



PRESIDENT

Jesuit Conference of South Asia

Corona Pandemic is a Portal!

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Thank you one and all for your enthusiastic participation in the “Lifeline Retreat”. On a conservative estimate, combining direct mailers, Whatsapp, and Website, roughly 15,000 people attended this retreat from across the world. Thank you for journeying with us in solidarity.

Rejuvenated by the Lifeline and reassured by the Risen Lord laboring with us, we are now better prepared to respond to the challenges of Covid 19. We are made deeply aware of our interconnectedness with everyone on the face of the earth; we are all sisters and brothers beyond the borders of our ego, family, nationality, religion and culture. We are co-responsible for everyone, for their health, food and shelter. Are we witnessing the birth pangs of a new global order? Is this pandemic a portal? Hopefully yes; our task will be to walk through it and enunciate a new world order, although that seems to happen in the most bewildering and costly way!

We are glad that we could share with you some riches of Ignatian spirituality to help us discern the ways of the Lord. We shall be happy to continue this collaboration in the coming days. Do send us your suggestions on how to sustain and build on this experience.

As you know, this retreat was prepared with limited resources and in a very short period, after the lockdown was announced in India on 22nd March, 2020. Since then, around fifteen Jesuits have been collaborating on-line from different cities in India, to prepare this retreat; the main warriors being Nithin Monteiro, SJ (Chennai), Siji Chacko, SJ (New Delhi), and Jossie D’Mello, SJ (Bangalore). Congratulations and thank you to each of them in a very distinctly Lifeline way. It was indeed Jesuit companionship in motion!

Our young men in *Sathya Nilayam* Philosophate (Chennai) provided the daily staple support for anchoring this online retreat, especially the liturgy. Corona held them back in the house, and they turned that into an opportunity to serve and thus became a real blessing for us. Thank you every one in SN for the significant role you played. We are indebted to Elsy, Rajesh and John from Jesuit Development Office in New Delhi who tirelessly worked online giving constant logistic support.

South Asia is one of the six Conferences of the world-wide Society of Jesus, with more than 4000 Jesuits, spread out in India, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, and Afghanistan. Our Networks on Ecology, Migrant Laborers, Entitlements for the poor, Skilling the unorganized youth, Non-Formal Education and Peace and Reconciliation are gaining momentum. Do whisper a prayer to the Lifeline to send us more vocations to continue this labour of love. We journey with the Lifeline to build a post-corona world that is new, different, and meant for all children of God. I wish you the hope and joy of Easter!



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President / Provincial of South Asia

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