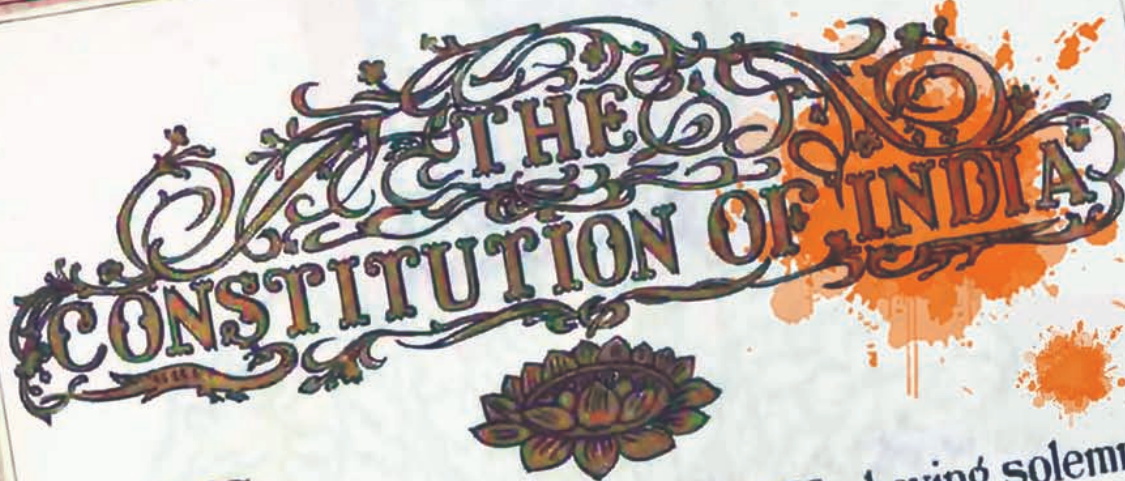


July 2019

# JIVAN

NEWS AND VIEWS OF JESUITS IN INDIA

## Election 2019: Jesuit Response to Stunning Verdict



**Preamble.** **WE, THE PEOPLE OF INDIA**, having solemnly  
resolved to constitute India into a **SOVEREIGN DEMO-**  
**CRATIC REPUBLIC** and to **secure to all its citizens:**  
**JUSTICE**, social, economic and political;  
**LIBERTY** of thought, expression, belief, faith and  
... of opportunity;



## Behind Closed Doors

(The poem reflects the plight of many Afghan girls born in conservative families)

Can you hear my silent screams  
As they kill my secret dreams?  
And if by chance you do,  
Will you try to help me now  
As I suffer silently,  
Behind closed doors?

I was born one Jumma<sup>1</sup> morn,  
A girl, an easy game for scorn;  
Plates of insults are fed to me  
More often than any shir<sup>2</sup> or birinj, <sup>3</sup>  
And I can't complain,  
Behind closed doors.

My Baba was a kindly man,  
I was his Freshta<sup>4</sup> Jan<sup>5</sup>.  
To my mother I didn't seem to exist.  
"Khodet Mushkil Asti."<sup>6</sup>  
And I wept silently,  
Behind closed doors.

Baba Jan loved me. That's all I cared for.  
But, sadly, Baba Jan wasn't always there.  
And when not there I had to bear my brother's  
wrath  
When, by chance, I crossed his furious path.  
But my cries were not heard for I was  
Behind closed doors.

As dawn ends I hear happy sounds,  
Boisterous boys on the way to school.  
My soul fills with longing  
To be at the desk with them.  
But girls don't study. They linger back,  
Behind closed doors.

Will girls ever get to learn, I ask Baba Jan.  
Inshalla<sup>7</sup> is the only reply I get.  
So, Allah, if you hear my silent scream,  
Make real my hope-filled dream.  
I cannot bear to stay any longer  
In this world...  
Behind closed doors.

Thomas Vaz, SJ

thomasjames625@gmail.com

( The author is currently the JRS Project Director in Bamyan Province, Afghanistan.)

<sup>1</sup>Friday

<sup>2</sup>Milk

<sup>3</sup>Rice

<sup>4</sup>Angel. Freshta Jan is a girl's name.

<sup>5</sup>Life or Soul

<sup>6</sup>You're a problem (Pastho)

<sup>7</sup>God willing.



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As a service of information for the South Asian Jesuit Assistancy, Jivan is sent to Jesuits and their colleagues, Collaborators and friends. Articles appearing in Jivan express the views of the authors and not of the Jesuit Conference of South Asia. The Editor regrets he is unable to return any hard copies of articles or photographs sent, so please keep a copy of whatever you send for publication.

All material sent for publication may be edited for reasons of space, clarity or policy. Readers are requested to donate generously towards Jesuit ministries.





"We have a problem here, George.  
All ex-provincials want to join JRS.  
All retired principals want to become  
parish priests. All retired parish  
priests want to give retreats to nuns!"



Old priest: "There's discipline for you,  
young man! A good Jesuit always  
gets out of bed at five o'clock..."

Young scholastic: "Twice a day, eh,  
Reverend Father?"



## The myth of priestly powers

Thank you, Astrid for the excellent piece on clerical abuse. As I see it the main problem is the glorification of priesthood, their claims that they have special powers and status which are all imaginary. The priesthood is a development within the Church, a "pro domo sua" approach made by the clerics themselves, claiming special powers over the Eucharist and the forgiveness of sins. They help celebrate the return of the sinner to the fold; they are not giving forgiveness. God loves the sinner. In the mass they remember and celebrate what the Lord had done, enabling people to commune with the Lord; nothing to do with clerical powers. Unless this myth of special powers is destroyed, they will continue to exploit. Continue the good work you are doing.

Joseph Mattam, SJ | Vadodara

## New eco-system for catholic clergy

One must thank Astrid for giving a sound clinical analysis on 'Gender Sensitivity and the Catholic clergy' in May-June issue. In most other religions the priest is a service provider unlike the Catholic priest who is 'especially called' and he is 'ontologically' different from other human beings. The Catholic priest, good or bad, gets excessive deference from the flock. In the past there was an eco-system that protected the priest. However secularization has done away with this eco-system leaving the priest exposed. Most Catholic clergy are also engaged in running secular institutions which gives them added power and privileges. The combination of 'ontological' and institutional power can prove deadly in any relationship leave alone with women. The ten steps for way forward by Astrid will greatly contribute to creating a new eco-system for the Catholic clergy.

Lancy Lobo, SJ | Vadodara

## Power and clericalism

Thanks Astrid for your comprehensive and courageous article highlighting an issue that is rocking the Church, and for offering concrete proposals for effectively coping with it. While Jesuits are becoming painfully aware of the sexual abuse crisis, I wonder how many see that the roots of the problem lie in the power and prestige that Jesuits enjoy in a hierarchical, patriarchal Church that lends support to the culture of clericalism. How do we strategise to transform this crippling culture into one of servant leadership in a community of equals?

A suggestion: If Jesuits would not like to dare the improbable by advocating for ordination of women could we at least insist on sufficient participation of women as equal partners at all levels of decision making in the Church? This will make a significant difference to the power dynamics in the Church and offset to a large extent the culture of "Yes Father. Yes your Lordship."

When I had gone to Toronto for the Parliament World Religions in November 2018 I travelled with the Anglican Bishop of Canada and his wife for a Sunday service in a Church on a reservation for the First Nations' indigenous peoples. It was a pleasant surprise to see an indigenous woman as the celebrant. She casually invited the bishop, who was seated beside me in plain clothes in the congregation, to also give a blessing. Thank God there was no trace of "Yes Father" or "Yes your Lordship" at all. How liberating for all concerned!

Prashant Olalekar, SJ | Mumbai



## POSA Speaks

GEORGE PATTERY, SJ

### UAPs – Pathways are made by walking

The Universal Apostolic Preferences are a process of responding to the mission of reconciliation, leading to transformation. All four of them are to be viewed in an integrated way as response to life-mission in its unity, not as separated entities. They constitute one process calling us, as the whole body of the Society of Jesus, to conversion at personal, communal and institutional levels.

Commenting on the UAPs, Fr. General says: “The Society of Jesus is living a moment of transition the magnitude of which is not easily sensed by those who are living it. The Lord has warned of this: ‘No one pours new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise, the new wine will burst the skins, and it will be spilled, and the skins will be ruined. Rather, new wine must be put into fresh wineskins. And no one who has been drinking old wine desires new, for he says, the old is good’” (Lk. 5:37-39).

Do not overlook the last line of the Lord’s warning. We are not only “accustomed” to a way of living and working apostolically but can even be “proud” of our current style of life-mission. It can seem to us not only good but the best, and that leads us to be content, to want nothing else... because the old wine is the good wine. The change of historical epoch that we are living, the changes that happen so fast that it is hard to keep up... these are the new wineskins into which we are called to pour the Good News of Jesus Christ through our life-mission profoundly transformed by the experience of encounter with the Lord.

The key word in UAPs is ‘conversion.’ The three preferences, as it were, form three circles of walking with the excluded, caring for the common home and accompanying the youth, intersected with the fourth circle of pathway of the Spiritual Exercises. In our journey with the Lord, we walk with the poor, care for the earth and get challenged by the youth. Inversely, we discover that the poor, the youth and the earth (common home) are the pathways of the Lord reaching us. Pathways are made by walking.

The UAPs, Fr. General continues, “are not only about what we do. These preferences are also about how God can change us. They can only orient our life-mission if our faith is based in personal experience of God and the convictions that come from that experience: that God is greater than we are; that God’s action transcends by far our limits; that God can and wants to communicate with us, with each human person.” (Fr. General to the Enlarged Council, Rome, 10th June, 2019).



## Editor’s Desk

VINAYAK JADAV, SJ

### First things first

During my tertianship the one-month experiment at Freedom Foundation - the Rehab centre for HIV patients, drug addicts and alcoholics in Bangalore - a slogan drew my attention: First things first. In the context of the inmates it meant that lack of priority in life creates a disorder which leads to undue tension the coping of which necessitates drug or alcohol inducement. For a fruitful life priorities are a must. The first among the four recently promulgated Universal Apostolic Preferences conveys not only the wisdom of setting priorities in life but that among them the most important is ‘showing the way to God’ which, for us Jesuits, is undoubtedly through the Spiritual Exercises and Discernment.

Ignatius himself practiced and affirmed the value of priorities. The Principle and Foundation establishes that life is not just a pathway but the pathway to God. Through ‘tantum quantum’ (in so far as) Ignatius showed that once we ‘taste and relish’ the pathway to God, all other pathways are tasteless and insipid. Showing the way to God is therefore absolute and all else is relative. The consoling taste of God’s forgiving love, the free choice to remain under ‘the banner of the Cross’ ever after and the ultimate joyful surrender in ‘Take and Receive’ leave us discerning ‘God in all things and all things in God.’

The first Universal Apostolic Preference then is itself the principle and foundation to the other three. Walking with the excluded, caring for our common home and journeying with the youth are the expressways among the many pathways to God today. It is the ‘one’ without which the zeroes that may follow are just zeroes and have no value in themselves.

I read somewhere: I have many things to do and love is not one among them. Showing the way to God in and through our way of life is not a prioritized activity among many. The Spiritual Exercises lead us into the ‘being and essence of God’ - finding ourselves in God and God in ourselves. Discernment is encountering love labouring in creation, including in ourselves. Tagore aptly reflects the spirit of the first Universal Apostolic Preference: *Let only that little be left of me, whereby I may name thee my all; Let only that little be left of my will, whereby I may feel thee on every side, and come to thee in everything, and offer to thee my love every moment; Let only that little be left of me whereby I may never hide thee; Let only that little of my fetters be left whereby I am bound with thy will, and thy purpose is carried out in my life and that is the fetter of thy love.*

Ignatius, Tagore and each one of us has received the grace of the first Universal Apostolic Preference. The task now is to make our very selves the pathways to God.



# Elections 2019: Jesuit response to a stunning verdict

If Election 2014 was about the ‘Modi wave’, then Election 2019 is definitely about the ‘Modi tsunami’ (tsuNaMo). PM Modi, who led the BJP and the NDA from the front, has ended up being recognized as an indefatigable campaigner and, with some help from his deputy, as a strategist par excellence. The massive scale of the victory has forced the opposition parties to go into a huddle to introspect. Does this stunning victory mean more trouble for the minorities? Or are they, in a strange way, going to be safer? A flashback to the 2017 Gujarat Assembly Election would be instructive.

The response of some Jesuits after the 2017 Gujarat elections, during which the Congress led a spirited fight against the BJP, was telling, as it was chilling: “Thank God the Congress did not win!” What they meant was that had the Congress won, a repeat of the planned violence unleashed on minorities during the 2002 pogrom in order to polarize the polity could not be ruled out. This was confirmed by a Muslim woman closely associated with Jesuit NGOs and works: “It is good that they (BJP) have won,” she said. We will not be raped or killed; we will at least be able to live and work.” The understanding that riots are planned and instigated and that a ‘riot system’ exists, which can be efficiently deployed at any given moment, is now beyond doubt. Propaganda, fake news and rumours, staged encounters, etc. are all part of this ‘system’. The BJP has realized that in order to reap electoral dividends, all it has to do is to use the riot system to polarize the people.

Another flashback to General Elections 2014 is revealing. Despite the rhetoric of ‘inclusive development’ (Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas), strident Hindutva was evident. Eminent persons at the panel discussion, organized by two centres (Xavier Institute of Social Research - XISR and the Department of Inter-Religious Studies - DIRS) of Xavier’s College, Mumbai, weeks before the elections, had warned of the dangers of voting for communal and fascist forces. With the landslide victory of the BJP, their words had proved prophetic. The ruling dispensation lost no time in implementing its majoritarian agenda. Cultural nationalism held sway. Attacks on churches, lynchings of Muslims, and sensational day light murders of rationalists and journalists who challenged the government and exposed its lies took place. The horrible rapes in Kathua and Unnao, coupled with threats and intimidation, prompted Ms. Ananya Vajpeyi, a woman journalist, to describe the happenings as ‘genocidal majoritarianism.’





Irrespective of electoral losses or gains, the RSS project of creating a Hindu Rashtra, will not be shelved. Having tasted power, having so many State governments in their kitty, having penetrated, and infiltrated vital organs of the State and other bodies including the Constitutional ones, the forward march of the RSS will continue. It is feared that after such a massive mandate the majoritarian agenda of the BJP will be implemented ruthlessly with scant regard to the rule of law or to Constitutional morality.

What should the Jesuit response be in the wake of this massive win? There is a mood of sombre despondency, even fear, among secular, peace loving people. However, there are voices such as that of Harsh Mander who stated recently that in these times “Despair is clearly not an option.” ‘Conscience keeper film-maker’ Anand Patwardhan asked a counter question

to someone who asked him, “Do you not feel depressed when so much is happening?” “Where do we have the luxury to feel so?” he asked.

Post 2014, the Jesuits of South Asia, have been trying to respond to the situation. Some Provinces formed groups and initiated platforms to make the general public, the student community, parishes and schools, aware of the growing intolerance of dissent and the rising spectre of fascism. Some of these initiatives were shared with the larger body of Jesuits through the office of the POSA. Another big step taken by the JCSA, led by Fr. George Pattery, was to come up with a bold and clear Statement contesting Hindu Rashtra. It analyzed the situation in the country and asked Jesuit Provinces to come up with their own strategies to combat hate and promote harmony. It



Image Source : Google





“

To remain as mere silent spectators in the midst of this onslaught on the Constitutional values of equality and fraternity, secularism and pluralism is to betray our mission. Our response must be in collaboration with men and women of good will and networking with civil society and other organizations that share our values.”

spelt out the Jesuit response in today's world with clarity and seriousness of purpose:

“Our Mission as Jesuits in South Asia is to build counter-cultural human communities of solidarity that will be an instrument of peace and reconciliation to respond to this danger of turning the region into a region of hate and violence. To remain as mere silent spectators in the midst of this onslaught on the Constitutional values of equality and fraternity, secularism and pluralism is to betray our mission. Our response must be in collaboration with men and women of good will and networking with civil society and other organizations that share our values.”

Furthermore, Jesuits can take the cue from Fr. General, Arturo Sosa, who is not unaware of what is happening in many parts of the world, including his own country Venezuela. On his most recent visit to India (March 2019) he encouraged his men to promote and strengthen democracy and the Constitution. Speaking at the Jnana Deepa Vidyapeeth (JDV) to a select group of Jesuits in higher education, he stated that a weak democracy is not in the interest of the people. It harms them, he said, especially the poor, the marginalized and the minorities.

Lack of democracy encourages violation of human rights and weakens the rule of law, he added. We all know Amartya Sen's famous thesis: Where there is democracy, there is no famine.

Another important area he wanted Jesuits to invest in is in the field of what he called 'Political Formation or Education.' According to him, Jesuits in their institutions and social centres should educate and train young people in politics and governance. He also said that they should be 'accompanied' and should be prepared to take up positions in the government so that the 'common good' can be promoted. The most important common good in our present situation is the realization of peace and reconciliation in a country marked by division, hatred and violence. The Universal Apostolic Preferences (UAP) includes 'Journeying with the Youth.' This is an opportunity for the Jesuits to rise to the occasion, and train and accompany the youth.

In the run-up to the elections, Jesuits and their institutions were involved in the work of Voter Registration-cum-Education. This was consciously done to strengthen democracy, and not merely as a short-term strategy. A large number of people, especially those hailing from the minority communities, Adivasis and Dalits found their names missing from the Electoral List. Many of them were helped to register. Voters were also helped to analyze the political situation in the country and to assess the suitability of candidates. Attempts were also made to educate the people about the basic contents of the Constitution of India so that they could appreciate the values enshrined in it, and become aware of the rights, duties and freedom guaranteed to citizens. A promising initiative led by the POSA was starting a nodal platform in Kerala called LIPI that coordinated the efforts of several peace platforms initiated by Jesuits in their respective Provinces.

Jesuit response should typically look beyond the results of Election 2019 to the larger horizon and bigger battles. If fascist forces have to be defeated, if the harm done to human rights jurisprudence, to democratic institutions and natural ecosystems has to be undone, if equitable distribution of wealth and social justice are to be implemented, and if agrarian distress to be mitigated, then Jesuits will have to engage not only in voter registration and education but also with all sections of society, across religious divides and ideologies, coming together to collaborate and network to strengthen democracy. They should also protect the Constitution, which is the bulwark against the transgressions of the State and its agencies, and the violent vigilante groups that take the law into their own hands. Remaining ensconced in one's own community or institutional comfort zones is, in the strong and direct language of the JCSA Statement, a betrayal of our Mission.

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# Rejection of Secularism and Socialism by the masses

The results of the just concluded Lok Sabha Elections 2019 show quite emphatically, that in the Northern States of India the masses have rejected two vital pillars of the Indian Constitution: secularism and socialism. Forces representing these two ideals (which greatly inspired the Founding Fathers of the Republic) have been trounced by overwhelming margins. On the other hand, right-wing nationalism and the forces driving it have got thumping majorities almost everywhere, except in the Southern States. What is it that has caused this astounding upheaval in the political landscape? Over many years, but especially during the last five years, right-wing forces have been relentlessly spreading their 'nationalistic' ideas through direct mobilization of the masses using various social and religious events, and especially, using every available mass medium (TV, radio, videos, WhatsApp, Twitter, Youtube, etc.), in all languages. This has led to a complete change in the perceptions and mindset of the masses; while the forces of secularism and socialism have done precious little or nothing to instil these lofty ideals in the minds of the common people, even with all the means necessary, including positions of power, at their disposal. Scientific temper too, another much-needed quality in today's world (strongly recommended in the Directive Principles of the Constitution), has not been inculcated by the political parties in power, educational institutions and the mass media, during the last seventy two years since independence. The so-called 'secular' political parties themselves seem to have lost faith in 'secularism' and embraced a softer version of strident nationalism.

Today, the vast majority of our people have begun to view every issue facing

the country through the narrow prism of right-wing nationalism. Thus, even bread-and-butter issues, like oil price-rise, demonetization, GST, farmer distress, lack of jobs for the educated classes, fall in standards of education, horse-trading after elections, etc., are pushed into the background or ignored. People are quite ready to face any hardship or privation for the sake of the fresh new nationalistic icons on the political horizon, and for cultural and national pride. Even serious blunders committed by the new champions of the people are glossed over, while the least mistake,



historic freedom struggle that made the nation what it is today.

Once secularism and socialism, as defined in the Constitution, are abandoned, the new nationalistic vision of the country will slowly tend to become more and more narrow, exclusivist and extremist, in the long run. Any dissent - even creative and constructive - will not be tolerated, as happened in several European countries in the early 20th century. If this happens, the nation's progress towards the future is bound to get severely retarded. Social harmony will be seriously disturbed, and as a consequence, economic progress is bound to suffer. Therefore, in the changed political scenario, those who still believe in secularism and socialism, will have to consciously re-dedicate themselves to these great ideals of the Founding Fathers and strive as hard as the 'hyper-patriots', to promote them. The minorities too, who will get increasingly marginalized, must insist on claiming their minority rights given by the Constitution, in order to more effectively promote secularism and socialism in all

their social service, healthcare and educational institutions, so as to help broaden the public's vision of narrow nationalism and lead the nation to internationalism and universal brotherhood, to true freedom and cosmic harmony which the ancient Indian scriptures speak of. As the great Indian poet, Rabindranath Tagore, a strong critic of narrow nationalism, says, "Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high; Where knowledge is free; Where the world has not been broken up into fragments by narrow domestic walls... Into that Heaven of freedom, my Father, let my Country awake."

■ Joseph M. Dias, SJ



# Death by a thousand (paper) cuts: Ignatius and the Promise of La Storta



Image Source : Jesuits Global

The laconic promise “I will be propitious to you in Rome” made to Ignatius at the chapel of La Storta in late October or early November in 1537 has suggested different things to different Jesuits across the history of the Society of Jesus. For Ignatius himself these words held a promise of the crown of martyrdom itself - perhaps in a similar vein to that of St. Peter to whom our founder had a great devotion. To Ignatius’ early companions this could well have been a promise of divine assistance for all that lay ahead for this embryonic *Compañía de Jesús* in Rome. However these enigmatic words

may have been interpreted back then, the ensuing course of events present us with a sobering - and, for our day and age, a heartening - insight into the dawn of our least Society and the dusk of the life of our renowned founder.

Through his autobiography as well as contemporary accounts of our founder, we are given the impression of a man-on-the-move. Soldier, pilgrim, group leader, fund-raiser, charismatic initiator... all these portray a man much more prone to doing things for God’s greater glory than simply dreaming of them or, worse still,

being content with hearing and recording accounts of others doing deeds of apostolic service. Yet, this was precisely the fate that awaited Ignatius for the last two decades of his life in Rome. As far as we know, from 1537 until his death in 1556 Ignatius never left Rome. And while he was certainly very active, apostolically, in Rome (we need look no further than the establishment of Santa Marta for that) we can also surmise that the bulk of Ignatius’ time and energies were consumed by what we may call “administrative affairs.”

The grind began a mere three months



after settling in Rome. As if the hands of Ignatius and his companions weren't full enough with establishing their domicile and apostolates in Rome, they had to fend off a smear campaign directed against them during Lent of 1538. Rumours were being spread - most egregiously by a former friend of the companions - that these were "reformed priests" on a mission to woo Catholic souls to the dark side of Protestantism. Given the ecclesiastical climate of that time this was a very serious concern and Ignatius had to immediately defend his fledgling group from these accusations. Thorough as he was, Ignatius waged his battle on two fronts. On the ecclesiastical front he doggedly presented his case to at least two leading cardinals and then even to the Pope. On the civil front, he would not back down until the governor of Rome passed a judicial sentence declaring their innocence. The fact that it took nine months to obtain this sentence and remains to this day one of the best documented episodes of those early years should give us a hint of the time, energy, and paper-work this process must have necessitated.

Fast-forward to the following year and the end of the Deliberations of the First Fathers in June of 1539. The first companions had discerned that God was, indeed, drawing them to establish a religious congregation. Having drafted the sketch of their "rule," they entered into the process of seeking approval from the Holy See. On September 3, 1539, Pope Paul III gave his oral approval. It took a year and three weeks before they finally obtained the Bull of approval. But not without first needing to overcome the successive obstacles thrown at them by cardinals who could not fathom their unconventional ways of living religious life. This was the period of Ignatius storming heaven with 3000 masses and soliciting written testimonies from anyone on earth (in Europe at least) who, first-hand, knew the companions and their good work.

Thus, any dreams from La Storta that Ignatius may have had of being nailed to a cross - upright or upside down - were quickly replaced by the reality of his being inescapably chained to a desk. Where else would he have had the occasion to so laboriously and tediously hand-write

those 7000 letters, let alone pen those exhaustive details of the Constitutions! Assuming that the bulk of those letters were written during his tenure at Rome, we can reckon an average of more than 360 letters a year! Now given the tenor of the letters that most of us have been exposed to, we may be tempted to conclude that Ignatius must have surely found much spiritual profit in writing about things of the heart and the spirit as he so magisterially does in his oft-quoted letters on prayer and discernment of spirits and poverty and obedience and so on. But a little more research into this matter reveals that a mere 5% of Ignatius' voluminous correspondence



Although responsibility for temporal business may appear and be somewhat distracting, I have no doubt that your holy intention and your directing everything you do to God's glory makes it spiritual and highly pleasing to his infinite goodness."

can be classified as "spiritual" in content and purpose. More than 75% deal with the humdrum reality of temporal tasks: property, permissions, and, quite likely, all sorts of pecuniary affairs. Tedious? Yes! Time consuming? Surely! Boring? To my mind, without a doubt!

Medieval China had a form of torture where a victim was left to die from the slow and painful bleeding from a 1000 tiny cuts made all over the body. Hyperbole admitted, many of "ours" in administrative positions today might identify with how spiritually "deadly" it can sometimes feel to have to write one more email, or report, or legal brief, or application for permissions, or ledger entry for what might seem as far removed from any educational, or pastoral, or spiritual purpose as possible.

Perhaps Ignatius in his wisdom and foresight anticipated the challenges of living and working under the tyranny of bureaucracy or what we in India experience as "the license Raj." As a result, he would encourage one of his contemporary Treasurers (who probably expressed his frustration and disappointment at the prospect of facing "death by a 1000 paper cuts") with these words:

Although responsibility for temporal business may appear and be somewhat distracting, I have no doubt that your holy intention and your directing everything you do to God's glory makes it spiritual and highly pleasing to his infinite goodness. For when distractions are accepted for his greater service and in conformity with his divine will as interpreted to you by obedience, they can be not only equivalent to the union and recollection of constant contemplation, but even more acceptable to him, since they proceed from a more vehement and stronger charity. (Letter to Manoel Godhino on Jan 31, 1552).

To the casual observer this may sound like a pious exhortation from a superior to a subject in desolation. To a cynical observer this may even sound like spiritual jargon. But from a man who entered the Eternal City nearly 500 years ago spurred on by the promise of facing a heroic martyrdom in service of his Eternal King and Lord, and ended up spending much of the rest of his life assuming "responsibility for temporal business" with all its drudgery and tedium, these are words no less autobiographical and heartfelt than anything in his Autobiography and Spiritual Diary. When Ignatius wrote these words in 1552 there was no doubt that he was writing them from his own decade-long experience.

Thank God for this side of our founder too! Saint Ignatius - antihero and patron saint of all paper-pushing administrators!

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# Shedding Light on Clerical Closets

## Musings on Pope Francis's *Motu Proprio*



Image Source: zig.com

### Need to relight our lives

*"In the Light of the Master"* is the title of chapter three of Pope Francis's March 2018 *'Gaudete et Exsultate'*—Rejoice and Be Glad!—On the Call to Holiness in Today's World. This exhortation was mainly meant for the run-of-the-mill Catholic 'layman' and not for ordained minister: the so-called *alter Christus*. Describing the Beatitudes in Matthew 5:1-12 as a "Christian's identity card", Francis painstakingly explains each beatitude. Little did he realize then that by May 2019 he'd use verse 14 to pen a *motu*

*proprio* — literally, 'on his own impulse' — rescript to exhort clerics to clean their insides since sexual abuses threaten not only to rock the Barque of Peter but to wreck it.

Pope Francis's *motu proprio* apostolic letter of 7th May, 2019, begins with: "You are the light of the world" (Mt 5:14), giving it its title, *'Vos Estis Lux Mundi'* (hereafter, VELM). He adds, "Our Lord Jesus calls every believer to be a shining example of virtue, integrity and holiness." If this call to be 'lights' is for common Christians, how much more must bishops and priests be shining stars radiating Christ, The Light of the World? Let's



see how VELM addresses sexual abuse by clerics.

## A bird's-eye view of VELM

VELM comprises two parts. The first, 'General Provisions', has 'articles' on the: (a) scope of application and definitions; (b) structures for the reception of reports and data protection; (c) obligation of reporting; (d) protection of persons submitting reports; and, (e) care of persons involved. The second part entitled 'Provisions Concerning Bishops and their Equivalents' has guidelines for cases of sexual abuse by hierarchs like cardinals, patriarchs, bishops and heads of religious orders.

VELM's norms apply to clerics guilty of: "(i) forcing someone, by violence or threat or through abuse of authority, to perform or submit to sexual acts; (ii) performing sexual acts with a minor or a vulnerable person; (iii) the production, exhibition, possession or distribution, including by electronic means, of child pornography." A "minor" is anyone under eighteen and a "vulnerable person" refers to "any person in a state of infirmity, physical or mental deficiency, or deprivation of personal liberty which, in fact, even occasionally, limits their ability to understand or to want or otherwise resist the offence."

It is mandatory to establish "stable and easily accessible systems for submission of reports, even through the institution of a specific ecclesiastical office. The Dioceses and the Eparchies shall inform the Pontifical Representative of the establishment of the systems established" and "The Ordinary who received the report shall transmit it without delay to the Ordinary of the place where the events are said to have occurred, as well as to the Ordinary of the person reported."

"Whenever a cleric or religious has notice of, or well-founded motives to believe that, one of the above-mentioned violations has been committed, that person is obliged to report promptly the fact to the local Ordinary where the events are said to have occurred." Furthermore, "any person can submit a report concerning sexual violations" and, when it concerns hierarchs — i.e., cardinals, bishops, patriarchs, etc. — then, it is to be addressed to an authority higher than the abuser. Notably, "the report can always be sent to the Holy See directly or through the Pontifical Representative."

To ensure that truth prevails, "the report shall include as many particulars as possible, such as indications of time and place of the facts, of the persons involved or informed." Finally, the authorities must ensure that "persons making a report are protected and must be committed to care for the victims by: (a) making them feel welcomed, listened to and supported,

including through provision of specific services; (b) offering spiritual assistance and (c) offering medical assistance, including therapeutic and psychological assistance."

Upon receipt of any report of abuse, the authorities must immediately begin investigating — and, "in any case within thirty days from the receipt of the first report" — by appointing an investigating committee that will collect information "by approaching individuals and institutions, including civil institutions, that are able to provide useful elements for the investigation." Unless proven guilty, "the person under investigation enjoys the presumption of innocence," must provide information from his/her viewpoint, and "may be assisted by legal counsel."

"The investigation is to be completed within the term of ninety days" and "having completed the investigation, the committee must submit its *votum* regarding the results of the investigation." The authorities "must then take appropriate action complying with the laws of the state in each case."

## Five vital takeaways from VELM

Pope Francis does well by: (a) Mandating that a special office be set up by June 2020 in every diocese, worldwide, to record complaints not only of abuse but also of cover-ups by higher-ups; (b) Insisting that anyone — not only the victims or victim's family — "*is obliged to report promptly*" cases of abuse; (c) Ensuring that not only 'minors' and 'vulnerable adults' but also those abused by religious authorities wielding great power, for e.g., novices, religious sisters, adult seminarians, etc., are protected; (d) Encouraging investigating committees to include the lay faithful who have legal and professional expertise that can be

fruitfully tapped; and, (e) Bringing cardinals, bishops, patriarchs and other superiors under the scanner. No one is above the law of the Church and the State.

## Root problem: Cancers of clericalism and careerism

VELM published, it's worth asking: Properly enforced, will VELM ensure that the clergy will never again be guilty of sexual abuse? One wonders whether this will be possible since the sexual abuse problem is deeply rooted in clericalism and careerism.

JIVAN recently published Astrid Lobo Gajiwala's article:



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'Gender Sensitivity and the Catholic Clergy' (JIVAN, May-June 2019, Page 7) stating, "Sexual abuse wherever it takes place, is not about sex but about the misuse of power" She cites clericalism as problem numero uno in the sexual abuse crisis. She's right.

Pope Francis ceaselessly warns priests about clericalism, which makes, "clergymen feel superior; they distance themselves from the people; they have no time to listen to the poor, the suffering, the prisoners, the sick ... Clericalism is truly an awful reality, and its victim is always the same: the poor, humble people that wait for the Lord."

Likewise, careerism, says Pope Francis, is an understanding of one's position in the Church in terms of what one can get, rather than of what one can give. Careerism makes one seek titles, grab power, demand privileges, manipulate people, batter colleagues and butter bosses. He labels it a "leprosy" that disfigures the priest who, rather than seeing himself as being "called by Christ to serve", sees everyone at his beck and call — to climb the church-ladder to be served, not to serve.

Reading two books: "Merchants in the Temple: Inside Pope Francis's Secret Battle Against Corruption in the Vatican" by Gianluigi Nuzzi, and "In the Closet of the Vatican: Power, Homosexuality, Hypocrisy" by Frédéric Martel, one will be shocked at the extent of financial and sexual "irregularities" that threaten to destroy the 'Mystical Body of Christ' from head to toe, inside to outside, Vatican to world. The problem? Power. Clericalism. Careerism.

It's saddening that some of the very clergymen guilty of economic and sexual "irregularities" are unforgivingly judgmental on Catholics in so-called "irregular unions". They're up in arms when, in *Amoris Laetitia*, Pope Francis opened up a small window for them to receive Holy Communion — albeit, after counsel and discernment. Isn't there some truth in Pope Francis's observation: "Behind rigidity something always lies hidden; in many cases, a double life?"

## Cleaning our own home closets

Lest we seek to take the speck out of our 'foreign brothers' eyes' unmindful of the log entrenched in our own *deshi* ones, we must all make a *mea culpa* for clericalism, careerism and abuses of various hues, nationwide. There's need to weed out these from the early stages of formation itself.

In over twenty years of teaching theology — especially Eucharist and Priesthood — in Vidyajyoti, Delhi, and Jnana-Deepa Vidyapeeth, Pune, I've heard comments like: "I'm no longer a layman; I'm a deacon!" Likewise, when teaching about the need to "bend down, and wash feet," a to-be-deacon stumped me, saying: "You're confusing us! Doesn't becoming a deacon mean going up, not down, in the Church hierarchy?"

Come diaconate-day, and many brothers are busy ordering new cassocks, drawing up guest lists, inviting family-members to travel long distances and so on. Ordination ceremonies become as showy as big fat Indian weddings. Then comes priesthood with 'Father' seeking ecclesiastical entitlements: power, privileges, pleasure and profit. With Pope Francis standing tall in every aspect of the evangelical counsels, we have a Jesuit *compañero* who walks the talk. Let's follow him.

## Lighting the way forward

In her article, Lobo Gajiwala suggests fourteen 'ways forward' to rebuild ourselves and our Church. These can be discussed in Scholasticates, seminaries and other forums. I add two more: contemplation and conversion. Beginning with myself, let me clean my closet and light my lamp. Hopefully, little lamps aglow, we shall radiate Him who is Light of the World.

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(signed)  
Antony Pitchai Vedamuthu, SJ





# Firebrand Jesuit!

## Blessed Tiburcio Arnáiz Muñoz

Blessed Arnáiz was beatified in October 2019. His feast day is celebrated on 2nd July, together with the other Jesuit Saints and Blessed of the day.

Even a cursory scroll down the life and ministry of Fr. Tiburcio Arnáiz Muñoz, SJ, who lived in the early decades of the 20th century, would set the bones of a Jesuit of the UAP Age (read 'today') on fire.

Arnáiz was ahead of his times in several respects. Of particular relevance was his promptness to detect and respond to structural problems and the priority he accorded to collaboration with the laity. He was an indefatigable evangelizer, using various apostolic instruments, especially the popular missions based on the Spiritual Exercises. His apostolate was centred in the Province of Malaga in Andalusia, Spain.

Fr. Arturo Sosa, in his letter announcing the priest's beatification (2018/17), surveys the incredibly wide-ranging ministries of this magnanimous missionary: "Working from the residence of the Society of Jesus in Malaga, Fr. Arnáiz was constantly giving the Exercises, offering spiritual direction, assisting in the Diocesan Seminary, and promoting the Marian Congregations, the Apostleship of Prayer, the Night Adoration, and the Conferences of Saint Vincent de Paul. Following the impulses of his heart, he frequently visited the incarcerated in prison and the sick in their homes and in the hospitals. The people of Malaga frequently saw him helping the street children, hearing confessions in the Jesuit church, or setting out to give popular missions. Convinced of the urgent need for good education, he promoted the opening of schools, the founding of a Catholic library, a system for distributing medicines, and the construction of houses of hospitality for people in need."

In the outlying districts of the province,

in the so-called "corralones" ('yards' or neighbourhood housing in which families and others lived around a common courtyard), he effectively organized a system of cultural advancement and catechesis for struggling residents. From the start he was generously helped in this initiative by teachers and other young women from the capital of Malaga.

In 1921, he and Maria Isabel Gonzalez del Valle Sarandeses (1889-1937), co-founded an association of consecrated laywomen dedicated to evangelizing poor rural regions.



Image Source : Google

Arnáiz always strove to work out of his comfort zone, creating new tasks and ensuring he persevered in accomplishing them. His charisma comprised his ability to attract and bring together people of diverse social origins to collaborate in helping the poor. He stood out for his admirable resilience after setbacks, his courageous evangelizing efforts in regions hostile to the Church. His spirituality shone in his utter confidence in Divine Providence, his firm personal love for Jesus Christ, his generous and affable friendship with all types of people, and his devotion to the Virgin Mary who was his abiding source of companionship and consolation.

Arnáiz was born in Valladolid, Spain, on 11th August 1865, the younger of two children. His father died when he was five, and his mother worked in a weaver's workshop to support the family.

Arnáiz had a great desire to become a priest. At thirteen he entered the Minor Seminary of that diocese, but owing to financial constraints had to leave it. He nevertheless pursued his studies as an external student. He worked as a sacristan in a local convent to supplement the family income. He was ordained a priest in 1890. He obtained a doctorate in theology from Toledo in 1896.

Fuelled by the spirit of the Ignatian magis, Arnáiz joined the Society of Jesus in 1902, after the death of his mother. He entered the novitiate of Granada. He continued his Jesuit formation, while at the same time guiding people in the Spiritual Exercises and getting trained for the popular missions. In 1909 he was appointed to Murcia where he collaborated for two years in various pastoral activities. After his tertianship at Loyola in 1912, he was assigned to Malaga, the city where he would remain for virtually the rest of his life. He died there on 18th July 1926. He was recognized as "apostle of the city."

"To present Arnáiz Muñoz, today, to the Church," stated Cardinal Angelo Becciu, who presided over the beatification ceremony on 20th October 2018, "means to make known a minister of God who made of his existence a constant, luminous and heroic path of total dedication to God and to others, especially the weakest. He felt co-responsible for spiritual and moral evils, as well as the social wounds of his time, and he was aware that he could not save himself without saving others."

The author is a prolific writer. His books include "Profiles in Holiness", "Brief Biographies of Jesuit Saints" and "Jesuit Saints without Paint".

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THOUSAND WORDS







“Work is  
love made  
visible.”

| Khalil Gibran





# Pope Francis' message to young people: "Christ is alive!"



Image Courtesy : Malta Catholic Youth Network

In the very first words of the post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, "Christus Vivit", Pope Francis, declares to 'young people and the entire people of God': "Christ is alive! He is our hope, and in a wonderful way he brings youth to our world." The message is loud and clear that Christ is indeed alive and that Christ wants young people to be fully alive in Him. This document was signed by the

Holy Father in March, 2019, and is the fruit of 'reflections and conversations' during the Synod on Young People held in the Vatican in October, 2018.

While going through this document let us reflect on this poignant point: What would be the implications of the Holy Father's text for the youth of India? Pope Francis portrays Christ as being in our

midst in his entire glory. This document speaks about Christ being ever present in our mundane lives. So, whether we are studying, playing or dancing, Christ is fully alive among us. He is watching over us and implicitly guiding us. But are the youth of India really aware of his generous presence in and around them?

The other dimension that Pope Francis



wants to put forward is that Christ wants us also to be fully alive! In other words, it is not just Christ who is fully alive. We too are called to be so. This would imply being aware of the Lord's presence in our day-to-day activities and life. It would also mean giving our best to what comes our way every day because when we give our best we use our entire might, all our God-given gifts and talents and our entire being. This would translate into making the best of the opportunities that come our way. St. Ignatius, the founder of the Jesuits, says that we have to be "generous and magnanimous" in our giving of ourselves to Jesus. After all, "God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Cor. 9:7).

There is also another dimension in the quest of young people to be fully alive. It is connected to listening to the voice of God. We see the youth of today busy with their mobiles. This immersion in the virtual world has favoured "a kind of 'digital migration', involving withdrawal from their families and their cultural and religious values, and entrance into a world of loneliness." They use their mobiles to listen to music, to play games and to communicate. This 'wired generation' has the earphones plugged into their ears while travelling by bus, walking along the roads, even while driving. In other words, they are constantly bombarded by so many voices that they sometimes fail to distinguish the good from the evil. These voices so confuse them that they have no idea which one would lead them in the right direction.

In other words, there is something missing - silence. It is only in the silence of one's heart that one can hear God's voice. This voice is not a blaring one. It is the 'still small voice' that leads us to lasting happiness. So, silence should play a major role in the lives of the youth of India. Then they will be able to discern and follow the right path. This is how, the Pope points out, "young people can help keep her (the Church) young."

Furthermore, each young person is a "bearer of a promise." Pope Francis tells us to look at Mary, the mother of Jesus, the young woman who listened to the voice of God. Her 'Yes' was that of "someone willing to take a risk, ready to stake everything she had, with no more security than the certainty of knowing that she was the bearer of a promise."

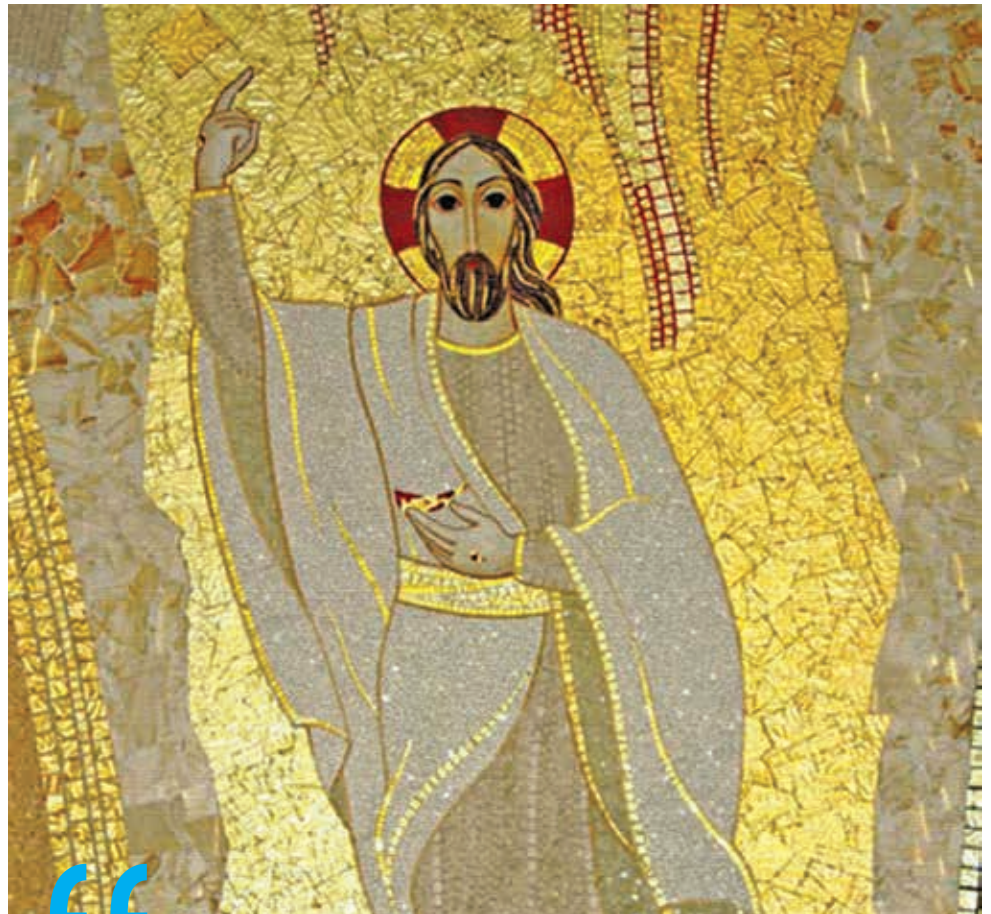


Image Source : rcam.org

The message is loud and clear that Christ is indeed alive and that Christ wants young people to be fully alive in Him.”

This promise is a promise of hope. Christ has that unwavering hope in us and he wants us to be the bearers of hope and promise in today's world.

As a result "each young person's heart should thus be considered holy ground." This is where God dwells. So, "if you are young in years, but feel weak, weary or disillusioned, ask Jesus to renew you." Pope Francis reminds the young that their life should be centred on Jesus. When they do this all else will fall in place. Pope Francis asks the young to "encounter each day your best friend, the friend who is Jesus."

Finally, the Pope tells the youth, "God loves you, never doubt this." He invites them to be "missionaries" in their daily life and to be ready to be guided and

"accompanied" by their seniors. The Exhortation concludes with a "wish". Pope Francis says, "Dear young people, my joyful hope is to see you keep running the race before you, outstripping all those who are slow or fearful. Keep running, attracted by the face of Christ, whom we love so much, whom we adore in the Holy Eucharist and acknowledge in the flesh of our suffering brothers and sisters. The Church needs your momentum, your intuitions, your faith... And when you arrive where we have not yet reached, have the patience to wait for us."

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# Innovative Interreligious Initiatives Fulfil UAPs

The Universal Apostolic Preferences (UAPs) promulgated by Fr. Arturo Sosa, the Superior General of the Jesuits, on 19th February 2019 can be summarized as follows:

1. Spirituality 2. Walk with the Excluded 3. Accompany Youth 4. Care of the Earth.

It was a pleasant surprise to note that at the Department of Interreligious Studies (DIRS) of St. Xavier's College, Mumbai these preferences were being fulfilled to a large extent. Right from the start after taking over as Director of the DIRS in 2014 together with a team of interested students we opted for innovation, inclusion and integration in keeping with the vision of the College. Quite a few students expressed their atheistic inclinations and seemed uninterested in religion leave aside dialogue among religions. However, they were committed to the common cause of saving the planet.

We chose our vision as "Co-create Cosmic Compassion" as it embraces all of creation including humans. This integral vision includes faith, justice, inculturation, interreligious dialogue and ecology - the major thrusts of the Society of Jesus since the 1970s. The Integral Pedagogical Paradigm (IPP) of context, experience, reflection, action, evaluation was followed for the select initiatives highlighted below.

In his Encyclical *Laudato Si* Pope Francis advocated for an Integral Ecology in response to the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor (# 139). Hence UAPs 2 and 4 are treated together as one under the title of Integral Ecology. Most of the activities are connected with one or more of the UAPs. The Ignatian worldview as

expressed in the key meditations of the Spiritual Exercises served as the implicit backdrop for the various programmes. The students were trained to find God in all things.

## Interfaith Spirituality (UAP 1)

The inaugural interfaith services and



Image Source : Google

Eucharist on the feasts of Sts. Ignatius and Francis Xavier were jointly organized by AICUF and DIRS. We opted for a "catholic" or universal approach in which the whole universe was included. The themes chosen integrated burning issues of local, national, global and cosmic relevance. The active participation of

students and staff (both teaching and working) was laudable. For instance, for one of the interfaith services on the theme of "inclusion" the sharing by a visually challenged, a transgender and a tribal was remarkable.

The Ash Wednesday service highlighted the fact that we are stardust and to stardust we will return. The following quote on the backdrop - "The stars were compassionate enough to explode and die so that we could be born as stars today" - heightened the sense of interconnectedness.

The 'Joy of Self Discovery' course focused primarily on self-awareness through embodied meditation and sharing in a compassionate community. Exposure visits to places like slums and homes for the destitute opened up unexplored areas of the psyche. From the initial shock and repulsion at the apparently inhuman state of the patients to feeling accepted and trusted by them led to a precarious and precious inward journey to come to terms with the vulnerability of the other and self.

The weekly 'Art of Peace' sessions proved great stress busters and helped the participants to slow down and regain equilibrium in the midst of the hectic pace of education. The monthly Playog sessions put the students in touch with their innate body wisdom and fostered a wholesome integration of mind, heart, body and spirit.

For the first time in 2015 there was a common eco-friendly triple celebration of Ganapati, Bakri Id and World Peace Day signalling a major breakthrough in the area of collaboration.



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## Integral Ecology (UAPs 2 and 4)

Several Honours courses were co-facilitated by teams of resource persons. The 'Awaken to Cosmic Compassion' course in 2014 began with an exposure visit to the nomadic Pardhi tribes and transgenders at Reay Road slum opposite a garbage dump. The course was renamed 'Cosmic Hug' in 2016. The Nature Walk and gratitude for the various parts of the body awakened an awareness of the universe around and the universe within. The star gazing meditation was a big hit as most have neither the time nor the space in Mumbai to watch stars besides the Bollywood ones.

Sr. Pat Siemen, OP, Director - Centre for Earth Jurisprudence, USA, co-facilitated "Earth Democracy" workshops at several colleges in Mumbai. A humorous skit demonstrating the rest of the species voting humans out of the planet dramatically brought home the message of human blindness to their disastrous behaviour and its irreparable consequences.

'The Big Story of Integral Ecology', the first Big History conference in India, was held in collaboration with the Heras Institute in November 2017 followed by workshops in India and abroad.

In keeping with the vision of DIRS the Christmas crib was presented as a Cosmic Crib in which themes related to the cry of the Earth and the poor were chosen to depict the birth of Jesus Christ in a cosmic context.

Ours was the only non-tribal group welcomed as part of the tribal family for the Jesuit National Tribal festivals (JEMAI) held in Gujarat (2014) and Ranchi (2015). The discussions touched on burning issues like the rape of Mother Earth and assault on tribal values and culture by rapid development.

A major 'out of the box' event was the 'Digital Morcha for Climate Justice' held on the occasion of the COP 21 meeting of international leaders in Paris to take action on Climate Change (2015).

AICUF and DIRS jointly organized the play 'A Peasant of El Salvador' on 22nd Nov. 2014 to commemorate the silver jubilee of the Jesuit martyrs of

El Salvador. The challenging questions that arose in the ensuing discussion disturbed the conscience of the audience on issues like farmer suicide and the prophetic role of education.

The exposure visit to Behrampada slum, Bandra, a Muslim ghetto formed after the Godhra riots in 2002, was a live demonstration of the economic, social, political and ecological degradation that the vast majority on the margins have to live with.

A group of students also visited Mahul, commonly known as the gas chambers of Mumbai, where those displaced by the metro work at Vidyavihar have been rehabilitated and where street protests are still going on.

Such exposure visits raised disturbing questions about development for whom and at what cost to the poor and the environment. The students were shocked and stunned by the wide chasm between the rich and the poor, the privileged and underprivileged, the attractive promises of the government and the depressing reality.

In the unique 'Voting 101' course through 7 sessions on the harsh realities of democracy the students were thoroughly prepared to vote during the elections. Relevant inputs, a visit to the State Election Commission, and creative presentations made this project of civic formation a transformative learning experience.

## Interreligious Dialogue (UAP 1 and 2)

Lakshmi Tripathi, the first transgender who had addressed the UN, enlightened the students in 2015 on "Religion: Oppressive or Liberative for LGBT?" "The mess in the country is because the political and religious leaders are all assholes" was one of her provocative insights.

Dr. Astrid Lobo Gajiwala's initiative to gather together for a couple of sessions in 2014, a few Catholic women whose husbands belong to other faiths, demonstrated the Church's need to update her theology of mission in a pluralistic world. Astrid's final report prepared with the help of Fr. Errol D'Lima, SJ, was used by Cardinal

Oswald Gracias for his presentation at the 'Extraordinary Synod on the Family' held in Rome in 2014.

The panel discussion on "To be Religious is to be Interreligious" held in collaboration with AICUF witnessed the active involvement of staff and students. There were quite a few other panel discussions with eminent speakers of various faiths.

At an interfaith Eucharist in Byculla jail on 25th Dec 2018 a Hindu student led the Peace Prayer of Francis of Assisi through music and movement, while a Muslim girl led the intercessory prayers on behalf of the prisoners, the majority of whom were refugees from Bangladesh.

A major breakthrough was the launching of Samanvaya (Harmony), a collaborative network co-founded with Anthony Dias, SJ, in 2015 to respond to the challenges of communal harmony.

Renowned grassroots intellectual activists as well as Jesuits, women religious and people of other faiths participate in regular meetings and programmes. The students relish the wide range of interreligious wisdom based on grassroots activism for communal harmony.

## Accompanying the Youth (UAP 3)

It was amazing to accompany the College youth in exploring new nations of the poor in collaboration with people of all faiths. Moving beyond the classroom to interact with people living in slums, jails, and homes for the destitute were novel ventures that opened up new horizons of dialogue in word and deed. While we were struck by awe and wonder contemplating the mystery of the universe, it was disconcerting to note the galloping rate at which the environment is being devastated. Accompanying the youth in the process of walking and talking, playing and praying with the excluded poor and with Mother Earth was an enriching form of holistic education and spiritual conversion for all concerned.

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# A Walk to Remember



“Are you blind? Do you need spectacles? The ball just went above your head!” I shouted at Vincent, the goalkeeper, who refused to admit that the penalty shot was a goal. The argument became more intense. I was about to use some moves I had seen in *The Karate Kid* when suddenly I heard: “Alex!” I recognized the voice at once and, intuitively, tried turning the scene into a joke.

It was three days since Fr. Peter had sternly warned us against fighting during games. Disobeying would mean a caning. I shuddered. The next moment my hand was across Vincent’s shoulder like a best friend as if nothing had happened.

The voice grew louder and clearer. “Alex. Is Alex there?” I prayed that if Jesus let this moment pass, I would never fight again. I was terrified of being penalized.

“How many of you have submitted your names to attend the Jesuit vocation camp?” “Fourteen,” I responded, relieved I wasn’t in trouble! Fr. Peter asked me to call them all, and I bounded off.

When the fourteen of us gathered, Fr. Peter told us that an insurgent outfit had announced a bandh the next day. I stood there, speechless. With no vehicles on the roads, we would have to walk the 51-km distance!

Suddenly, a voice suddenly piped. “We can make it if we set off by 4 am and walk fast.” Fr. Peter said, “If you are willing, who am I to stop you?”

We left Fr. Peter’s office having decided to walk 51 km the next day. But I was in a dilemma. I had never walked that much in my life though I was very excited.

After a restless night I awoke at 3:30 am. We had a quick

breakfast and then, like soldiers going to war, we set off for Moirang. As the youngest of the group, I struggled to keep up.

As we walked through dusty tracks that passed for roads, roosters crowed from nearby houses, wishing us luck. Early risers - especially women - had begun to split firewood and do other morning chores. As we thudded past, they smiled at us like citizens paying their respects to soldiers marching to war. I must admit, we felt like one - ready to face any consequences to reach our destination.

The older boys planned our itinerary as we walked. The rest of us were more interested in the music playing on Samuel’s mobile phone. After a brisk walk of about an hour, we noticed the mist begin to disappear. Thick fog still covered the high mountains. The gentle breeze caressed our faces. We were still in Khoupum valley and two huge mountains lay between us and our destination.

We saw the thick forest at a distance challenging us to enter. Up we climbed, through the forest, turning hindrances into stepping stones. The stony path was perilous; a stumble could result in serious injuries.

We heaved a sigh of relief as we reached the main road. It did not matter that the road was full of puddles and potholes some of them 8–10 feet wide. “Our parish truck carrying bricks fell here two years ago!” exclaimed John. He said two other trucks had met the same fate at the same spot. That was why there were no buses plying on it!

We decided to use shortcuts on the way down. The path looked like no one had used it for centuries. Thorns, thistles, sharp blades of grass, and dew drops made it slippery. At one clearing, my friend reminded me that this was where a number





Image Source : Google

of insurgents had been killed in an ambush - not an uncommon incident in this part of Tamenglong district in Manipur.

Trees lined both sides of the road, shading us from the sun. Gurgling springs and wind whooshing through the trees accompanied the monotonous thumping of our feet. The scent of wildflowers teased us. We stopped occasionally to admire nature's beauty and the panoramic view of the terrain we had to cross. After a while we saw the Leimatak River bisecting the Pinjang valley. Paddy swayed to the rhythm of the flowing river.

A wave of nostalgia hit me. I remembered playing in the forest as a small child. Now, I was on my way to becoming a Jesuit. The thought brought me joy as well as some sorrow - joy since I was going to serve the Creator, and sorrow at all that I would have to leave behind.

Soon, we were climbing again. When we had walked for about four hours my energy began to fail me. The terrain became stony with fewer trees, and the sun beating down on us. I began gasping for breath.

"O my God!" I exclaimed to myself. "Is this how Jesuits found their vocation? Why is it so hard?" Then, out of the blue I remembered the Israelites complaining against God in the desert. That shut me up. I continued in silence.

Noticing my tired face, my friends took frequent breaks and encouraged me with assurances that we were close to our destination. It became harder to get moving after every break. However, my will to attend the camp was strong. After a while I was happy recalling what St. Paul had said, "When I am weak, I am strong." Anyway, these thoughts helped me ignore the physical pain. Limping and staggering, we eventually reached the mountain top.

We had a bird's eye-view of Imphal valley. It was like looking at a map. Loktak, the largest freshwater lake in Northeast India, lay ahead of us stretching as far as our eyes could see. I'm not sure whether we ran or flew but soon we were in the valley, exhausted but ecstatic. We threw ourselves into autos and headed to Loyola School, Bishnupur.

By then we were famished. As we reached the school gate, we saw a tall bespectacled figure. From his attire we guessed he was a priest. We wished him and he responded lovingly. He was so welcoming! My friends and I exchanged smiles knowing we were in good hands. Then, the priest enquired about our journey and jokingly commented, "So, you are all following in the footsteps of Stanislaus Kostka." We nodded as if we knew who Kostka was! We didn't.

I learnt later that he is the patron of Jesuit novices, and had walked from Poland to Germany to join the Society. He was not the explorer I had thought him to be.

When he realised that we hadn't had lunch - it was 3.30 pm already - the priest requested the kitchen staff to prepare a meal. After lunch he had a tour of the campus and were dropped at St. Xavier's School in Moirang, our final destination.

That was September 2009! Yet the day - particularly the kindness of the priest - has left an indelible mark on me. The sessions, the prayers, and the fun we had during that vocation camp also impressed me. It was a fitting introduction to the Society of Jesus.

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# Cyclone 'FANI' brought three-fold unique graces to Puri

Puri was the 'epic-centre' of the cyclone - FANI - that caused large scale destruction and an unforgettable terrible experience. Wind and rain, starting early morning around 6.00, slowly picked up velocity and force. By 7.30 the electricity went off and by 9.30 the force of the wind reached over 250 km per hour. Water from our dining room overflowed into my room. I moved to the adjacent room, praying the rosary all the time. Mr. Sushant, the caretaker, stayed in the guest room. At 2.30 when the wind and rain subsided, I came out and saw that our compound the wall had collapsed on three sides, and the 'badam' tree was uprooted blocking the house in the next compound. All the other trees had got uprooted as well, and the metal sheet roofs of the rooms on the top floor had blown off. Broken pieces of the asbestos sheets were all over the place. The new rickshaws parked in the garage were damaged, the ceilings of the classrooms had blown off and the fans twisted. Although it was a devastating experience, some 'power' was giving me continuous hope and a consoling assurance: do not be afraid I am with you always. The 'assurance' was so strong that I requested my Provincial to allow me to continue 'administering the sacrament of compassion' to the suffering people of Puri.

FANI turned out to be a moment of 'unique grace' for me - to be with the suffering people and to experience the Lord tangibly - an opportunity to learn the meaning of Rm.14:7-9: "For none of us lives for himself and none of us dies for himself; while we are alive, we are living for the Lord, and when we die, we die for the Lord: and so, alive or dead, we belong to the Lord." To live with the Lord in the suffering people and to die, if needed, is a 'unique grace.'

In the evening when the 'fury' was over, Mrs. Savita came with her husband, their daughter and six of their goats, pleading for shelter for the night. Since everything was in a chaos, Mr. Sushant told them that we had absolutely no place. I felt uncomfortable to send them off yet there was a conflict within me: 'how can I deny them a place and, at the same time, what place can I offer them?' I remembered the Holy Family - Joseph looking for a place in Bethlehem for Mary who was about to give birth to Jesus. Just then Mr. John came to see how I was. He helped clean the corner of a classroom - hardly sufficient for the family of three to spend the night along with their goats. Though not very clean, probably it was better than what Joseph could arrange for Mary! After giving them the place, I asked Sushant to prepare some food for them as they had not eaten anything the whole day. He protested, "We too have not eaten." Realizing

that he had not recovered from his 'shock', I went to the kitchen to prepare some rice. While I was in the storeroom looking for some rice Sushant came asking what I was doing. 'I am looking for some rice and dal to cook for the three guests,' I replied. He immediately took over, cooking for all of us - some rice, dal and potatoes. All of us had a simple delicious meal and then spent the night thanking the Lord for giving us an opportunity to give food and shelter to 'Jesus' (Mt. 25:40) who had protected us from the terrible FANI. Yes He is with us always (Mt. 28:20). The Lord is our protector and FANI brought Jesus, Mary and Joseph to us. Of all the celebrations of Christmas I have had the most 'grace-filled' and 'real' was on 3rd May, 2019.

FANI taught me 'the strength of being with and for the poor and powerless', the 'wealth of poverty', the 'power of helplessness', the 'joy of sharing even what I do not have', the 'richness of privation', the 'power of suffering', the 'glory of the Cross', the 'foolishness of human wisdom'. Once Fr. Tom Kunnunkal had said: "No good can be done except at the cost of the one who does it." How true Pope Benedict was when he said: "In a society of efficiency and success, your life, marked by the 'humility' and frailty of the lowly, of empathy with those who have no voice, becomes an evangelical sign of contradiction" (17th World Day of Consecrated Life).



Image Source: firstshort.com

Though the big 'badam' tree was uprooted on 5th May, a new branch sprouted - a very special 'grace' from the Lord. We planted it. "Your heavenly Father knows you need them all. Set your hearts on His Kingdom and its righteousness and all these other things will be given you as well" (Mt. 6:33-34).

By breaking the brick wall, FANI broke the barrier that had kept our neighbours away from us - a unique grace! Children, who used to run away, started coming to us. I bought a 'carrom board' and a 'snake and ladder' set for the children. It attracted more of them. When they first saw a 'crucifix' hanging on the wall, one of them exclaimed: "Look, Allah!" All the children were Hindus. I explained to them that I was a Christian, not a Muslim. They could not grasp what I said but it made no difference. Some brought along their mother or some other relative. FANI brought this 'unique grace' as well - a family spirit!

The author is the former Provincial of Jamshedpur and currently engaged in peace initiative between India and Pakistan while based at Puri, Odisha.

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**TITLE:** HOW PEOPLE VOTE? Civic Literacy and Political Participation

**AUTHOR:** Lancy Lobo, SJ & Jayesh Shah

**PUBLISHER:** Rawat Publications, Jaipur

**PAGES:** 264 | **PRICE:** Rs. 995

## Indepth study of voting behaviour

How people vote in a liberal, open, competitive democracy is a big question in two senses. First, as Indian voters make up one-sixth of the world's total electorate, their voting behaviour matters considerably to the future of representative democracy everywhere. Second, as India faces so many challenges to its social, ideological and political cohesion, what people think about voting is significant to how India will evolve in the future.

Political participation is central to the democratic system and civic literacy plays an instrumental role in it. This volume examines the impact of civic literacy on political participation, by studying voting behaviour in local, assembly and parliament elections in rural, semi-urban and urban areas of Gujarat. The conclusions are drawn from what people said and what was observed on the ground, combining booth-wise analysis of votes polled with indices of civic awareness and political participation.

The main questions addressed are: (1) What is the level of civic literacy and political participation of the citizens? (2) How to measure civic literacy and political participation? (iii) What are the variables influencing civic literacy and political participation? (iv) How are civic literacy and political participation linked? (v) To what extent do individuals vote as individuals, transcending caste and creed? (vi) To what extent has Indian democracy matured in terms of electoral behaviour?

This book will interest students and teachers of the Social Sciences and all those engaged in citizenship education, towards perfecting procedural and substantive democracy in India.

■ Lancy Lobo, SJ

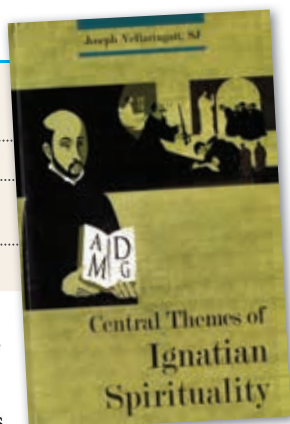
## Ignatian charism for all

**TITLE:** Central Themes of Ignatian Spirituality

**AUTHOR:** Joseph Vellaringatt, SJ

**PUBLISHER:** Gujarat Sahitya Prakash, Anand

**PAGES:** 192 | **PRICE:** Rs. 200



Ignatian spirituality is the heritage of the entire Church. Besides the Society of Jesus, many religious congregations have drawn inspiration from Ignatian spirituality and some of them have integrated some elements of this spirituality in their respective Constitutions. In the book Central Themes of Ignatian Spirituality the author has highlighted the salient features of the Ignatian charism which is easily accessible to all, whether they are priests, religious or lay persons. It offers to all an easy way of finding God in all things and of becoming mystics in the ordinary daily activities performed in a spirit of loving service. Ignatius, in his Spiritual Exercises, teaches various methods of prayer to suit the temperament of different individuals. Ignatian spirituality is also a spirituality of compassion and eco-sensitivity. Ignatius, who had a deep love for the Church, teaches us how to think and feel with and in the Church. Finally, the book presents some of the salient features of Jesuit charism that is firmly rooted in Ignatian spirituality. Members of other religious congregations also can profit much from these features.

■ Joseph Vellaringatt, SJ

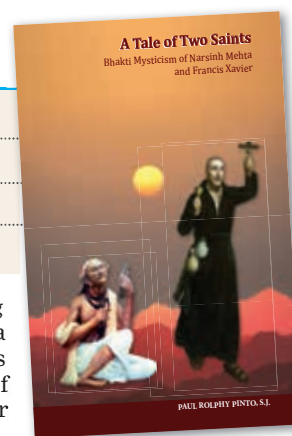
## When the twin - east and west meets

**TITLE:** A Tale of Two Saints

**AUTHOR:** Paul Rolphy Pinto, SJ

**PUBLISHER:** Gujarat Sahitya Prakash, Anand

**PAGES:** 260 | **PRICE:** Rs. 300



Why is there such a lot of anger and hatred rising among certain influential quarters in India towards anything "western" in recent times? Is their contempt against the religious doctrine of the colonisers or their ideology or some of their oppressive and dehumanising methods?

Francis Xavier has been described as a pirate in priest's clothing. Is he? When one reads the Letters of Xavier, transcending the inherent cultural and religious baggage and grasps, to the extent possible, the underlying experience, and when one does the same with Bhakti Padas of India's very own Narsinh Mehta, one comes to realise that they are more like than unlike each other. This book places the two spiritual giants in dialogue. It proposes a method of re-reading the wisdom of Xavier mediated through the religious experience of Mehta, thus making Xavier more accessible to the Indian reader.

Mysticism, which is an authentic experience of the divine, is a spiritual power that is capable of subduing the shaāripu (the six core enemies) of human nature, irrespective of one's religious or non-religious affinity: kāma (lust), krodha (anger), lobha (greed), moha (attachment), mada (pride) and mātsarya (jealousy). Amidst the rising tensions and charging polarities that are in the interest of a few power-crazy leaders who fuel the fire of shaāripu, we need a superior power that can quench that fire. Could love-bhakti mysticism be that power?

■ Paul Rolphy Pinto, SJ

# Towards becoming Transformative Leaders



The training programme for Vice Principals of Jesuit Colleges of South Asia was held from 4th to 6th May, 2019 at JMJ Residence, Sirumalai Hills, Dindigul. The programme aimed at empowering the participants holding important positions in their respective institutions, towards becoming better leaders.

Rev. Dr. Arockiasamy Xavier, SJ, Principal SJC, Trichy, began the session with an overview on the structure in Jesuit Colleges. Rev. Fr. Joye James, SJ, Secretary (JHEASA), gave us a glimpse of the Higher Education scenario in our country and the strengths and concerns of Jesuit institutions today.

Dr. Jaygar Chellaraj, former Principal, Bishop Heber College, Trichy, gave a very inspiring session on 'Role of officials in the formation of college students'. He pointed out that as administrators we may face many problems, and seeking God's help will enable us resolve every concern. He stressed that our important role is to unleash the potentials of our students and help them to self-actualise. Rev. Dr. James Thamburaj, SJ, former Principal, Loyola College, Chennai, spoke on 'Jesuit Education and IPP' which helped us understand the holistic nature of Jesuit education and the significance of practising IPP model that helps in the critical active participation of students.

The session on 'Educational leadership in Higher Educational Institutions' by Dr. John Peter, Dean, SJC, Trichy, emphasised the need to free our students from the clutches of 'tyranny of education'. He reiterated that as educational leaders we need to adopt the change management strategy which results in personal growth, knowledge enhancement, skill development, communication competence and attitudinal change. Rev. Dr. Xavier Alphonse, SJ, spoke on 'Familiarising the recent UGC

and MHRD Directives' and presented some glaring facts of the current status of Higher Education and UGC.

Dr. Alexander Pravin Durai, Director, SJC, Trichy in his session on 'Quality initiatives in Higher Educational Institutions' cautioned the participants that corporate are going to enter into higher education, and there are bound to be changes in quality expectations in terms of examinations, performance, graduate progression, National and International Ranking. He pointed out that gradually technology will replace institutions and highlighted the factors influencing quality: aspirations of students, demands of regulatory bodies, vision of founders and needs of the market. We need to address these factors to be on the right track.

Rev. Dr. M.A. Emma's session on 'Accompanying students through mentoring and counselling', helped us to reflect on causes for issues in students and explained the goals of counselling with case-study illustrations.

The session on 'Transformative Leadership' by Rev. Dr. V. Joseph Xavier, SJ, former Principal, Loyola College, Chennai, sensitised us to be more leaders than managers to effect change in our students and staff. He stressed the need to be transformative leaders in order to bring a change.

The training programme was indeed a learning experience as a result of the sharing by the resource persons. It enabled us to reflect and reinvent our role as important administrators in our respective institutions. The ambience of the place helped us to relax and return rejuvenated for a fresh beginning.

Dr. Loveena Lobo



# A Call to appreciate a Call

Fr. Pedro Arrupe in his letter 'On the Preparation for Ordination' initiating the Pre-Ordination Programme (POP) in the Society of Jesus, terms the entire month as a time of "an appropriate spiritual preparation before the ordination to priesthood." This year the programme for the Provinces of South India was held from 16th April to 15th May at Marian College in Kuttikkanam, Idukki, Kerala.



The POP, also known as Arrupe month, was indeed a time of intense spiritual preparation for ordination for the fifteen participating scholastics. The group consisted of seven theology students from Madurai Province, and eight from Karnataka Province. It was appropriately termed "a wilderness experience" by Fr. Joseph Lobo during the orientation.

The programme began with a Historical Overview of Jesuit presence in Kerala by Fr. P. T. Matthew. The orientation by Fr. Joseph Lobo set the tone. He highlighted the purpose, priorities and expected outcome of the programme. The topics covered included Ignatian Spirituality, Neuro-linguistic

Programming, Pastoral Animation, Jesuit Priesthood Today and Social Commitment, Psycho-sexual and Spiritual Integration, and the Universal Apostolic Preferences. The resource persons were Frs. P. T. Matthew, Salvin, Joseph Lobo, Toby Joseph, Joe Pulickal, Jerry Rosario, P. T. Joseph, and Sunny Kunnappallil. A couple of Catholic lay persons also addressed the participants and shared about the expectations of the laity from their priests today. The many insightful and critical issues raised during the courses encouraged deeper reflection and shed light on the joys and challenges of priestly life. The courses and the personal approach of the resource persons helped us to comprehend the depth and beauty of our Jesuit vocation.

Their generosity in sharing with us their time, knowledge and experience paved the way for us to make a good discernment of our vocation to Jesuit priesthood.

Notwithstanding the intensity and seriousness demanded by the programme, there was sufficient time to pray, reflect, relax, rejuvenate and integrate the learning. Recreations, picnic, break days, spiritual direction, faith-sharing, retreat

and evaluation helped in the integration process. The eight-day Ignatian retreat at the end of the month directed by Fr. Errol Fernandes, SJ was a fitting culmination.

POP was a time of discernment and introspection. The natural settings, the serene atmosphere, adequate facilities and a near perfect weather at Kuttikkanam made the experience of POP a memorable one. The coordinator, Fr. P. T. Joseph and the Director, Fr Salvin Augustine (PCF, Kerala Province), left no stone unturned to make the programme a successful one.

| Praveen Kiran Martis, SJ

## Drawing from Nature - Art and Mother Earth

An Art Workshop was organized by CARP (Company of Artists for Radiance of Peace), LIPI (Loyola Institute of Peace and International relations, Kerala), and GJEM (Gujarat Jesuit Ecology Mission). Nineteen professional artists from India and abroad - Bihar, Gujarat, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Kerala, and Manila (Philippines) - converged for VAW (Vagamon Artists' Workshop) at Vagamon (Western Ghats) in April-May, 2019. It was a wonderful place to commune with Nature, inspiring artists to immortalize the communion into Works of Art.

Warli Adivasis from Maharashtra creating Warli paintings; a young woman doing her BFA; a Jesuit professor of Fine Arts from "Ateneo de Manila" (Philippines) creating Art from waste pieces of cloth; the Principal of a Theologate painting the pain of Paris at the destruction of 'Notre-Dame Cathedral'; a Belgian Sister making tiny dolls depicting the life of poor women; a professional cartoonist's cartoons that communicated volumes; a parish priest painting colourful, delicate leaves and flowers. There were Sisters with Art degrees from India and Italy; a monk from the Kurishumala Ashram of Vagamon; accomplished women and men artists, a Capuchin; a



CMJ; a few Jesuits... The place and the diversity of artists and Art made VAW a deep experience for all!

We mingled, merged and painted from early morning, right through the day and late into the night. At night we gathered to share, see,

hear and discuss, enjoying the imagination, creativity and skills of each artist. All painted with joyful intensity inspired by Mother Earth.

At sunset we celebrated the Eucharist in God's own cathedral under the sky in the shade of trees, with birds and crickets joining us to praise and thank God. It was an experience of the Creator Lord's presence with us, celebrated with gratitude.

A full day was dedicated to 'Children/Youth - Art and Mother Earth.' Environmental and Art awareness programmes were conducted for 150 youth preparing for the UPSC exams and 40 local children. Divided into groups of 50, a group was led to a 'Nature Walk' to relish Nature, always seen, but rarely closely observed and absorbed. Another group sang and danced to Environmental Malayalam songs. The third group admired, interacted and discussed with the VAW

artists at work. The children painted in small groups using their fingers, hands, etc. The whole atmosphere was bubbly for kids/youth - full of life, enthusiasm, chatter, and laughter.

Jesuit Artists and Environmentalists from three Jesuit organizations - CARP and LIPI (Kerala), GJEM (Gujarat) - had met at Sameeksha, Kalady in May, 2018, and dreamt of an Art and Ecology workshop. The POSA gave his blessings and support. In a year the dream became a reality in VAW: 'Drawing from Nature - Art and Mother Earth.' More Art and Environment workshops are planned across India to wean children/youth away from the grip of Electronic and Social Media, to live 'the now' in communion with Mother Earth in OUR COMMON HOME.

| Rappai Poothokaren, SJ

# Preparing for the first Universal Apostolic Preference

'Discernment and Spiritual Exercises', the first of the Universal Apostolic Preferences (UAP) is fundamental because it presupposes as a basic condition the relation of the Jesuit with the Lord, his personal and communitarian life of prayer and discernment. These were the words of Pope Francis while approving the UAP of the Society of Jesus.

With this new challenge of the UAP, sixteen Jesuits representing four Zones of the South Asian Assistancy reached the Palani Hills for the five-week in-depth study of the Spiritual Exercises and Discernment.

The course was well planned and included all the Ignatian sources, i.e., Autobiography, Spiritual Exercises, Spiritual Diary, the Letters of St. Ignatius, the Constitutions and some General Congregations.

"Every reading of the Ignatian sources is a new revelation and interpretation", was the starting statement of William Sequeira (KAR), the tertian instructor who dealt with the Autobiography. James Antony Poovathumkal (NEP), summarizing the Autobiography said, "Walking down the memory lane with the humble pilgrim, Ignatius of Loyola, inspired and challenged me personally, 'to be what I am meant to be', a true companion of Jesus.

Jossie D'Mello (KAR), the JIGSA Assistancy secretary dealt with the Spiritual Exercises in depth as the source and foundation of Jesuit Spirituality. His lucid explanation of the dynamics of the Four Weeks helped the group greatly.

Sudhir Chettiar (GUJ) a retreat preacher said, "The spiritual exercises came alive to



me as a tool for transformation of self and others. It will help me greatly in my retreat ministry in the days to come."

"For me, 'Roots and Wings' was a pilgrimage into the rich Ignatian spiritual legacy," were the sentiments of Ravindra Darshima (DUM). Fr. Ignatius Tete (RAN) explained the Spiritual Diary as the place where we meet St. Ignatius who deliberated on Poverty in depth.

D. Antony Inigo, Novice Master (MAD) analyzed the Letters of St. Ignatius. Raymond Cherubim (PAT) found that the Letters are the best communication method for him to move closer to the heart and mind of St. Ignatius. Raymond expressed, "I'm overwhelmed and filled with joy by 'Roots and Wings' which has synthesized my 37 years of Jesuit life."

Arul Sivan (MAD) presented the

Constitutions of the Society of Jesus. Sivan went into the Formula of the Institute and systematically explained the structure and content of the chapters of the Constitution. "This programme has deepened and strengthened my spiritual foundation," said Joseph Victor (DAR).

The session on 'Mission Today' in the light of the 'Constitutions on Mission and the recent GCs' by Jerry Rosario (MAD), was an excellent synthesis of the courses covered as well as an update on the relevant Church documents. The icing on the cake was the eight day Ignatian retreat by M. Irudaya Raj (GUJ). A big 'thank you' to M. Devadhas (MAD) the local organizer, and Patrick Ravichandran (MAD) and his dedicated community members and team.

| Irudaya Jothi, SJ



# Socio-cultural analysis cum workshop

Indian Social Institute, Bengaluru organized a fifteen-day Socio-cultural analysis cum workshop from 23rd April to 8th May, 2019. There were 19 participants - 16 scholastics from different Jesuit Provinces, a religious sister from St. Joseph of Tarbes, and 2 staff members from St. Aloysius College, Mangaluru. Fr. Alwyn D'Souza, SJ, Head of Human Rights Unit along with Mrs. Kanchana, the assistant, meticulously organized the course and the logistics.



The purpose was to take a critical and constructive look at society. The in-depth sharing by the resource persons and the involvement of the participants helped in achieving this purpose. There was input and sharing on various topics: social analysis, cultural and religious analysis, political analysis, human rights, Dalits and Ambedkar, the Indian Constitution, media and society, legal analysis, economic analysis, gender equality and gender justice, society and environment, migrant workers, refugees, sexual minorities, Hindutva, child rights, etc. The issues dealt with helped in broadening our horizon and shaping our future vision.

The course was very interactive. We had sharing, group discussions, group activities, arguments and counter-arguments.

All these made the process of learning richer and meaningful. The whole experience was very enriching since the resource persons brought with them rich experiences from the field, and the participants took part actively. The visits to the slum and to the Saahas zero waste industry contributed to the personal reformation and transformation of each one.

On 6th May the participants in two groups put up a good performance using skit, dances and mime highlighting the various evils prevailing in society. All that they had learnt during the workshop appeared in the cultural presentations. On the final day, during the academic presentations the

participants presented their experiences of the course, the messages they had received, the lessons that they had learnt, and their 'take aways' for the future. During the valedictory ceremony, certificates of participation were given to all. The participants profited greatly from this course and they were ready to work towards bringing about transformation in society.

| Sch. Nithin Machado, SJ

## Iñigo Parivar

"Nothing ventured, nothing gained." With that in mind, Hazaribag Province, focusing on the first UAP, organised a live-in seminar in Hindi on Ignatian Spirituality from 17th to 19th May for forty-six of our lay collaborators (men and women), at St. Stanislaus, Sitagarha. The participants were from 15 of our schools and parishes. The organiser was Fr. Anil Aind, the Novice Master, assisted by Fr. Ignatius Tete, the Tertian Master. The programme was at the urging of Fr. Provincial, Santosh Minj. The group included two Muslims and a number of Hindus.

The purpose of the seminar: the Empowerment of Life and Community by means of Ignatian Spirituality by living a life based on God's plan and lived for God's greater glory and the service of our neighbour.

The dynamics: to see our life in the light of Ignatius' life and vision and his Spiritual Exercises, and reflecting on some of the key meditations of the Exercises and applying them to our lives, with the importance of the examen highlighted.

Fr. Anil guided the participants through the Autobiography of Ignatius translated into Hindi by Fr. Bill Dwyer. Fr. Anil gave the group seven stepping stones in the life of Ignatius: the worldly man, the wounded and helpless one, the pilgrim, the enlightened one, the student, the servant, and the discernor... seeking and finding God in all things.

Fr. Ignatius put before the participants the goal of life (sadhya), the means to achieve our goal (sadhan) and the pursuit of our



goal (sadhna). In the pursuit, he stressed the proportionate use of creatures, the importance of indifference and aiming for the magis.

A concert was staged by the Jesuit novices and some of the local parish youth. The centre piece was a skit on the challenges of family life. A day was devoted to the 1st Week with considerations on sin, repentance and purification of mind and heart.

Fr. Ignatius guided considerations on the Call of the King of the 2nd Week. He led the group in reflecting on their personal, family, neighbourhood and occupational responses to the Call of the King, urging everyone to a total commitment of greater service.

At the end of the seminar, the participants were given an evaluation sheet which included various questions like 'what touched you the most?' and 'what inspiration did you draw from the seminar?'

We ventured boldly into uncharted territory and gained much. The participants gave us the accolade... dil mange more (the heart seeks more... the magis)!

| Geoff Meagher, SJ



## Fr. Leopold Correa, SJ (MDU)

Fr. Leopold Correa, fondly called Fr. Leo, was born on 14th September 1931. He joined the Society of Jesus on 28th June 1954, was ordained on 25th March 1966 and took his Final Vows on 15th August 1971.

Fr. Leo was a very sociable person. He was a wonderful companion and a great human being. He had a terrific sense of humour and, many a time, one could hear peals of laughter coming from the classrooms where he was teaching.

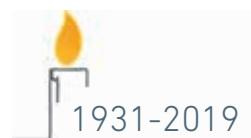
He was always available for any work given by the Society. He was warden and lecturer at St. Joseph's College, Trichy (1969-1970) and St. Xavier's College, Palayamkottai (1970-1972). He was Rector in two Jesuit colleges - Loyola College, Chennai (1974-1980) and Arul Anandar College, Karumathur (1980-1986). He was Principal of Loyola College, Chennai (1986 to 1990). He served as Secretary at St. Xavier's College, Palayamkottai (1991-1996).

He was teacher/dean/superior/ in Jesuit formation houses at BeschiIllum, Dindigul (1972-1974), Vidyaniketan, Trivandrum (1996-2005), and St Xavier's Institute, Negombo, Sri Lanka (2005-2006).

He was a good superior and when he was in charge of formation, he imparted to the young Jesuits Ignatian values of generosity, humility and availability. He had a soft corner for the poor and used to help poor students quietly.

In 2017, since his health was failing he was assigned to BeschiIllum, Dindigul, where, after a brief illness, he surrendered his well-lived life into the hands of the Lord on 17th April 2019. He was 87 and had spent 64 fruitful years in the Society of Jesus. He lived a full life that was a blessing to many.

|| A.J. Thamburaj, SJ

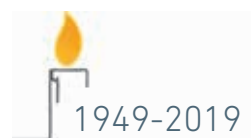


## Br. Maurice Lakra, SJ (DUM)

Br. Maurice Lakra was born at Chitlidakshinpara, Bangladesh. The family settled at Altapur, in North Dinajpur, West Bengal. He responded to the Lord's call to become a coadjutor brother and joined the Society of Jesus in the Santal Region and began his novitiate at St. Stanislaus College, Sitagarha, on 2nd February 1970. After his first vows he completed a two-year teacher's training programme at TTI, Sitagarha. Br. Maurice spent most of his religious life as a teacher, and as assistant prefect and prefect of hostels at Sahibganj, Mundli, Madhupur, Mariampahar, Hathimara and Jibonpur. In 1983, he did a short theology course at Vinayalaya, Mumbai. Assigned to Mundli once again in 1987, Br. Maurice also took care to strengthen the KrusVir (Crusaders), besides being a prefect and a teacher. In 1996 he was appointed Diocesan Director of Crusaders. He was also Province Coordinator

of Brothers and Coordinator of the Adult Literacy Programme. In 2003, he began working among the Oraons at Mundli. In 2011 he was Minister and Assistant Director at the Catechists' Training Centre, Torai. Though his health began to deteriorate, Br. Maurice willingly accepted the assignments given him. At the end of March 2019 he suffered a mild heart attack and was hospitalised for a while. On 18th April while visiting Jisu Jaher, he felt acute chest pain. Soon he passed away. Br. Maurice was a good and devout religious. He liked interacting with people of different cultures and religions. He carried out the assignments given to him by his Superiors to the best of his ability.

|| Paul Aquilina, SJ



## Fr. P.T. Chelladurai, SJ (MDU)

Fr. P.T. Chelladurai, SJ, (83/65) who passed away on 22nd April, 2019 at Dindigul was a renowned musician in Tamil Nadu. Born and brought up in a devout Catholic family, he generously embraced the call of the Master to follow him in the Society of Jesus.

He was the Director of Aikiya Geethalayam which was part of Aikiya Alayam, Chennai. He was there for a whole decade preparing to plunge into the service of Tamil music. From 1986 to 1994 he created history as a Professor in a Government Music College. Yet another milestone was that he was appointed Principal of Tamil Isai Kalloori, Chennai, from 1995-2000. He continued as its Director after his retirement.

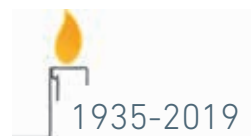
His hard work was recognized by the Tamil Nadu Government Award for his masterpiece Thennaha Isaiyiyal (South Indian Musicology). Since its publication this book has been used as the prescribed textbook by students of South Indian music at all levels. The Splendour of South Indian Music is another

important work first published in 1991 and, considering the growing demand, further editions were published with the necessary modifications.

He has been the recipient of numerous awards the most significant among them being Tamil Nadu Government's Kalai Mamani (Best in the Arts) conferred on him on 22nd Nov. 1995 for his research in Tamil music.

Besides these honours and awards, Fr. Chelladurai's major achievement has been the 'Summer School of Carnatic Music.' In spite of his ill health he managed to conduct the Summer School year after year since 1994. He has trained hundreds of seminarians and sisters to celebrate the liturgy and prayer services using Tamil Music effectively and meaningfully. He still lives in the hearts of hundreds of his students and thousands of lovers of Tamil music.

|| R. Wenishraj, SJ





# Shrine of St. Anthony at Kachchathivu Island

Over 6,500 Sri Lankans and 2,100 Indians came for the feast of St. Anthony, the patron of seafarers, on 15th-16th March, 2019. Sri Lankan Tamils and Sinhalese, after years of civil war, mingle at this pilgrimage isle and cement their fraternal bonds in the face of adversity.

"Fishing issues have caused huge problems for the two governments and Navies," said Joseph Manuel, a Tamil Catholic from Sri Lanka. Indian fishermen use high-tech fishing methods which give them an advantage over Sri Lankan fishermen. They intrude into Sri Lankan territorial waters. Barred from fishing in Sri Lankan territorial waters under the 1976 Maritime Boundary Agreement, many Indians flout the law and rely on Sri Lanka's bounty of sea life for their livelihood.

Given the potential tension, Sri Lankan navy organises the annual festival on Kachchathivu. They provide all the meals, potable water and sanitary facilities. Temporary jetties, medical, emergency and rescue teams are deployed always. Indian visitors are given visa-free entry to Kachchathivu for 24 hours.

After many years facing each other in battlefields, the two communities now pray and celebrate together. Visits to the island and its shrine were forbidden during the war. "This is our only opportunity to pray with people from another country, and also with different ethnic groups from our own country," said Mary Nileeshia, teacher from Negombo. "This year we prayed for national reconciliation," she said.

"Indian pilgrims have been coming to the shrine of St. Anthony and the feast of Kachchathivu since 1905... They attend Holy Mass and camp out under the sky," said Nileeshia, a Sri Lankan Theravada Buddhist.

The shrine is a unique place of worship, sitting on the maritime border shared by Sri Lanka and India. It takes about two hours to the island from Rameswaram in southeast Tamil Nadu. The Indian pilgrims make the risky sea journey from Rameswaram, because of their strong faith in St. Anthony.

*Adapted from UCAN*



## THE ROAD NOT TAKEN

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# Fr. Jose Ignacio Tellechea Idigoras (1928 to 2008)

How a Basque diocesan priest helped many modern day Jesuits “to know, love and follow” St. Ignatius more closely and thus find God in all things.

Fr. Jose Ignacio Tellechea Idigoras, a Basque diocesan priest, is a renowned medieval history scholar. While he always harboured a passionate love for St Ignatius, he strangely did not entertain any desire to be a Jesuit.

Fr. Idigoras wrote several good books on medieval history but the one on St. Ignatius, Alone and on Foot, in Spanish, is acclaimed by all as a masterpiece. Even readers who are familiar with the life of Ignatius will relish this fresh biography. It is written from a Basque point of view and the parallels between Iñigo and Don Quixote are well presented. But what makes this scholarly book so gripping are the details that form patterns for the reader to grasp the character of this elusive saint and mystic. To cite a few examples:

- The contemplative streak in Ignatius could perhaps be traced to his lonely childhood. He spent hours with his wet nurse, Maria Garrin and her blacksmith husband who were typical Basques - quiet and reticent.
- Ignatius' radical conversion at Pamplona was the end result of a series of mounting disillusionments while serving “temporal kings”.
- The Spiritual Exercises has its roots at Montserrat through a Benedictine monk, Jean Channon, his confessor, who gave him a copy of “The exercises for a spiritual life” by the Benedictine reformer Gracia Cisneros.
- He first gave the Spiritual Exercises to the “Iñigas”, a group of pious women at Manresa who then started St. Martha's Hospital. It confirmed Ignatius' dream to make the Exercises his life mission.
- The fierce “loyalty to the king” was clearly seen at the siege of Pamplona when Ignatius rather foolishly held the fort alone as his elders abandoned the ship. This even won him the respect of the French troops.
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Image Source: diariodenavarra.es

The book is an excellent and perceptive study of Ignatius. The author combines an exact knowledge of much of the recent research on Ignatius with a reflective approach that comes from an understanding of the saint's Basque background. The book, translated into English by Fr. Cornelius Buckley, is remarkable for its smooth translation.