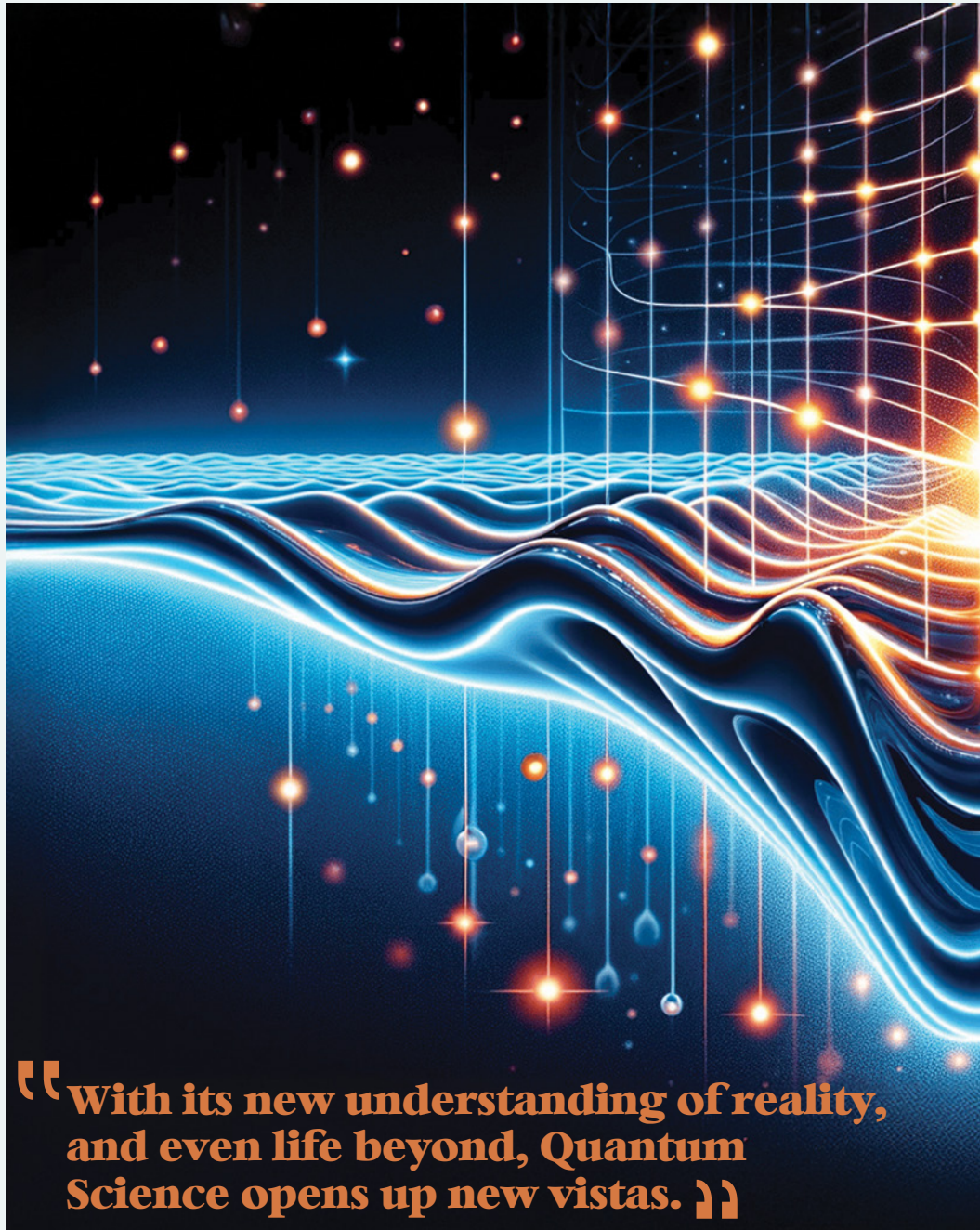
The fundamental concept of quantum physics is the awareness of the limit with regard to precise measurement of any pairs of physical properties. For example, in the case of a moving particle, its position and its momentum (that is, speed) cannot be simultaneously and accurately measured. If we are precise with regard to position, we would make errors in determining its momentum and vice versa. This is the limitation of scientific technology. We cannot make accurate measurements. This is known as the uncertainty principle.

Science has not determined whether light consists of particles or waves. Sometimes it behaves like particles (photons); and sometimes it behaves like waves. We need to know more and understand

better the reality in which we live.

Till the 20th century, Newton's laws of motion, known as classical mechanics, governed the world. Our world was known as a deterministic world. A deterministic model would predict the future result from a given starting condition or initial state. With the advent of special theory of relativity in 1905, depending on the speed, length, mass, and time of a moving object, its observation will be relative with respect to a stationary observer: As the speed of the moving object increases, its length would contract (looking shorter), its mass would increase, and time would dilate (that is, a moving clock ticks slower). But in the world of relativity, there is one thing constant, which is the speed of light. For any object that starts from rest, its maximum speed (velocity) is the velocity of light.

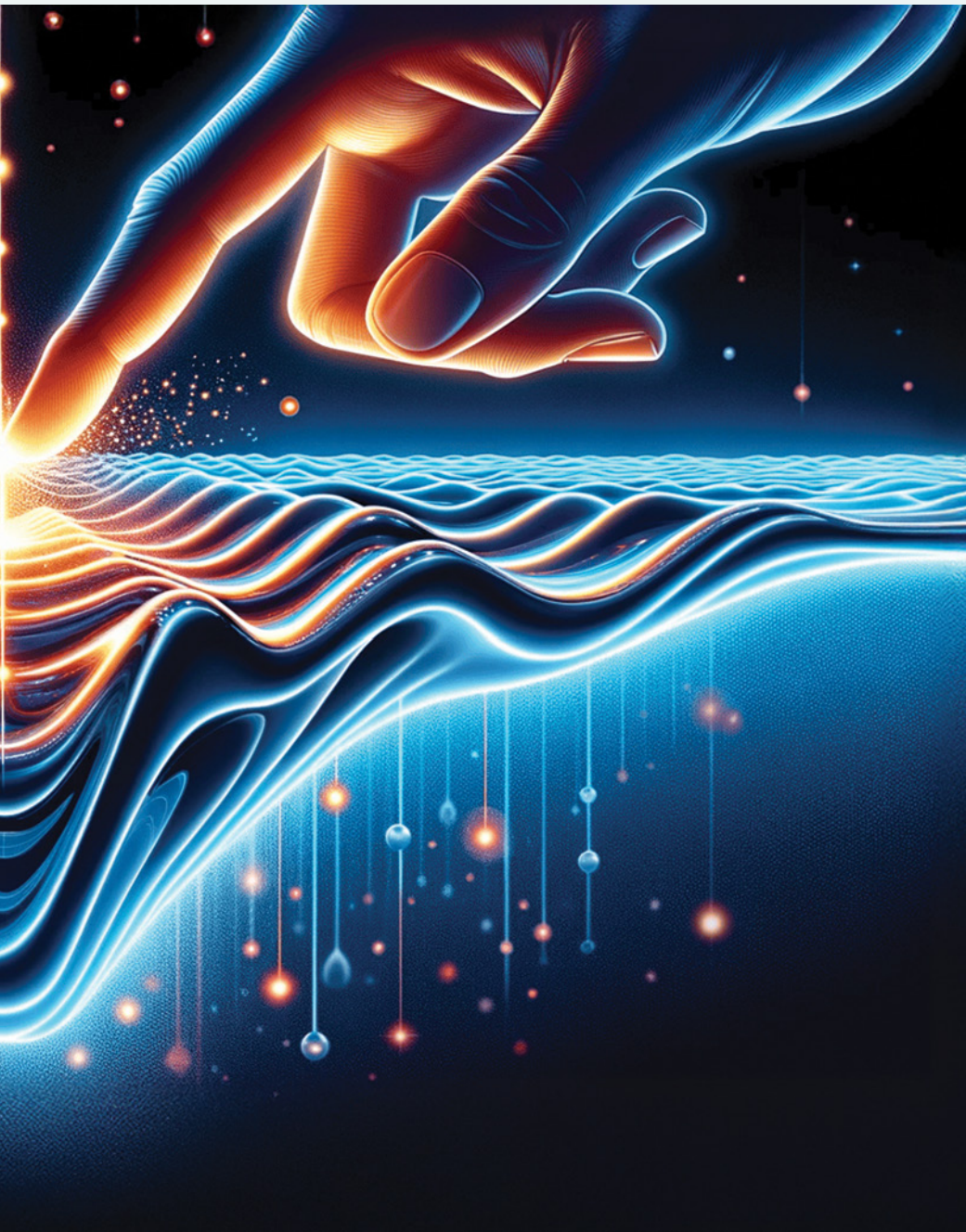
Quantum science classifies the world into two: macroworld and microworld. Newton's laws hold good for macro objects – It is the deterministic world. But quantum physics governs atomic and subatomic world, that is, microworld, where relativity is dominant. Hence in the universe different frames have different sets of physical laws. For example, in our universe, we have attractive gravity but outside of our universe gravitational force is repulsive in order to keep off anti-particles (or anti-matter). Our universe consists mostly of particles, while outside of our universe there are more anti-particles. It is assumed that at the moment of creation - Big Bang - there might have been equal amount of particles and antiparticles. But when a particle and anti-particle encounter each other, they annihilate each other. Hence anti-particles are kept off from



**“With its new understanding of reality, and even life beyond, Quantum Science opens up new vistas. ”**

our universe through repulsive gravitational force, so that life could emerge in our universe.

Quantum science has paved the way for ‘nanoscience’ (one thousand-millionth), now emerging as quantum technology such as quantum sensing for more accurate healthcare, communication or computing, etc. Some nanoparticle metals are stronger than steel. For example, carbon nanotubes are 100 times stronger than steel but one-sixth of their weight.



Pic courtesy: zmescience.com

With its new understanding of reality, and even life beyond, Quantum science opens up new vistas. We can draw up parallels as well. J. Huber writes in his book, *Es Existiert*, (2018): “Photons are quanta of light and angels are forms of light; further, photons make us see, while angels enlighten our path. This implies that both are mediators of transcendence... Thus, both photons and angels are spaceless and timeless, matterless and eternal. And they connect the transcendent with the visible.

Angels connect us with God. This implies that nothing is too big for God and nothing is too small for God either. He cares for everything and everybody.

Quantum science inspires us to take quantum leaps in our life. Peter had this quantum leap from the boat onto the water (Mt 14:29) to keep company with ‘the Water-Walker,’ Jesus. And Jesus uninstalls deterministic assumptions in us, caused by prejudice or hopelessness, and installs relativistic insights of hope and confidence. Thus, Jesus works on reverse engineering and establishes a new understanding of reality.

St Ignatius, in the concluding meditation of the *Spiritual Exercises*, calls us to see and experience God continuously working ‘for me’ in created beings (Sp.Ex 236), leading us to find God in everything and everybody – macro as well as micro. In order to take the quantum leap of faith, we need to leave the comfort of the boat, like Peter, and jump onto the water. And once we take the quantum leap in life, the protective blanket of hope will simultaneously spread underneath.

Some scientists think that quantum physics could explain life after death, as some aspects of consciousness, which are assumed to be energy, don’t die but transform. In summary, quantum science provides us with insights to explore the mysteries of life – both here and hereafter. ❖

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A scientist and a former MDU Provincial, **Francis P. Xavier, SJ**, is the founder of LICET, Loyola, Chennai. Currently he is the Programme Director at DACA, Madurai.

## Women's Commission meets in Rome



After three years of collecting data through surveys and discussions with women and male collaborators, the Women's Commission convened at the Jesuit Curia in Rome from 23 November to 2 December '24 to compile their findings into a final report.

In March 2021, Fr General Arturo Sosa established the 'Women's Commission' to provide guidance to the Society of Jesus regarding the roles and priorities of women. Initially made up of ten members – five lay women and one religious sister, one layperson, and three Jesuits - the commission has evolved to include one religious Sister, six lay women, one layman, and five Jesuits, with a three-year mandate, centered on four key objectives.

These objectives include evaluating the impact of Decree 14 on the inclusion of women in Jesuit apostolic planning, assessing the Society's support for women's participation at all levels, proposing strategies to enhance gender dialogue and collaboration within

Jesuit works, and recommending structural changes to foster better integration and solidarity with female colleagues.

The final report will take some time to finalize. An Indian member of the Commission shared that the experience of collaborating with a diverse group of lay and religious individuals has been enriching, highlighting the vital role women play as community builders and the significance of their holistic perspectives in furthering the Society's mission. ❖

- Our correspondent



# Are we preparing our students for tomorrow's world?

- The secret of making learning enjoyable

The question that all educators should ask is: Are we equipping our students with what they need to play a meaningful role in tomorrow's world? Our present education leaves unaddressed significant gaps for critical leadership roles of tomorrow. Today's knowledge economy relies on information and knowledge in creating jobs and fostering growth whereas our education system, modelled on labour economy, is fixated on land, labour and capital model as factors of production.

The gap between what our world needs and what our schools and colleges deliver needs our urgent attention. Our effort at bridging this gap begins with a radical shift in our perception of learners and on what gets them to learn.

Learning is not the prerogative of an elite few! Social status, economic affluence, locational advantage, etc. are no prerequisites or necessary conditions for learning to happen. You do not need to be highly intelligent, especially talented or "good at languages" to learn a foreign language. Every normal human being is prewired to learn, all that we need to trigger learning is a conducive atmosphere and an internal compulsion to learn. If we are reminded, given motivation and exposure, it is impossible for one not to learn a foreign language. A compelling attraction to a topic made comprehensible with sufficient

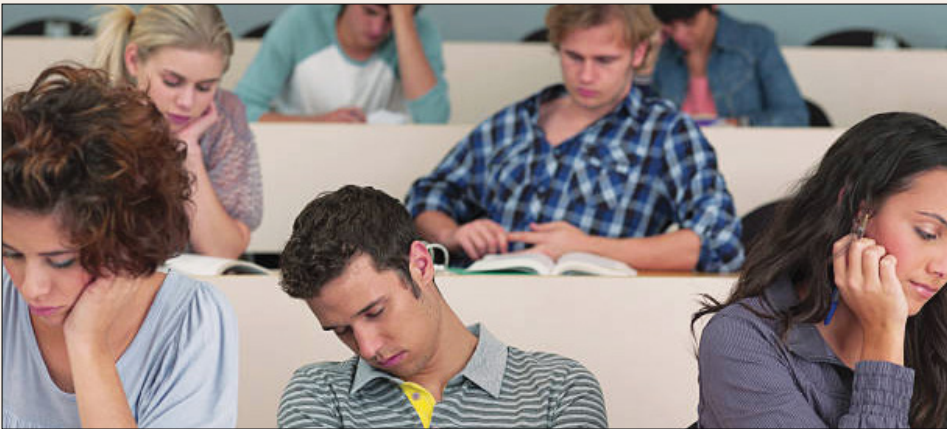


pic courtesy: istockphoto.com

opportunity to interact in the process of understanding issues and solving problems pertaining to the topic gets a learner to learn both the content as well as the medium. What is encouraging is that these opportunities are not impossible to introduce in our schools and colleges.

In a way, learning, like seeing, is involuntary. Nobody needs to teach another normal human being to see. All you need to do is to open your eyes and everything before you becomes visible. One only needs to like what one sees, focus on what one wants to acquire and judiciously omit all other distracting details. Some assistance from an expert caregiver or peers would be an added advantage to help notice what is critical but not obvious in what is presented. When the content is seen as relevant, appealing, achievable, and rewarding, learning is triggered.

**“The gap between what our world needs and what our schools and colleges deliver needs our urgent attention. Our effort at bridging this gap begins with a radical shift in our perception of learners and on what gets them to learn.”**



Pic courtesy: thehornetonline.com

However, the fact is not all are interested in acquiring everything presented to them. Despite firm resolutions and repeated exhortations, some seem to make no progress. Why they abandon their pursuit halfway and give up can be quite revealing.

Call to mind any three resolutions you had made in the last six months, things you required, skills or information you wanted to acquire. Take, for example, your desire to get a 4-wheeler driving licence, master a computer package/coding language, master a new recipe, learn a foreign language like Japanese/ Spanish, try and slim down, or publish an article in Scopus/UGC journals. Now, you might have achieved some and abandoned others halfway. Analysing factors bearing upon your outcome, you would agree that predominantly we give up halfway because we felt the task undertaken was beyond/below our capacity, has no immediate use/relevance, or was not exciting enough. And whatever you felt achievable -even if mildly challenging – and rewarding, you pursued.

That is also true of learners. When their passion matures into persistence and determination their effort becomes a pleasure. They begin to realise what they are looking for is also looking out for them. Think of the learners who struggle in traditional classes

to stay focussed in the classroom, to pass an exam. Yet these kids easily master intricate computer games, replete with so much more complex rules than those that govern solving mathematical problems or complex language construction.

They demonstrate astounding mastery of complex concepts involving multiple interconnected aspects, operating under specific conditions. Playing the game creates a compulsive need in them to learn to win. So, they determine the most successful route, anticipate the probable moves of competitors, develop strategies to counter them and look out for and take advantage of favourable opportunities. They succeed because the game creates a compulsive need in them to learn and enjoy what they do. When success is round the corner, the task becomes so engaging that they do not mind the burdens and hurdles along the way.

A classroom can also succeed if it can replicate a situation like this. When what is taught is made relevant, challenging, rewarding, interesting, and interactive, it is likely to become compulsive, engaging, and effective.

With an added provision of an expert who is ready to guide them, to track their progress, to offer non-threatening feedback about their progress the students will march at a pace not witnessed before. Learning would turn into a celebration, transforming the learners' current 'have to learn' attitude to a welcome 'want to learn' attitude. They will take the initiative in making learning yield desired and assured results. ❖

**“ In a way,  
learning, like seeing,  
is involuntary.  
Nobody needs to  
teach another normal  
human being to see.  
All you need to do is  
to open your eyes and  
everything before you  
becomes visible. ”**

*Francis Peter, SJ (MDU) has worked in institutions such as St. Xavier's College, Loyola College, and XLRI School of Business Management. Currently he is Director of Joseph's Hub for Languages (JHL), Trichy.*



Pic courtesy: freepik.com

## *Design Thinking & Jesuit Innovation*

Shimano, a leading Japanese company, known for its high-performance bicycle components in the US, once encountered a significant business challenge. Despite its dominance in the elite cycling market, it was missing a large, untapped customer base: casual cyclists. Noticing that most American adults were not riding bikes, Shimano partnered with IDEO, a design and innovation consultancy, to understand and address this issue.

IDEO conducted extensive customer-centric research across different US cities and found that many Americans fondly remembered the joy of biking as children but had stopped cycling as adults. The reason was simple: modern bikes were perceived as too complex, expensive, and intimidating. Many had bikes collecting dust in their garages because they found them difficult to use. Based on these insights, IDEO identified the need to simplify biking and bring back the joy of riding, which led to the concept of

“coasting” - a bike designed for pleasure rather than performance. By simplifying the design and removing complex gears and controls – eliminating the need for constant cleaning, adjustment, or replacement - the bike became accessible and fun, allowing riders to reconnect with the joy of childhood cycling. This user-centred approach rekindled interest among casual cyclists, while simultaneously strengthening Shimano’s market position.

Shimano’s success illustrates the power of Design Thinking (DT). DT is a human-centred approach to innovation that focuses on deeply understanding users’ needs (empathy), and behaviours. This helps to develop solutions that are not only desirable for users but also economically viable and technologically feasible. It follows five steps: empathise, define, ideate, prototype, and test. In short, it is a process of continuously redesigning a business, using insights derived from a deep knowledge of customer.

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DT has become a powerful tool in today's fast-paced business world, and it has been adopted by leading companies. Its applications extend beyond product development to fields such as healthcare, education, and social innovation.

While DT might seem like a modern phenomenon, popularized by IDEO and Tim Brown's influential work, *Change by Design* (2009), elements of this approach - such as empathy and focus on the user - can be found in the works of the Society of Jesus, founded in the 16th century.

The Society of Jesus was founded primarily to spread the Gospel and offer spiritual guidance, marked by a unique vow of obedience to the Pope for greater mobility. Initially broad in focus, their mission soon prioritized education and doctrinal defence in response to the Protestant Reformation. Recognizing the need for well-trained clergy to counter Protestant influence, the Jesuits established a network of schools across Europe and beyond, developing Catholic leaders and extending Catholic teachings globally, with influential Jesuits such as Francis Xavier, Matteo Ricci, De Nobili, and Peter Canisius at the forefront.

During the Counter-Reformation, the Jesuits played a key role through theological debates, writings, and contributions to the Council of Trent. Jesuits such as Diego Laínez and Alfonso Salmerón served as papal theologians, while Peter Canisius's catechisms and Robert Bellarmine's writings strengthened Catholic doctrine. The *Spiritual Exercises* of St Ignatius of Loyola became a foundational text for Catholic spiritual renewal during this period of religious upheaval.

In their missionary work, the Jesuits demonstrated deep respect for local traditions by immersing themselves in the customs and values of the communities they served. In South America, Jesuit Reductions for the Guaraní were designed with a profound understanding of the needs of the local community, protecting them from exploitation by colonists and promoting self-governance. In China, Matteo Ricci adopted traditional Chinese attire, mastered classical Chinese, and studied Confucianism to engage scholars and gain acceptance for the Jesuits in the Chinese society. Similarly, in India, Robert de Nobili adapted to local customs by learning Sanskrit

and Tamil, while Constanzo Beschi contributed to Tamil literature with works like *Thembavani*.

Jesuits today are committed to aligning their mission with the real needs and aspirations of the communities they serve. The Universal Apostolic Preferences (UAPs) - which include core priorities such as showing the way to God, walking with the excluded, journeying with youth, and caring for our common home - have emerged from a global process of listening and discernment involving Jesuits and their grassroots partners. These UAPs serve as a guiding framework, further tailored locally through Province Apostolic Planning (PAP), which outlines each Province's specific mission focus for the next ten years.

Lanny Vincent, an innovation consultant and author of *Jesuit Ways of Innovating*, champions an approach to innovation that contrasts with the fast-paced, profit-driven corporate world. Grounded in Jesuit spirituality, his model emphasises a reflective, purpose-driven process for creating a lasting impact. His framework is built on three practices: First, *accompanied discernment*, which fosters collaborative, value-based decision-making guided by shared wisdom to address community needs. The second is *inclusive-empathetic collaboration*, which calls for deep empathy - fully immersing oneself in others' experiences and 'meeting people where they are' in order to design genuinely impactful solutions. Third, *purpose beyond self-interest* prioritises societal and spiritual well-being over personal or financial gain and is rooted in the belief that God is already at work in the world and that our role is to align with His mission.

The aim of the present ongoing exercise of 'Reimagining and Restructuring' is the same. It needs to blend mission-focused strategies with modern management tools in order to remain both spiritually grounded and organizationally effective. Jesuits should leverage Design Thinking and Jesuit-inspired innovations of the past. The exercise should empower Jesuits to create transformative solutions that instill dignity, purpose, and hope in the communities they serve. ❖

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*Wilson Moras, SJ, (KAR), who has a Master's in Business Administration, is currently doing his Tertianship at Arrupe House, Kandy, Sri Lanka.*





## The silent symphony of service

When the waters rose menacingly across Vijayawada in October 2024, transforming familiar streets into treacherous waterways and reaching depths of 4 feet even around our 100-acre campus, it wasn't just a natural disaster - it was a call to action. With the call of Fr. P.R. John, the Rector of Andhra Loyola, appointing me as the coordinator of the flood relief efforts, I witnessed firsthand how a catastrophe can unveil the extraordinary resilience of the human spirit.



Our campus, though affected, became a beacon of hope as we transformed the YES-J Center for Excellence into an emergency response hub, coordinating relief efforts that would touch thousands of lives in the coming days.

The immediate response was swift and methodical. Within hours of the flooding, we had established a control room, mobilized over 40 student volunteers, and begun rescue operations in the most affected areas. Our teams worked tirelessly, navigating through waist-deep waters to reach stranded families. The sight of elderly residents being safely evacuated from Sitara, the distribution of 400 emergency food packets, and the provision of clean drinking water to 150 families marked just the beginning of what would become a comprehensive relief operation spanning multiple phases. As we expanded our reach to more affected areas like Ibrahimpatnam, Vambey Colony, and RR Pet, the operation grew to include 35 volunteers working in coordinated teams, providing not just immediate relief but hope to communities in crisis.

As Albert Schweitzer beautifully puts it, “The purpose of human life is to serve and to show compassion and the will to help others.” This truth reveals itself most powerfully in moments of crisis, when nature’s fury tests human resilience. Flood relief work brought to mind Paulo Coelho’s wisdom from *The Alchemist*: “When we strive to become better than we are, everything around us becomes better too.” It is not about the magnitude of our actions but the magnitude of love we pour into them. In a crisis, we often discover that the line between giver and receiver blurs. Everyone becomes a part of a larger tapestry of human connection.

Walking through inundated villages, this contradiction becomes vivid. In the midst of devastation, the human spirit rises to its fullest stature. You witness vulnerability and strength, despair and hope, loss and renewal.

Phase 2 of our operation, which aimed at ‘rebuilding and restoring’ emerged from countless hours of strategic planning and community consultation. The goal was ambitious yet clear: to support over 1,000 flood-affected rag-picker families who are neglected by society. These relief kits would help restore their dignity and rebuild their lives. Each package, valued at ₹ 5,000, represented more than just material aid - it was a symbol of hope and renewal. We ensured that families received comprehensive nutritional support including 5 kg of rice, various dals, cooking oil, and essential spices. The inclusion of mosquito nets, fresh bedsheets, and sanitary supplies addressed immediate health concerns, while cooking utensils and stoves helped restore a sense of normalcy to their daily lives.



What touched me most deeply during this phase was witnessing the transformation in our student volunteers. Over 100 young people contributed more than 100 hours of service, learning lessons that no classroom could teach. As one student, Kotha Sai, reflected, “This experience taught us more about life than any classroom could.” These words echo the essence of what we as Jesuits strive to instill - education that extends beyond academic excellence to embrace human excellence.

As we step into the New Year, these reflections offer deeper insights about life’s essential truths. Rabindranath Tagore reminds us: “I slept and dreamt that life was joy. I awoke and saw that life was service. I acted and beheld; service was joy.” This cycle of realization transforms everyone.



The New Year beckons us to embrace what Rachel Naomi Remen calls ‘the wisdom of not knowing’ - approaching each moment with fresh eyes and an open heart. True service isn’t about having all the answers but about being present in questions, in struggles, in the silent spaces between words where real connection happens. Perhaps this is why service becomes such a powerful source of joy – it connects us directly to life’s deepest meaning. In helping others, we help ourselves find our way home to our own humanity.

As we embrace 2025, let us remember that the greatest gift we can offer isn’t our resources or skills, but our presence - fully there, fully aware, fully connected to the sacred dance of giving and receiving. May this New Year bring us all closer to understanding that true wealth is not what we accumulate, but what we give away - not just material resources, but our time, our presence, our compassion.

Genuine service is characterized by a profound silence - a quietude that speaks louder than words. In the silent symphony of service, every act of kindness adds its own unique note to the eternal music of human compassion. Let us make 2025 a year where this symphony grows ever richer, ever deeper, encompassing more hearts in its healing embrace. ❖

*Fr Bala Kumar Bollineni, SJ, (AND) is Founder-Director, Youth Empowering Service-Jesuits (YES-J) and a Counselling Psychologist residing at Andhra Loyola College, Vijayawada.*



*I'm a 77 year old woman,  
and I still matter*

I had always believed that I would not live beyond the age of 60 because I have been ailing for so many long years. Now I suddenly find myself at 77 years complete. But I am still contributing to my neighbours and society in small ways. I no longer write as prolifically as before and I cannot reach

out to others in the same measure as before, but I still write from time to time about my convictions, however irrelevant or dangerous they may seem in the present scenario.

I was born in an age when India had just gained freedom from colonial rule and there was tolerance

of differences in religion, region or language. I realize how far we have travelled from those values we cherished and took for granted, the give and take between different communities and people with different religious beliefs.

When I look back I realize how many of my dreams have been shattered and how little common ground I can find in our society. The spirit of divisiveness has gripped us. Countries are at war with each other, and wars exterminate innocent children and women.

We witness the rise of sectarian forces, racist or communal political leaders and parties, many ultra conservative, authoritarian regimes and discrimination against the minorities. I keep asking myself if I can make even an iota of difference to this sad situation.

The patriarchal society we live in discriminates against women every step of the way. When it comes to elderly women, the situation is even worse. Ever since the joint family system dissolved, elderly women have been treated badly by most nuclear families. We daily hear of elderly women who are obliged to shoulder onerous responsibilities when they can barely walk and suffer from all the infirmities of old age. Some of them are pushed out of their homes with no alternate source of income and shelter. In some houses elderly women are treated badly by the younger women at home. They are often left to the mercy of their sons and daughters-in-law.

The river of life, which carried us along, seems nearer the ocean. We do not have the strength of our earlier years. Physically our capacities diminish and our mental faculties also decline.

But still I believe that old age is a blessing from God. The older I get the more experience and wisdom

I gain. This is why grandchildren can acquire the most precious lessons for life from their grandparents. Though feeble and frail, I still contribute to society. It is the stage in life where inner beauty is the only thing that matters. In old age, God strips us of our ego one layer after another and gradually prepares us for death, when we leave everything that might have meant much to us and go back to the source from which we came.

This is the time of my life when I see my spiritual capacities expand. So I have resolved to react less and to embrace life as it comes. I am learning to accept what I cannot change and for the rest, to do what I can.

So, no matter what society may say, I believe that I still matter, that I am eternally loved and valued, because physical degeneration and cognitive decline do not define me. I see it as a time when I should just surrender my life to God. My professional years are behind me, but I now work in different ways. I now accompany those who are approaching death and try to help those who are in the last lap of their lives. I have also

become more tolerant of personality differences and the flaws of others I have to live with, by acknowledging my own flaws and weaknesses. I am aware that at the end of the day, I will not be judged for my accomplishments but for how much I have loved and served.

Not merely Jesuits, but all priests and religious, should be sensitive to the problems elderly women face and treat them with the dignity that is still their right. It may help, if they see them as their mother or sister. ❖

**“No matter what society may say, I believe that I still matter, that I am eternally loved and valued, because physical degeneration and cognitive decline do not define me.”**

*Janina Gomes is a veteran, freelance journalist and an author. She can be reached at [janinagomes7@gmail.com](mailto:janinagomes7@gmail.com)*



## It seemed as if I was in a trance



Pic courtesy: firsttrek.in

A five-day immersion programme at Varanasi has had a lasting impact on me. I participated in it in the spirit of *Fratelli Tutti*, Pope's encyclical that mandates us to have a lived experience of neighbor-religions and synodal virtues of listening, speaking, and learning.

The experience in Varanasi was one of discovery and self-reflection. I went as a seeker, driven by a quest for meaning, truth and understanding amidst religious animosity in contemporary India. The well-known philosophical analogy of four blind men describing an elephant helped me understand the plurality of gods. I perceived 330 million gods of Hinduism as diverse manifestation of one God.

The lives of Hindus are intricately connected with the River Ganga. Along its banks, there are 84 ghats, though I could only visit a handful. Pilgrimages to these sacred sites offer devotees a renewed sense of purpose. However, politics, commercialization and tourism affect the impact of these sacred sites.

A significant religious activity at the Ghats is the Ganga Aarti. People believe that attending this ritual

will free them from their sins and provide peace to the souls of their ancestors. The way people took part in this ritual, with faith and devotion, deeply affected me. It seemed as if I was in a trance and it engulfed all of my senses and transported me to a higher realm of existence. It was lovely and incredible to stand there and watch the little lamps float away and light the river. Light and beauty combined to make it a powerful experience.

I witnessed two cremations at Manikarnika Ghat, which reminded me that my ego should die. It helped me see that actions influenced by the ego are meaningless. As I saw the corpses being burnt, I felt as if I was reborn.

I realize that the city of Varanasi is a powerful reminder of the cycle of life and death. While showing me how fickle life can be, it made me think of the meaning of life. It helped me realize that we need to live every moment we have here on earth. ❖

*Sch. Aric Makwana, SJ (GUJ) is one of the first year students of theology at Vidya Jyoti, Delhi, who visited Varanasi for an immersion programme, led by Fr Anil D'Almeida, SJ*

## Jesuit School Education: Zonal Triennials 2024



Jesuit educators from all four zones gathered in Bangalore, Ranchi, Pune, and Patna to engage in a thoughtful deliberation on the theme, 'Reimagining & Restructuring Jesuit Education in Today's South Asian Context' 'Review – Reinvent – Renew" during the Triennial Meet 2024. As we arrived, we were filled with uncertainty and felt like blank slates, knowing little about the depths we would explore. Yet, this openness became the starting point for our journey of reflection and renewal.

As those who are directly engaged in shaping the minds and hearts of the next generations, we are uniquely positioned to carry forward this rich tradition. We are tasked with the responsibility to adapt and breathe new life into it, ensuring that it remains relevant in an ever-changing world. The needs of our students are evolving, and our educational practices must evolve with them. To remain true to our mission, we must review, reinvent and renew to ensure that our institutions remain beacons of hope and agents of transformation.

The sessions were meticulously planned with a mixture of input sessions by the experts, group

activities, and plenaries. The first day was fully dedicated to 'Contextualizing our Jesuit Education Apostolate in South Asia: Social, Economical and Cultural Context' and 'Jesuit Educational Context: Global, Regional, National, Local.' The second day was dedicated to 'Reimagining and Restructuring Jesuit Education.' The participants included Jesuit major superiors, Jesuit school leaders, Jesuit educators, lay and religious collaborators and senior teachers. At the end of each Triennial, all Zones came up with Zonal Triennial Declaration with concrete action plans at the Province and Zonal level as a way forward to fulfilling our commitment to be educationally relevant as Jesuit Schools in the changing landscape.

As we traverse this new era of education, let us remember the roots of Jesuit tradition while also embracing the need for change. We have the privilege and responsibility of shaping the next generation, guiding them toward becoming thoughtful, compassionate and innovative leaders. To do so, we must remain open to change and ready to adapt our methods. ❖

John Ravi, SJ (DEL)



## A sacrificial victim

**Film:** *Gran Torino* (2008)

**Director:** Clint Eastwood.

**Run time:** 117 minutes

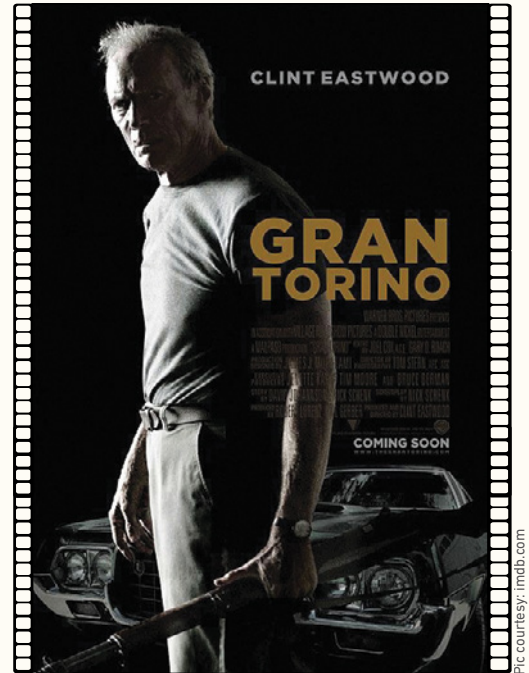
This Clint Eastwood movie narrates the spiritual transformation of Walt Kowalski, an octogenarian misanthrope, towards the end of his life. Kowalski, a Korean War veteran, is a Catholic. A widower, who retired from the Ford Motor company, lives alone in suburban Detroit. The lonely old man despises his children and considers his grandchildren spoilt and worthless. They hate him too. He lives with his pet dog, guns and a 1972 Gran Torino pickup truck to move around. Walt's only love was his wife who had entrusted his spiritual welfare to their parish priest, Fr Janovich. But Walt spurns any talk on spirituality.

Residing in a declined Detroit suburb, Walt's neighbourhood is occupied by south Asian immigrants whom the racist Walt treats with utter contempt. He spits on them his tobacco spittle if they cross his path. As an arch individualist, feared by the neighbours, he has a few old friends all of whom belong to his race.

Walt is disconnected from God and consequently disconnected from fellow humans too. During an attempted theft of his Gran Torino he almost shoots a teen aged neighbourhood boy named Thao. Thao is a Hmong who is forced by his criminal cousin, nicknamed Spider, a gang leader who is into thieving. Spider repeatedly attempts to initiate his innocent cousin into the world of crime. Walt would threaten the gang with his shot-gun whenever they enter his premises. Thao's family is grateful to Walt for saving him, thinking that Walt saved their son. They express their regard for him, which despite his misgivings, brings Walt closer to these people.

Realizing their essential humanity and with the promptings of Thao's mother, Walt mentors the boy out of his poverty and delinquency, turning him into a hard working, responsible young man. He helps Thao get a job as a construction worker. This closeness becomes mutually beneficial: the boy becomes like Walt's grandchild and Walt gradually gets rid of his loneliness and becomes humane.

Later Walt intervenes to save Thao and his family from the Spider's gang. Thao and his sister Sue are constantly harassed by the gang. Their resistance leads to a gang rape, enraging Thao into to revenge. He seeks Walt's help, and Walt promises to help. But the war hero does something contrary to expectation. He visits Fr Janovich for confession, gets a haircut and puts on a new suit, talks to Thao in



his basement, where he tells the boy of his own past guilt over the killing of an innocent child soldier. Locking up Thao in the basement, he goes to confront the thugs in their home.

Before the climactic confrontation Walt, the would-be avenger, prays "Hail Mary" and performs the surprising ultimate act of love, offering himself as a sacrificial victim for Thao whom he once would have killed. In the concluding sequence of Walt's funeral we hear Fr Janovsky reading out Walt's last will and testament which testifies to the dead man's final act of generosity. ❖

*Prof. Gigy Joseph Koottummel, former Head of the Department of English, SB College, Changanacherry is a sought-after writer, translator, columnist and actor-director of Shakespeare productions.*

# The 20-Year Journey of the Ignatian Solidarity Network

In 1989, on the evening of 15 November, soldiers belonging to an elite Salvadorian military unit entered the campus of the University of Central America (UCA) with orders to silence the Jesuits. In the residence the soldiers found 6 Jesuits – Ignacio Ellacuría, Ignacio Martín-Baró, Segundo Montes, Juan Ramón Moreno, Joaquín López y López, Armando López – and two laywomen – housekeeper Elba Ramos and her 16-year-old daughter Celina. Early in the morning of 16 November, the soldiers dragged them from their rooms and executed them in cold blood.

The Jesuits were targeted due to their efforts to peacefully resolve the conflict between the Salvadoran government and the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) - a bloody civil war that spanned 12 years and killed or made disappear more than 83,000 mostly poor people. The mastermind of the murders, Colonel Inocente Montano, Vice-Minister for Public Security, intended not only to kill the messengers of peace, but also to intimidate others who might advocate for the poor and marginalized in El Salvador. Montano thought that the murders of the UCA Jesuits, which the soldiers tried to blame on the FMLN, would permanently silence the cries for justice.

They were wrong.

Thirty-five years after the murders of the UCA 8, their story has inspired the greatest push for Social Justice in the history of the Church. As news of the murders spread, the international community was outraged, with each new detail peeling back the layers of the conspiracy. Ironically, the murders led to the international scrutiny that Colonel Montano and his co-conspirators thought they were preventing. The deaths of the UCA martyrs became a focal point for social justice that exposed human rights violations across the region, and an incubator for a new generation of ministries that advocated for the poor and oppressed.

One of the ministries that emerged from that incubator was the Ignatian Solidarity Network (ISN). Founded in 2004, ISN promotes social justice through the lens of Ignatian Spirituality: the collective wisdom



of the founder of the Society of Jesus, St Ignatius of Loyola. ISN's mission is to network, educate, advocate for social justice and to form those with a passion for social justice. Since its inception, ISN has collaborated with Catholic universities, high schools, and parishes who have established programs serving the poor and the underrepresented.

From the “Ignatian Family Teach-In for Justice” that takes place each year in Washington DC, to the protests at the “US Army School of the Americas” Fort Benning in Georgia (where many of the murderers had trained), to a lengthy lists of educational campaigns and ministry events, ISN has animated generations of men and women who look at the violence perpetrated against the most vulnerable among us and say... “enough”.

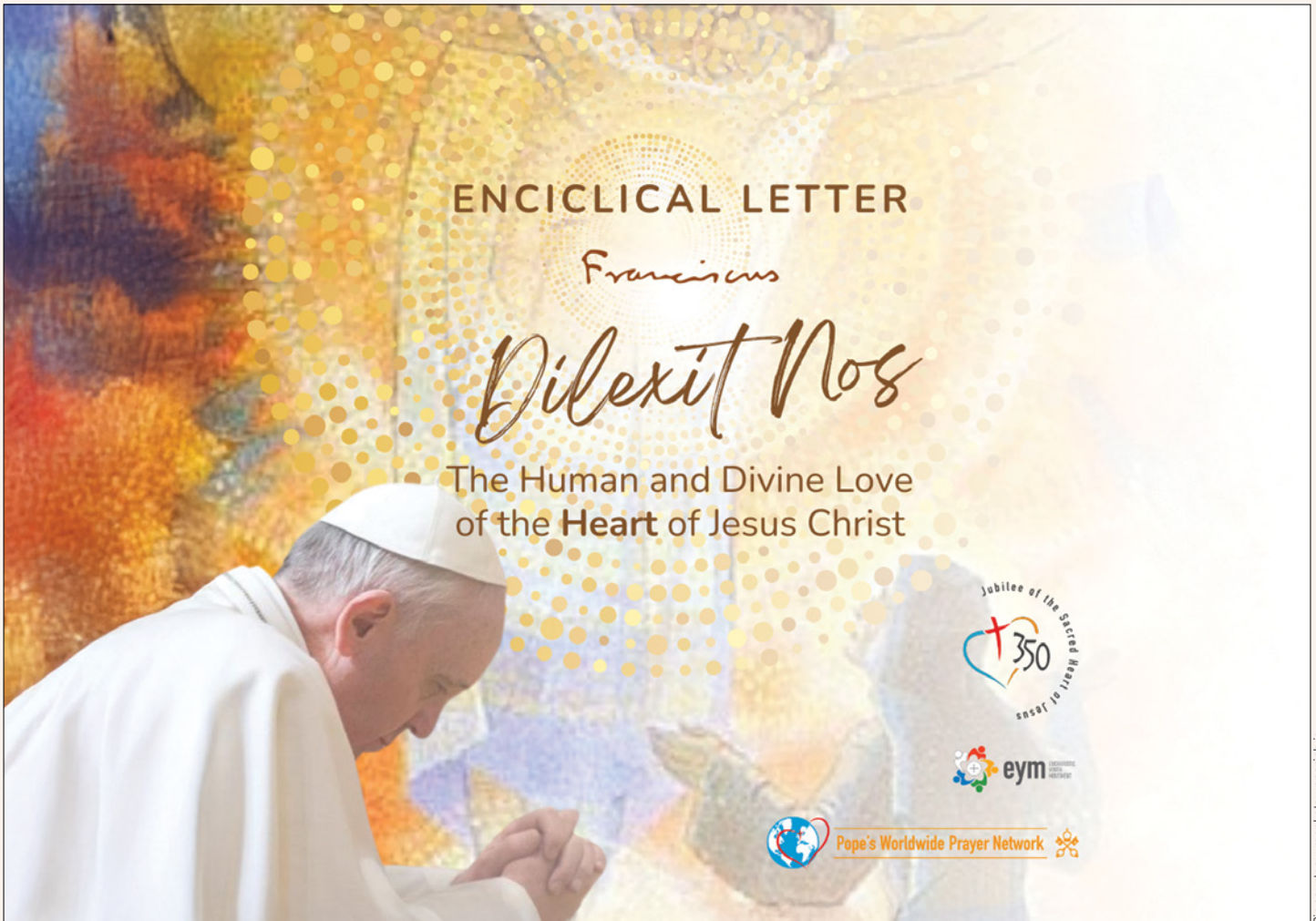
It is in that historical context that the Society of Jesus celebrates 20 years of the ISN. Fr Arturo Sosa, Superior General of the Society of Jesus, sent a video greeting, encouraging ISN to continue its mission with boldness, while assuring them of the support of the Society. In the message, Fr General highlighted the ISN's focus on collaboration and networking, while encouraging a culture of inclusivity and cooperation. He also pointed at the ISN's emphasis on addressing structures of exclusion, and the work done to invite young people into a transformative process that is rooted in Catholic Social thought in view of a more just and hopeful future. ❖

Source: <https://www.jesuits.global/>





# A Jesuit Devotion & a Jesuit Pope's encyclical



In Pope Francis's latest encyclical, *Dilexit Nos* (*DN*), he talks of the great devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, a special part of Jesuit spirituality. Lending credence to this devotion that has become a part of the Jesuit legacy, Fr General Arturo Sosa renewed the Society's consecration to the Sacred Heart in September, '24 on the occasion of the 350th anniversary of the Sacred Heart apparitions in Paray-le-Monial, France. This bond, historically created through St Claude de la Colombière, a Jesuit priest, merges interior sanctification with a passionate call to evangelise, making Christ's love a source of healing and compassion for all humanity.

## Claude de La Colombière & the Sacred Heart

St Claude de La Colombière is a pivotal figure in the Jesuit tradition of devotion to the Sacred Heart, particularly because he was the confessor and an ardent supporter of St Margaret Mary Alacoque. Claude accepted and validated Margaret's Paray-le-Monial mystical experiences. He saw them as an opportunity to teach the Church about Christ's unconditional love. In *DN*, Pope Francis highlights Claude's role in blending these mystical revelations with the practical spirituality of St Ignatius, inviting a profound, heart-centered relationship with Christ (*DN125*).

Claude's legacy encompasses his theological meditations on the Sacred Heart and his trust beyond personal devotion. His well-known prayer, "All my confidence is confidence itself... I shall never lose my hope", invites the faithful to a relationship with Christ based on unwavering trust and surrender (*DN no. 126*). This trust, which Pope Francis celebrates in *DN*, transforms devotion into a personal act of piety into a communitarian call for others to find hope and renewal in the boundless love of Christ's heart.

### **The Spiritual Exercises & the Heart of Christ:**

Pope Francis also connects Jesuit devotion to the Sacred Heart with St Ignatius's *Spiritual Exercises*, noting that both aim to shape and transform the heart through affection (*affectus*) and inner spiritual movements. The Exercises encourage retreatants to engage in a "heart-to-heart" dialogue with Christ, primarily through meditations on His life and passion, focusing on His pierced heart. According to the Pope, this practice deepens intimacy with the Lord, as one's affections are gradually reoriented toward divine love and self-giving (*DN 144*).

The Holy Father quotes Michel de Certeau who describes prayer's "unexpected movements" as God's love disturbs and realigns a person's priorities, leading them deeper into Christ's mission of compassion and mercy (*DN 24*). Through devotion to the Sacred Heart, Jesuits allow Christ's selfless love to shape their lives and vocations.

### **Historical Continuity & Apostolic Mission**

Pope Francis goes on to note that the Jesuit devotion to the Sacred Heart survived the Society's suppression and restoration. In 1883, the 23rd General Congregation of the Society accepted the "gentle burden" of this devotion with "overflowing



delight and gratitude" as from Christ. Today, the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network continues to promote the Sacred Heart. This network, formerly the Apostleship of Prayer, invites millions of Catholics to pray and act in union with the heart of Christ.

Pope St John Paul II urged the Society to spread this devotion to meet contemporary demands. He thought the Sacred Heart's message of love and restitution was necessary to develop a "civilisation of love" in a world of hate and violence (*DN 147*). Inspired by Christ's wounded heart, Jesuits promote reconciliation and compassion in their ministries.

### **Conclusion**

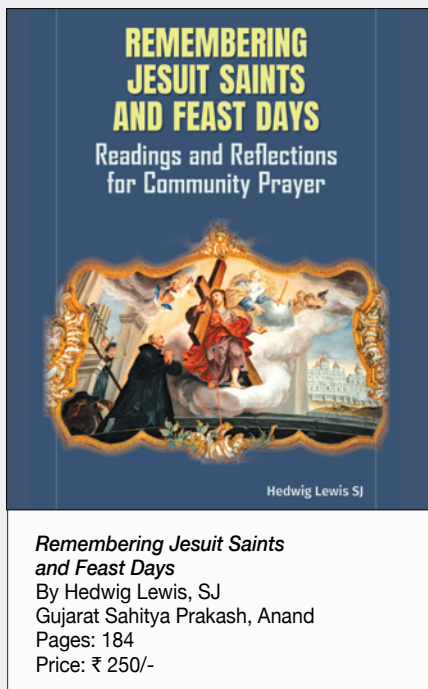
Pope Francis emphasizes how Jesuit devotion to the Sacred Heart is both a spiritual journey and a call to mission. Saints Claude de La Colombière and Ignatius Loyola demonstrate how this devotion may change lives and advance the Church. The Sacred Heart guides Jesuit spirituality and mission, promoting personal holiness and the work of evangelisation. Today, Jesuits at Paray-le-Monial work with the Visitation Sisters and the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network to teach catechism, give retreats and spiritual guidance to all who seek it. ❖

Source: <https://www.jesuits.global/>



## Remembering Jesuit saints

*Hedwig Lewis, SJ, talks about his new book.*



**What inspired you to write this book?**

A spiritual challenge: to produce a significant work on Jesuit Saints that is strikingly unconventional, convincingly relevant, both spiritually and socially. I felt drawn to make it a 'collaborative' venture – with Our Lord, Our Lady and Our Saints themselves. I deeply experienced their presence and guidance all through

my labours.

### What are the contents of the book?

The essence and effects of Ignatian spirituality, from the Spiritual Exercises and Constitutions, as exemplified and explored by our 53 Saints and 157 Blessed of the Society of Jesus. The community prayer sessions are highly focused – under ten minutes.

### How does the book help Jesuits?

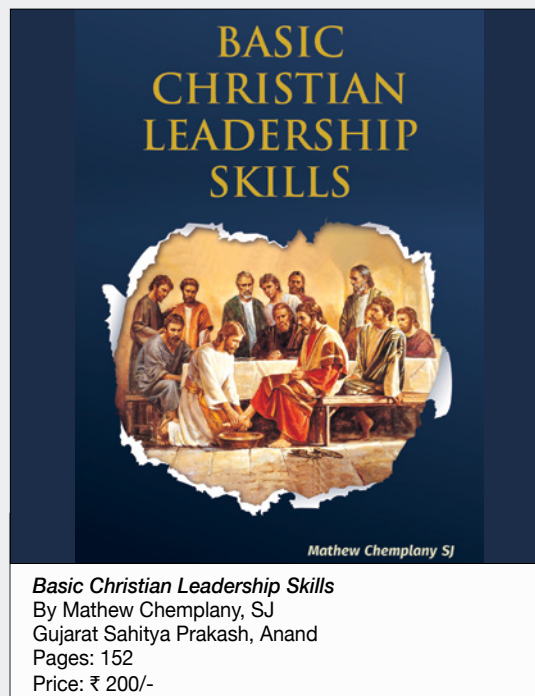
The book is designed to steer Jesuits toward reviving interest in our Saints, systematically, feast day to feast day, through the year. It presents the Saints as fully human and vulnerable as we are, distinguished by their spiritual resilience in fighting the good fight, against all odds, whatever the cost, for the welfare of all. Their struggles and ventures are highly relatable to those we encounter today. The book is a learning-experience on how to grow in wholeness and holiness of life.

*Fr. Hedwig Lewis, SJ (GUJ) is an educationist and writer and has served as a lecturer and principal. He can be contacted at [hedwiglewis@jesuits.net](mailto:hedwiglewis@jesuits.net)*



## For Christian Leaders

*Fr. Mathew Chemplany, SJ talks about his new book on Christian leadership.*



*Basic Christian Leadership Skills*  
By Mathew Chemplany, SJ  
Gujarat Sahitya Prakash, Anand  
Pages: 152  
Price: ₹ 200/-

### What inspired you to write this book?

I have been in various leadership positions in the Society of Jesus. I have been giving courses in leadership, mainly in religious circles. In that process I have been studying this topic for the last many years. I thought of sharing the result of my learning with others.

### What are the contents of the book?

It is written for the Religious and other Christian institutions and organizations. The book talks about the characteristics, functions, and qualities of leadership. There is a Chapter on 'Spiritual Leadership.'

### Who are likely to benefit most from your book?

It will profit mainly the members of Religious congregations and other priests and their collaborators.

*Fr. Mathew Chemplany, SJ (PAT) is a Counsellor at St. Xavier's College of Education (SXCE), Patna. He can be contacted at [chemplany@gmail.com](mailto:chemplany@gmail.com).*



## Devadatta Kamath, SJ (KAR)

Born in 1934, after his initial studies in Mangaluru, Devadatta joined St Joseph's Seminary, Mangaluru to be a diocesan priest. During the formation, he felt the call to be a Jesuit and went to Christ Hall, Calicut for Novitiate and then philosophy in Shembaganur and theology in Pune. He was ordained a priest in 1966 and took his final vows in 1974.

Having earned a PhD in Sanskrit from Karnataka University, Dharwad, Fr Deva went on to become a professor of Indology at St Joseph's Seminary, Mangaluru and taught for 21 years. Later he was appointed to teach in the Juniorates in Thiruvananthapuram and then as Dean in Mundgod and Bengaluru. He served at St Philomena's Hospital, Bengaluru and Lourdes Hospital in Dharwad as the chaplain.

Fr Kamath was a poet, composer, writer, philosopher, scholar, teacher, professor, grammarian, translator, and historian. Being a multi-faceted personality, Fr Deva was brilliant in whatever work he took up. While working in different places on various assignments he wrote the history of Karnataka Jesuit Province (1878 – 2005) in two parts consisting of six volumes, history of the Mangalore Catholic Diocese in two volumes, History of the Ursuline Sisters (UFS) Mangalore, Catholic Catechism in Kannada in three parts, and Janakana Manadanna – Kristayana and Dharmakanda, a biblical poetical epic on the life of Christ starting from the book of Genesis. He has left behind a literal and loving legacy.

▮ Olvin Veigas, SJ



## Theodore Minj, SJ (MAP)

Fr. Theodore Minj hailed from a humble village called Chachaali in the Katkahi parish of Gumla Diocese. Despite facing numerous challenges in his early education, his strong determination and desire to become a priest helped him overcome all obstacles. He initially joined St. Albert's College, Ranchi with the intention of becoming a diocesan priest but soon felt called to be a Jesuit.

In 1960, he entered the novitiate at SSC, Sitagarha. Later he earned a Bachelor of Arts degree. As a Jesuit priest he held various roles as Assistant Prefect, Assistant Director, Prefect, Director of the Apostolic School, Minister, Assistant Parish Priest, Parish Priest, and Confessor. From 2014, he dedicated the last ten years of his life to prayer at Khrist Milan

Ashram in Namna, interceding for the Church and the Society until 23 October 2024.

Remarkably, he was one of the very few Jesuits in the province to reach the age of ninety. Fr. Theodore was known for his simplicity, humility, and sociable nature. He devoted his life to serving the Lord with generosity and readiness.

Affectionately nicknamed "Bolo Jesu" (Infant Jesus) for his childlike spirit, he had a remarkable skill to engage others in conversation. He connected very well with villagers. He demonstrated warmth as well as the necessary strictness in his role as an educator. He made a profound impact on people.

▮ Henry Lakra, SJ



## William (Bill) Dwyer, SJ (HAZ)

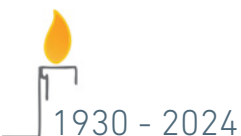
Fr William (Bill) Dwyer SJ, died at Constant Lieven Hospital, Mandar, Ranchi on 12 November '24. He was 94 years old and had lived 76 years as a Jesuit. Born on 13 May 1930, in Melbourne, Victoria, Australia, he completed his school education in Victoria and entered the Society of Jesus on 2 February 1948, at Loyola College, Watsonia, Victoria. After completing his novitiate and juniorate, he went to India in 1952 as part of the second group of Australian Jesuits to travel to India.

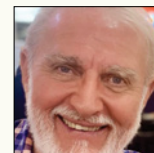
He was ordained a priest on 25 March 1963 at Ranchi Cathedral by Archbishop Pius Kerketta, SJ. He was fully incorporated into the Society of Jesus on 15 August 1967 at St. Xavier's, Hazaribagh. His companions, Frs Paul Horan and Tony Herbert, who came along with him from

Australia, fondly remember their time with Fr Bill when they learnt Hindi in Allahabad. Fr Paul says, "Later he became the Principal of St Xavier's College, and he spoke very high class Hindi that made native speakers raise their eyebrows in surprise." He valued the importance of interfaith dialogue to better understand and connect with the local people

He went to Melbourne, Australia to be the Assistant Director of Jesuit Mission for two years before returning to Hazaribagh in 2009. Fr Bill Dwyer made India his home and spent his life, uplifting tribal communities through education and spiritual direction. He leaves a profound legacy.

▮ <https://jesuit.org.au>





## Deep, conscious breathing

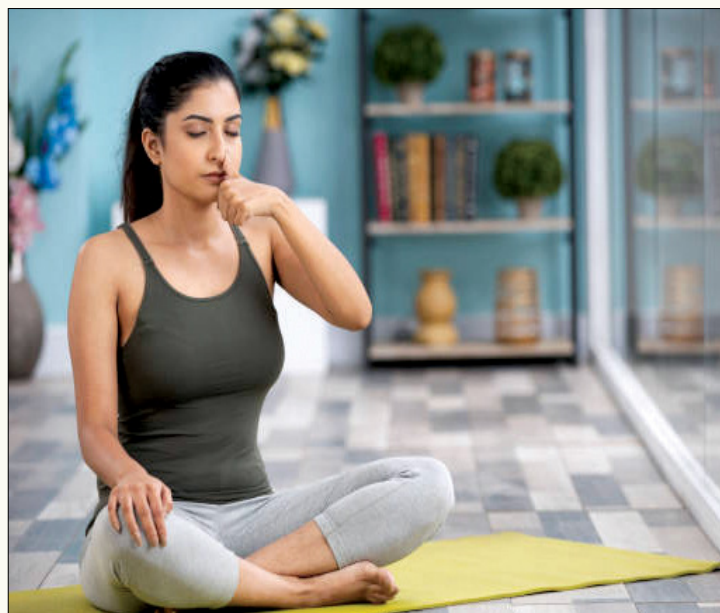
Still many are not aware that 'breath prayer' has been a part of the Christian-Orthodox tradition. It appears perhaps as early as the 3rd century. Known as the "Jesus Prayer" or "Prayer of the Heart," it draws from Mark 10:47, where a blind man, Bartimaeus, calls Jesus to heal him. A common form is, "Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me." By placing a few words on the inhale and a few on the exhale, this prayer unites the prayer with the body. Understanding meditation requires understanding correct breathing.

Focusing on breathing is an ancient and widespread practice in all traditions. Its purpose includes reduction of mental clutter, allowing inner calm to arise. To practice Zen meditation is to be in tune with the breath — the reliable guide and healer for one's life journey.

Breathing is like an anchor-hold, with its natural flow; deep and calm, without pause, through the nose and from the diaphragm. Gradually, as the late Thich Nhat Hanh said, "Feelings come and go like clouds in a windy sky. Conscious breathing is my anchor." Abdominal breathing, connecting body and mind, helps me explore the deeper levels of existence. Respiration through the nose down to the diaphragm relaxes the mind. During expiration the slow extended length of the breath is particularly supportive. With each out-breath there is a sense of 'letting go,' of breathing without any conscious goal, and it should be silent, slow and relaxed.

One's breath involves one's basic attitude to life. Breathing normally, one counts each breath from 1-10. Then start again and so on. Try to focus on the out-breath; breathing out long, slow and steady. Let the incoming breath flow normally, gently and of shorter duration. In seated meditation (zazen), with a straight back, we breathe naturally but deeply, intentionally and slowly. The breathing is centred on the lower diaphragm, yet the whole body participates in the breathing. The practice of connecting with the breath flows into daily life with the potential for deeper relaxation.

Seated meditation involves posture, breathing, and mind-quieting, and so it naturally helps us become deeply familiar with the everyday workings of the breath, which varies as the pace of these activities change. Attention to our breathing can lead to a sense of unity and cohesion in daily life.



Pic courtesy: fatyoga.com.au

Breath-awareness is practiced in those idle moments in one's day; while waiting at an intersection, for the kettle to boil, for an appointment, or in between one task and another. Intentionally taking a deep breath or two, one places oneself in the here and now where one is. In this practice, one notices the qualitative difference in one's day. Instead of losing those moments, fidgeting or getting impatient or anxious, one finds they become connectors that tie my life together, and back to the living centre where it originates — the 'here and now'.

Fr Ama Samy says, "Zazen is not a method or technique of achievement, . . . The physical posture of zazen is a door opening into the spirit of zazen, where there is a form of healing affirmation. It is letting-be and be-ing. When I do zazen, it is, in a way, the universe that is doing zazen. Zazen embraces all times and spaces and at the same time it is timeless and spaceless".

The practice of Zazen requires the alignment of the posture, the natural flow of the breath, and the ebb and flow of thoughts. All that we are is the result of what we have thought. What we think, we become. This is why deep, conscious breathing, practiced regularly, generates a peaceful mind, a clear spirit, and true stability in the midst of daily life. ❖

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"Don't tell anyone that I am back. I will meet people in the morning. First, I have to die."

"Die?"

"Dye my hair."



"I will not give up this remote until my serial is over. Get your own TV if you want to watch the IPL cricket final."



"I always had this thought of joining some contemplative order."

"Go ahead. What is stopping you?"

"This sumptuous food and drinks that we get every day on our table."



"As a newly ordained priest your first Sunday sermon was great."

"Thank you."

"It was loud and clear. But nothing useful or inspiring."

Melwyn Pinto, SJ

JESUIT HUMOUR

## Do you know who is speaking?

This incident took place a quarter of a century ago when mobile phones were a rarity. A group of scholastics, nearly a dozen in number, led by Sch. Vinod, planned a day-long picnic to the waterfalls not far from DNC. For reasons unknown, Sch. Jeevan failed to join the outing. Frustrated by Jeevan's absence, Vinod decided to call and confront him. Impatient and angry, Vinod dialed the number, and as soon as the receiver was picked up, he unleashed his fury. "You rogue!" he bellowed into the phone. "We counted on your presence at our gathering, but you've let us down badly! How can I ever trust you again? Rest assured, I'll never invite you to another picnic!"

Vinod didn't know that in his haste, he had called the wrong number. He was actually speaking to the Provincial! Stunned by the tirade, the Provincial roared back, "Hey, hey, stop it! Do you even know who you're talking to? This is the Provincial!" Aghast, Vinod stammered, "I-I'm s-s-so s-s-sorry, Father. I called you by m-m-mistake. But, F-fa-father, do you know who is speaking to you?" "No," replied the Provincial, confused. Before he could continue, Vinod muttered in a relieved tone, "Thank God!" and quickly hung up.



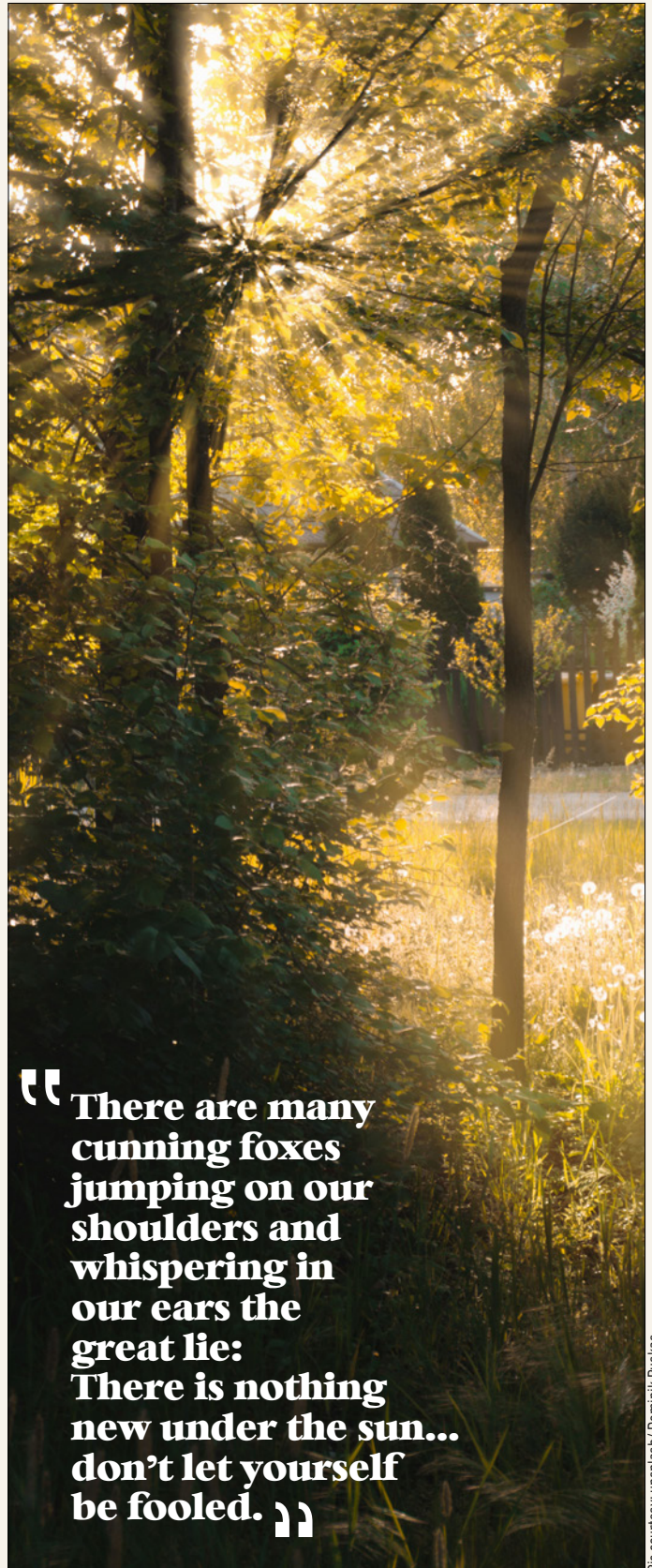
# Live each day as a day full of promises!

We must learn to live each day, each hour, yes, each minute as a new beginning, as a unique opportunity to make everything new. Imagine that we could live each moment as a moment pregnant with new life. Imagine that we could live each day as a day full of promises. Imagine that we could walk through the new year always listening to the voice saying to us: “I have a gift for you and can’t wait for you to see it!” Imagine.

Is it possible that our imagination can lead us to the truth of our lives? Yes, it can! The problem is that we allow our past, which becomes longer and longer each year, to say to us: “You know it all; you have seen it all, be realistic; the future will just be a repeat of the past. Try to survive it as best you can.” There are many cunning foxes jumping on our shoulders and whispering in our ears the great lie: “There is nothing new under the sun... don’t let yourself be fooled.”

When we listen to these foxes, they eventually prove themselves right: our new year, our new day, our new hour become flat, boring, dull, and without anything new.

So what are we to do? First, we must send the foxes back to where they belong: in their foxholes. And then we must open our minds and our hearts to the voice that resounds through the valleys and hills of our life saying: “Let me show you where I live among my people. My name is ‘God-with-you.’ I will wipe all the tears from your eyes; there will be no more death, and no more mourning or sadness. The world of the past has gone” (Revelation 21:2–5). ❖



“There are many cunning foxes jumping on our shoulders and whispering in our ears the great lie: There is nothing new under the sun... don’t let yourself be fooled.”

WELL SAID

“The direction you choose to face determines whether you’re standing at the end or the beginning of a road.”

- Richelle E. Goodrich



Pic Courtesy: freepik