

January, 2026

JIVAN

NEWS AND VIEWS OF JESUITS IN INDIA



JOURNEYING WITH MARY through the New Year

| Wait! Don't Quit!
| A transgender in a Jesuit college

| "Read it in the light of heaven!"
| God Finds Us in All Things

And then...

And then all that has divided us will merge
And then compassion will be wedded to power
And then softness will come to a world that is harsh and unkind
And then both men and women will be gentle
And then both women and men will be strong
And then no person will be subject to another's will
And then all will be rich and free and varied
And then the greed of some will give way to the needs of many
And then all will share equally in the Earth's abundance
And then all will care for the sick and the weak and the old
And then all will nourish the young
And then all will cherish life's creatures
And then all will live in harmony with each other and the Earth
And then everywhere will be called Eden once again.

*Originally titled, 'A prayer for the nation'.
Courtesy: Saltproject.org*



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Pic courtesy: AI generated

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Blessed and grateful

I felt blessed and grateful after reading Fr. MA. Emma, SJ's article, "Every Second can be a moment of gratitude" in the September '25 issue. I appreciate his profound and lucid explanation. Many of us might have experienced the joy and satisfaction when we express gratitude to others. Now I know the reason: "Gratitude activates dopamine, serotonin and improves self-esteem." The Spiritual Exercises invites us to find God in all things. If we are able to, how grateful we will become! It will be really possible to make every second a moment of gratitude.

| Sch. T. Praveen, SJ | Thiruvananthapuram

Not merely here on earth

Thanks for giving us, *Jivan* readers, things that surprise and touch us. From the interview with the new Jesuit Director of the Vatican Observatory in the October '25 issue, I learned that Jesuits are not merely here on earth, but also in space. It was such a pleasant surprise to know that more than 45 asteroids have been named after Jesuits.

I was touched by Fr Raju Augustine's report on the poor but musically-gifted children from Kalimpong, West Bengal, coming all the way down to Kerala and playing for the differently-abled children of Kerala. This gave me an idea: why can't Jesuit schools or colleges in one State take their students to Jesuit schools or colleges in a far away State for cultural interaction, helping them form friendships across States and broaden their minds?

| Ashwin Kumar | Bengaluru

To bear much fruit

Fr. Hedwig Lewis SJ's article 'Lessons from the Life of the New Jesuit Blessed' in the October '25 issue of *Jivan* is a call to the Jesuits of South Asia to bear witness to Christ, and to proclaim the gospel not from the pulpit alone but through our presence amidst the suffering humanity and our adversaries. The Society of Jesus, known for its unwavering commitment and altruistic service to the Catholic Church, has given us 53 saints, 158 blessed and 15 venerable servants of God. We must thank God that Archbishop Eduard Profittlich, SJ, a shepherd who never abandoned his flock, is exalted to the status of Blessed this year.

Fr Hedwig has wonderfully recalled the martyrdom of Bl. Eduard, along with that of Fr Stan Swamy SJ's. Both of them knew what the cost of discipleship was. Jesus says, "Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a grain; but when it dies, it bears much fruit" (Jn 12:24). Bl. Eduard Profittlich, SJ's martyrdom exemplifies those words of Christ and invites us to emulate his life of faith, fidelity and courage to serve in the vineyard of the Lord and bear much fruit.

| Sch. Alfwin Cross, SJ | Tamil Nadu

Inspiring

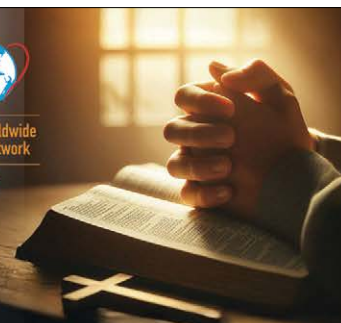
I was taken up by the article, 'Lessons from the Life of New Jesuit Blessed' Eduard Profittlich by Hedwig Lewis, SJ. I found it inspiring, heart touching, and enriching. Lives of those who suffer for the sake of righteousness are meaningful and rewarding. This article invites us to live in faith and peace as per the motto of the Blessed Eduard Profittlich. We must acknowledge that the path of Christ is not safe but it is beautiful. Let us learn to walk the path of Christ!

| Arockia Sebastin, SJ | Trivandrum

Prayer
Intention for
January '26

For prayer with the Word of God.

Let us pray that praying with the Word of God be nourishment for our lives and a source of hope in our communities, helping us to build a more fraternal and missionary Church.



Pic courtesy: pinterest.com



WHAT DO YOU SAY?

STANY D'SOUZA, SJ
President, JCSA

During the year 2026

"It was a SPA," remarked Fr Girish Santiago, the Regional Superior of Myanmar, when he shared his experience of the Meeting of the Major Superiors (MMS) in Rome. By 'SPA' he meant 'a spiritual, personal and apostolic experience.' All the Major Superiors said in unison that it was an enriching and elevating experience for them.

What made the MMS different from other meetings? I think it was the dynamics that worked the miracle. Unlike the usual meetings, the MMS began with a retreat preached by Fr General on *the Autobiography* of St Ignatius. Fr General explored the *Autobiography* from the perspective of the missionary identity of the Society. It revived, recharged and refreshed the missionary dimension of our vocation.

Of course, there were a variety of themes like, 'the UAPs and Collaboration, the mission of the Major Superior and Reimagining Structures of Governance, Building a culture of safeguarding and Promotion of Jesuit Vocations' for reflection and sharing. But the game changer was the spiritual conversation.

What we enjoyed the most was the meeting with Pope Leo XIV on 24 October 2025. One of the main points in his inspiring talk was, "The Church needs you at the frontiers, whether they be geographical, cultural, intellectual or spiritual." But what touched us most was his characteristic simplicity, humility and his affirmation of the affective bond that unites the Society with the Church and the Roman Pontiff.

After the MMS, the JCSA had its meeting in Rome. It was a time to recall, ruminate and relate the insights of the MMS. Like the disciples on the road to Emmaus who exclaimed, 'Were not our hearts burning while ...' everyone recalled gratefully and joyfully whatever touched them at the MMS. It was certainly an invitation for reimagining and restructuring our life-mission.

We are at the threshold of a New Year, 2026. Any New Year becomes new only when we reimagine, redefine and redirect our life-mission. Fortunately, we have already started the RR process in the Conference. When I think of RR, I remember what a senior Jesuit said once at the conclusion of his session, "This session is ended. Let us go and become MAD!" MAD? Make A Difference! Let us make a difference during the year 2026. What do you say?



WHAT DO YOU THINK?

M.A. JOE ANTONY, SJ
Editor

We are part of one another

In 2026, the year that has just dawned, will you be what you were in 2025? No, you won't be. Are you very different from others? No, you have a lot of other people in you. I owe this to Jug Suraiya, the well-known writer whom I have always liked. In a recent column in the *Times of India*, he quotes a saying attributed to Heraclitus, the ancient Greek philosopher. 'You can't step into the same river twice' because the flowing water isn't the same as it was when you first stepped into it, and you are not the same you as you were when you first walked into the water, either. This proves that everything is in a state of perpetual flux, everything is constantly changing.

This means that nothing is permanent. Of the approximately 300 trillion cells that our bodies are made up of, over 300 billion, or about 1 % of the total, are replaced every day. This means that today you are a 1 % different you than the you who you were yesterday. Tomorrow, you will be a different you. In 7 years, all the cells in our bodies will be replaced. So, in 7 years, we will be 100 % different from what we are today.

He goes on to point out that whenever we perform any activity or biological function, atoms from our bodies are expelled, and atoms from the biosphere, which come from other people and other sources, are absorbed by us. Everything on earth is connected in an unending circle of life. We are all made up of hundreds of billions of atoms that were once part of other bodies. This molecular interchangeability blurs the boundaries separating religions, races, nationalities, and all other dividing factors including gender. "We are literally part of one another."

We are constantly changing; we are all part of one another. These are thoughts that should cheer us up when we begin a new year. There are many such ideas in this New Year issue. Learoy Rodrigues, SJ points out that God carries us, when we can't. Francis Peter, SJ asks us not to quit, but to wait – wait for healing, for clarity, for a better tomorrow. Hedwig Lewis, SJ brings new sparks from the old, Ignatian fires. 'Finding God in all things' is the old fire. 'God finds us in all things' is the new spark. This issue, therefore, has a lot of stuff that can see you through a new year.

Development Directors Embrace People-Centred, Holistic Development



Convened by Joe Victor, Conference Development Director, New Delhi, the annual meeting of Jesuit Province and Region Development Directors of South Asia was held on 12-13 October 2025, at Jesu Jaher, Dumka, Jharkhand. Eighteen participants gathered to ponder the theme, 'Reimagining Development Today', calling for a shift from project-based approaches to people-centred, participatory, and justice-driven development.

Fr. K.C. Stephen, Provincial of Dumka-Raiganj, presided over the inaugural Mass and recalled with gratitude the province's century-long journey. He presented a video tracing its humble beginnings and growth. In his online address, Fr. Stany D'Souza, POSA, emphasised that fundraising as a ministry rooted in hope, faith, and love.

Fr. Wilfred Lobo, Assistant General Treasurer, from the General Curia, Rome, highlighted that fundraising is a mission of partnership, not just resource mobilisation. He stressed creativity, inclusivity, and sustainability, grounded in transparency and respect for donor intent. Fr. Cedric Prakash (GUJ) challenged the group to move beyond building structures and engage in global advocacy, urging a fresh, responsive approach to development. Global social activist Ms Asuntha Charles underscored the role of Jesuits whom she described as 'compassionate

companions in marginalised communities.' She praised their work in tribal villages, refugee camps, and slums, noting that Jesuit initiatives foster inclusion, confidence, sisterhood, and ecological care. "Our faith listens, our justice walks, our hope organises," she said.

Fr. Marianus Kujur (RAN), Director of XISS, Ranchi, described the Province Development Director as a strategist and animator, aligning development with the Jesuit mission and Universal Apostolic Preferences. He advocated for holistic models addressing physical, intellectual, social, ecological, and spiritual needs, with a focus on community ownership, ecological regeneration, and digital inclusion.

The meeting included a review of 2024-25 activities and the formulation of 2025-26 action plans at both province and zonal levels. Participants appreciated the zonal workshops and the support from the Conference Development Office. Several provinces committed to upgrading their websites, development offices, documentation, and fundraising systems. The event was marked by deep reflection, strategic planning, and a renewed commitment to walking with the marginalised communities in solidarity. ❖

| Joe Victor, SJ (DAN)



Wait! Don't Quit!

Consider a man who planted both fern and bamboo seeds. The fern sprouted quickly. The bamboo, on the other hand, showed no sign of growth for years. Discouraged, he nearly gave up and decided to dig up that plot that showed no yield. Luckily he didn't. The bamboo suddenly shot up ninety feet in six weeks.

What he didn't see was the bamboo silently growing underground, building roots strong enough to support its eventual height. Growth is bidirectional. Every tree that ascends high begins with a descent into the dark, damp rocky soil, and silence. A seed presses toward gravity before it can ever flaunt its foliage in the sun. The root system must first push through dirt and darkness to establish a staunch support and a steady supply of water and nutrients before strutting proudly into the dizzy sky.

Many give up during the root-building phase. They lose faith, because they don't see results. But we can't rush the birth of a child, the blooming of a flower, or the unfolding of a breakthrough. As Seth Godin reminds us: Nine women cannot produce a baby in one month! What is needed, therefore, is patience.

Patience is powerful, but not passive. It's the unseen force behind every breakthrough, the quiet companion of resilience, and the strategic edge that separates fleeting success from lasting impact. Water held back by a dam appears to stagnate, but that is when water deepens and acquires power. Just like running water made to wait gathers power, when before acting we pause, reflect, refine, and recalibrate our ideas, we allow them to strike deeper roots. What feels like a setback today might be the setup for tomorrow's breakthrough.

Millions wait. Wait for a job. For healing. For clarity. For a better tomorrow. And in that waiting, many feel stuck - convinced the universe is conspiring against them. But waiting is not the enemy. The true question is: Do you want to rest on your oars and wait passively for change to happen, or will you wait proactively to become the change? If you choose to wait patiently, you can turn the waiting period into a reservoir. While waiting, you can deepen it, fill it with new skills and richer knowledge. So let this time of waiting make you more powerful—not more distressed and dissuaded.

What can help us wait patiently is to realize that some things simply take time. You cannot push the river! We need to make the time of waiting productive, by finding opportunities for deeper self-awareness, skill refinement, network expansion. We need to keep telling ourselves that this is a God-given opportunity for resilience building, developing the mental fortitude that separates the good from the great. It is a time to explore, analyze the problems, and finding solutions to them.

Let me share a lesson from Japanese fishing. The Japanese have always loved fresh fish. But a few decades ago, finding fish in close waters had become increasingly difficult. So, fishing boats had to venture farther out and stay longer in the ocean. Naturally,

people complained that the fish they brought did not taste fresh.

Fishing companies solved the problem by installing freezers on their boats. This allowed the fishermen to go farther into the ocean and stay longer to catch more fish. This seemed like a great solution, but the Japanese people could taste the difference between fresh and frozen fish, and they preferred the taste of fresh fish.



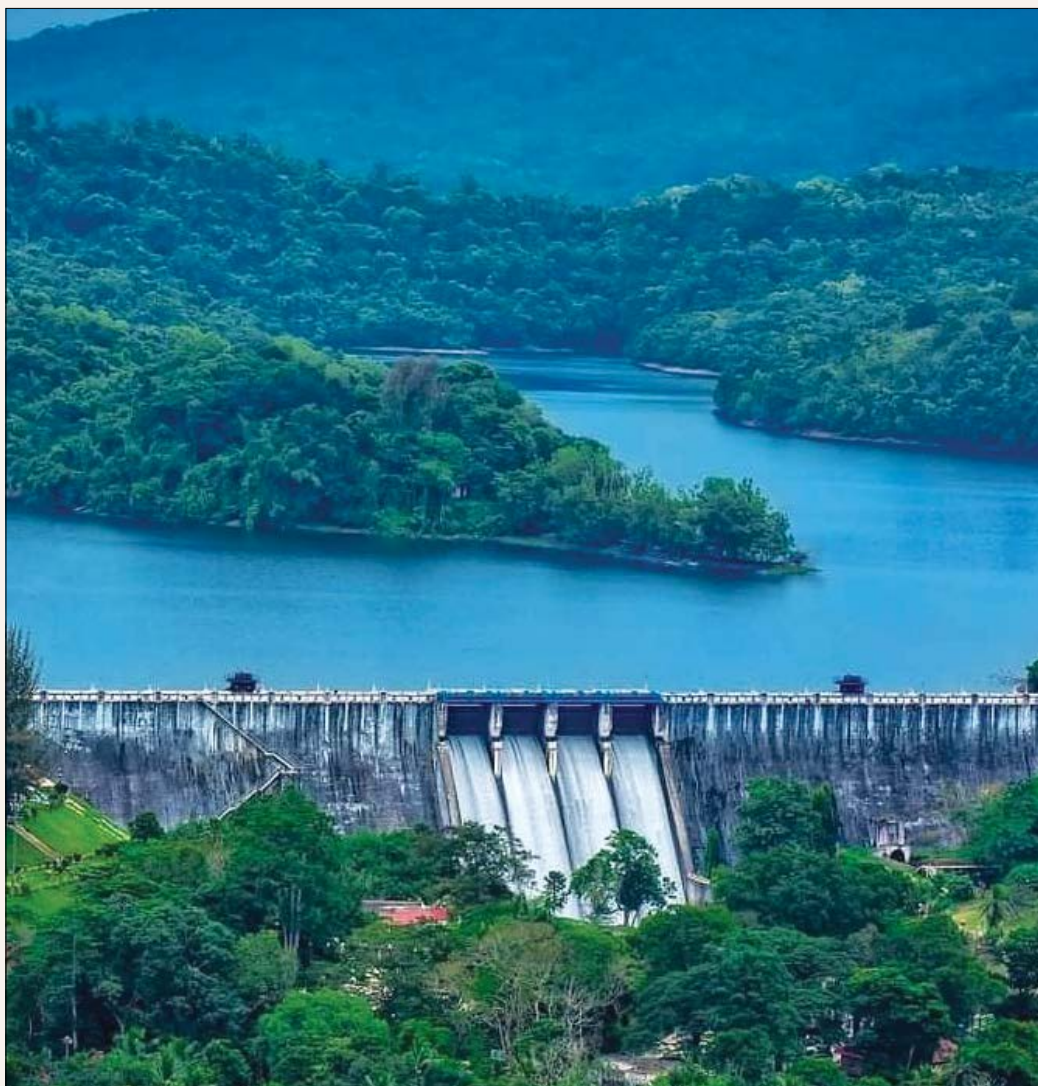
Pic courtesy: pinterest.com

Next, the fishing companies installed fish tanks on their boats. They caught the fish and crammed the live fish into tanks to keep them alive. Packed fin to fin, the fish reached the shore alive but tired and dull, and the Japanese could tell the difference.

But where the Japanese boatmen thought they had tried every possible solution, Japanese fishermen added a small shark, yes—a predator, to each fish tank on their boats. Although they lost a few fish in the process, the sharks kept the remaining fish as challenged as they had been in the ocean, and they arrived at shore in a vivacious state. These fish tasted fresh — and the Japanese were able to do a great deal of fishing in deeper waters and come back with fish that met their high standards.

The same is true for people who settle for what they have, give up trying, lose their passion and become stagnant. We only thrive in a challenging environment. We perform at a higher standard when challenged. When something doesn't seem to work, let's wait, let's pause and use this time to explore and try another possible solution. Our waiting is our shark. God has made you wait – not to disappoint you, but to sharpen you, to keep you moving, to keep you exploring. So, we must encounter challenges with hope, patience, and determination.

When you're forced to wait - for results, for clarity, for opportunity - this wait is not a punishment but a preparation. A blessing in disguise. A gift to help you become clearer, stronger, and more capable. The breakthrough you seek may be just around the corner.



So, be like water. Let the wait deepen you. Let it make you a force to be reckoned with. Don't hesitate to battle challenges while others hesitate. Those who do now what others won't, will later do what others can't.

The final stanza of Edgar A. Guest's "Don't Quit" says it all:

"You can never tell how close you are,
It may be near when it seems so far.

So, stick to the fight when you're hardest hit -

It's when things seem worst that you
must not quit." ❖

Francis Peter, SJ (MDU) is a veteran educator who has worked in many Jesuit colleges. Currently he is Director, Joseph's Hub for Languages (JHL), Trichy, Tamil Nadu.



JOURNEYING WITH MARY

As we begin a New Year

Dealing with Transition the way Mary did

In the movie, *Journey to Bethlehem* (2023), a Christmas musical, directed by Adam Anders, the life of a young Mary undergoes drastic change the moment she is told by the angel Gabriel that she will be the mother of God. Transition wasn't easy. Mary, the Mother of God, whose feast we celebrate on 1 January, seemed adept at handling key transition moments in her life. Being called to be the mother of God was probably her greatest transition moment. This invitation will have brought pain, confusion, even dying to a former way of life. But she allowed herself to go through a process, and with God's help, embrace newness.

In our own lives too, we sometimes find ourselves coming face to face with a mighty proposition. The New Year is itself a daunting period for some. Some hope for better health in the year to come, while some wish that a better job comes their way. Some hope that they finally find a suitable life partner, while some others just crave peace in the family. Some wish they'd be able to finally overcome an addiction, while some just wish to find deeper meaning in the things they do every day.

We can draw inspiration from the life of Mary. Taking a cue from the movie, *Journey to Bethlehem*, we shall dwell on a 4-step process that can help us deal with tough transitions.

a. Acknowledge confusion and weakness:

In *Journey to Bethlehem*, when told that she will be the mother of a king, the first words that Mary sings are, 'I don't understand the words you've spoken, and my heart is still trying to believe.' These words smack of confusion and chaos. She also admits weakness and fragility when she sings, 'this burden is too heavy, I need strength to be a mother to a saviour and king.'

Many people today feel drained of spiritual and emotional strength.. Some find that they have to drag themselves out of bed each morning, and fight



for the will to carry on with daily chores. I've heard Jesuits complain of burnout and fatigue, not finding sufficient daily fire to keep going with zest. Some complain of work expectations being unreasonable, some find their relationships too strained.

In moments like these it seems best to step back like Mary, and just spend a quiet moment with the chaos, the pain. Acceptance is key here. It's ok to feel weak, even disillusioned, and sometimes lacking purpose. Mary paints a vivid image in the song when she talks of the burden of carrying Jesus when

actually she it is who feels the need to be carried by God. I have found this image very reassuring – being carried by God, especially when I have felt tired carrying others and their daily struggles.

b. Move from doubt to dependence on God: Mary goes from saying ‘there’s nothing in my life I have to offer’ on to saying ‘I need You more than ever.’ Her acknowledgement of her vulnerability before God now gives her the added grace to depend on God’s plan however strange it seemed. And from here forward, she begins to build an even more robust, dynamic, and living relationship with the Lord.

In the Visitation letter to the Bombay Jesuits, our provincial, this year, invited us to journey from a modern-day ‘crisis of disconnect’ to ‘genuine belonging’ – a belongingness that is rooted in the Trinitarian God, our Ignatian ethos, and a love for our Jesuit heritage, our men in community, and the varied works.

c. Notice the constant interplay between the old and the new: The invitation to Mary to be the mother of God was both new and old. She is asked afresh, in continuance of an old promise – ‘the Lord himself will give you a sign. The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Emmanuel (Is 7:14).’

Quite often, what’s seemingly new in our lives, has its foundation in the old. The onus is upon us to notice the connection, trace the path back to the roots, the origins, and thus find meaning in the present. On 24 October 2025, in his meeting with the Jesuit Major Superiors at the Vatican, Pope Leo XIV quite plainly reminded the Jesuits that “the Church needs you at the frontiers – whether they be geographical, cultural, intellectual, or spiritual.” He said this with a clear intent to recall and deepen the invitation that Pope Paul VI made to the Jesuits at GC 32 in 1974, when he said, “Wherever in the Church, even in the most difficult and extreme fields... here also there have been, and there are, Jesuits.”

The start of a New Year provides quite the platform needed to take stock of our lives, notice how our life’s purpose and early foundational experiences play out even today, and how best we can rekindle an old flame and keep it burning.



Pic courtesy: pinterest.com

d. Try seeing what God sees in you: Mary struggled to see what God saw in her. Quite natural. She asks God, ‘When you’re looking down on me where do you see a mother to a saviour and king?’ But she had the humility, and strength, and the wisdom to train her gaze. She says movingly, ‘Give me eyes to see, just how I can be, mother to a saviour, when I need saving.’

In the year ahead let us pray this prayer of Mary – to have eyes to see what God asks of us, even amidst our weakness and doubt, and to have the boldness to say ‘yes.’ ❖

Learoy Rodrigues, SJ is presently Socius to the Bombay Jesuit Provincial. He resides at Vinayalaya, Andheri, Mumbai.



“Read it in the light of heaven!”

- a young priest's letter to his late mother

As I knelt in the prayer room, my pristine white cassock draped around me, tears welled in my eyes, and I found it hard to rise. My mother gently lifted me, her voice so soft with concern. “Son, why are there tears in your eyes? Today is the day of your ordination - a day we’ve waited for so long.” Soon after, I was ushered to the parish church in a decorated vehicle, like a bridegroom, for the sacred ceremony. I never shared with my mother the reason for my tears that day, and before I could, she passed away.

Now, I write this to her, hoping that in heaven she may read it and find peace.

“Dear Mother, I was assigned to Devpure Mission in a remote village in Jharkhand, where the parish priest served all alone. One evening, a family invited me for evening prayers. Accompanied by my catechist and two religious nuns, I scheduled a visit to their village. Their home was a mud hut, roof sagging like an old man’s shoulders, with space hardly enough for



five people. The air smelled of earth and smoke, and as I stepped inside, the woman of the house greeted me warmly with a smile as wide as the Ganges in spate. It didn't seem she was in any way ashamed of her poverty.

I sat cross-legged on the floor, with the Bible in hand, but restlessness gnawed at me. Dusk was falling; birdsong faded into the trees, and the path back would soon vanish in darkness. I urged the family to begin, tapping my foot like an impatient child. But the mother paced, wringing her hands. "Father, please wait," she said softly. "My daughter isn't home yet."

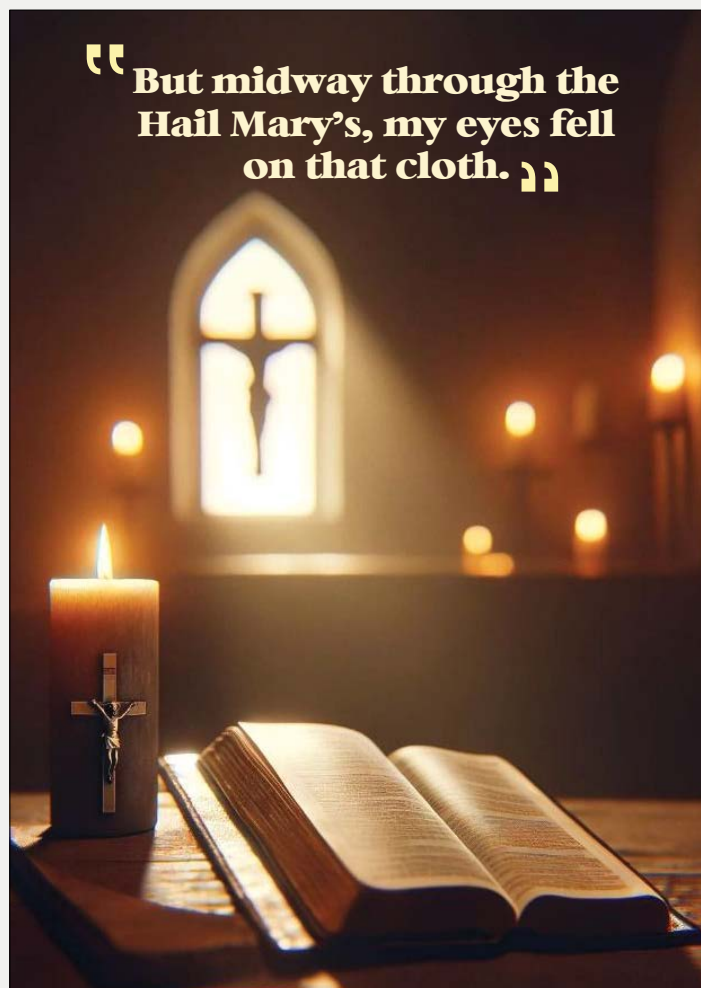
Minutes stretched like the rosary beads. Anger simmered in my chest: why this delay in a house that has nothing to offer? I shifted the rosary from hand to hand, beads clicking like accusations.

Then the door creaked, and in burst Fulbaha, six years old, school bag slung over her shoulder, eyes wide at the crowd of strangers. Her mother whisked her inside without a word. I bowed my head, fuming silently, convinced this was folly. When they returned, the mother laid out a white cloth for the altar, placing Jesus' picture on it, flanking it with a stub of a half-burned candle and wildflowers plucked from the forest's edge. The prayer began, voices rising in fragile harmony. But midway through the Hail Mary's, my eyes fell on that cloth. It was no ordinary rag. It was Fulbaha's shirt - her school uniform, the only white garment in their home, spotless despite the mud paths she trod each day.

And there she sat beside me, half-naked, her small body bare from the waist up, smiling as if the world was hers. She had given her shirt freely, without fuss, for this fleeting hour of prayer. In her innocence, I saw Him - Jesus, stripped and sacrificed, sitting among us in that crumbling hut.

My heart burned, like that of the disciples on the road to Emmaus when the stranger broke bread and vanished. Tears threatened again, but this time not from doubt or fear, but from feeling ashamed for my hurry, my anger. Mother, they are economically poor but I understood they are rich in faith, and content with what they have. All are happy together -not worried about tomorrow. Isn't this the way you brought us all up?

Here was a child who offered her dignity, so God might have a throne of white. What had I sacrificed that day, in my fine cassock and decorated car? I never



“But midway through the Hail Mary’s, my eyes fell on that cloth.”

told you this story, Mother, though it reshaped me. In Fulbaha's smile, I found the Gospel alive in that hut of mud floors and half-burned candles. She taught me poverty is true wealth, that a heart that gives without counting the cost is the heart of gold.

Forgive me for the tears on my Ordination day. They were not just tears of joy. They were harbingers of nights like the one I spent in Fulbaha's hut, when grace ambushes the hurried soul, when a poor, little girl teaches you lessons you can never forget.

Rest now, Mother. Read this in the light of heaven, where no roofs collapse and every child has shirts aplenty. Your son has learned, at last, to wait in order to be able to break bread for and with your little children, to identify true wealth.

With all my love,

Your son – a priest forever ❖

Carter Thomas, SJ (DUM) serves as the Media Coordinator and resides at Provincial House, Dumka, Jharkhand.

What does it mean to be Christian Palestinian Arab citizens of Israel? - Fr General meets Arab Christians in Israel

Six Christian Palestinian Arab citizens of Israel – four men and two women from Jerusalem and the north of Israel – were invited to meet with Father General at the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Jerusalem and share their personal reflections on what it means to be not just Christians in the Holy Land, but Arabs in Israel. The group represented people from different walks of life, yet all committed to the mission of the Church. One member of the group was a female religious, the others were lay people ranging in age from their late twenties to their early sixties. Four of the participants are Catholic and two are of Orthodox backgrounds.

The animator of the encounter, a Jesuit from the Jerusalem community, is a Christian Israeli citizen, formerly responsible for non-Arab Catholics in Israel – both Hebrew-speaking citizens and migrants. The participants shared their personal stories with Father General, attempting to give him a portrait of the complexities of Christian life in Israel. They shared the challenges they have faced while living as Christians in a state that defines itself as being Jewish. They shared the state of the Christian population in Israel: the crises faced by and the resilience of the community. They also talked of the state of the Church within Israel: how Christians inside Israel see the conflict that has been playing out for decades between the Palestinians and the Israelis – detached and yet intimately intermingled.

They shared with Father General their thoughts on what it means to be Christian Palestinian Arab citizens of Israel in the midst of the conflict and how that odd intersection challenges their identity and role. This sharing took place during Father General Arturo Sosa's visitation of Jesuit works in the Holy Land. It proved to be a unique experience of the cultural and ministerial diversity of the region.

As the encounter continued, they offered their vision of the role of the Church in the conflict, set against their own experience of maintaining relationships with both Jews and Muslims, and their hopes for the future of the region. One blessing that emerged from the encounter was a conversation on the possibilities for broadening the mission of the Society of Jesus inside Palestinian Arab society in Israel. The Society has focused, until now, on a presence in Bethlehem and the West Bank in Palestine.



However, over the course of the conversation there was a clearly stated desire to contribute to deepening faith life and Christian formation inside Israel as well. Quite a few Jesuits from Jerusalem and Bethlehem, have been making forays into Israel for just as long.

The history of the Society of Jesus in the region is filled with quiet successes that have stood the test of time. There has been a steady stream of Jesuits, who have worked tirelessly to strengthen the small Hebrew-speaking Catholic communities that were founded in the mid 1950s. These Jesuits have established the structures that serve the much larger but very fragile network of migrant Catholic communities in Israel, comprised predominantly of migrant workers from Asia and asylum seekers from Africa.

As the encounter with Father General ended, there was a hopeful feeling of the possible. This small community has shown its strength. In the midst of a so many challenges, it has survived, even thrived, in a place where it shouldn't be possible. If they have done the impossible, perhaps it might be possible then to dream about establishing a Jesuit presence in Galilee, perhaps based in Nazareth? Is there another generation of Jesuits who are willing to take upon themselves this work? Can the Society of Jesus be as open to the future, as these Christian communities in the Holy Land? ❖

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

MAG+S 2025 & Youth of North Karnataka



The North Karnataka MAG+S 2025, held in Dharwad from 31 October to 02 November 2025, was inaugurated by Bishop Derek Fernandes of Belgaum. Around 250 young participants, representing various parishes and institutions, came together for three grace-filled days of faith, friendship, and formation.

There were talks, testimonies, meaningful Eucharists, confessions, Taizé prayer, meditation, contemplation, spiritual counselling and adoration. In the fast-paced world that often overwhelms young hearts, these sacred pauses became spaces of inner calm, clarity, and healing. One of the most transformative experiences came through MAG+S Circles - the heart of the Ignatian method. Personal sharing and guided reflection enabled participants to open up, speak honestly, confront their struggles, and rediscover direction. These circles became living reminders that God works powerfully through listening, companionship, and community.

Joy and celebration blended beautifully with prayer and reflection. The cultural evening was a vibrant expression of youthful creativity and talent. The play *Maralida Kurimari*, performed by the Vidyaniketan scholastics, was especially moving, because of its powerful message of returning to God and finding the purpose of life in God. The three-day journey was a spiritual turning point for the youth - a moment when their faith became alive, personal, and deeply meaningful.

MAG+S Dharwad 2025 showed what happens when the Ignatian vision touches young hearts. In the midst of academic pressure, emotional struggles, loneliness, and the noise of modern life, MAG+S offered a refreshing space for encounter, reflection, belonging, and transformation.

MAG+S is a vibrant youth formation journey rooted deeply in the spiritual heritage of St. Ignatius of Loyola. While its origins may be traced to the global MAG+S movement that began in France in 1997, today it has become a transformative expression of youth ministry in India. Internationally, MAG+S was designed to help young people prepare spiritually for World Youth Day. Its name gained official recognition during the 2005 pilgrimage in Cologne, Germany, and was later enriched with a dynamic format in Spain, shaping the Ignatian youth gatherings we know today.

The term MAG+S, marked with a plus sign, expresses the Ignatian desire for “more”—more generosity, more depth, more courage, and more love in seeking and doing God’s will. The plus symbol also points to the Cross of Christ, the banner under which St. Ignatius of Loyola offered his life. His journey reminds young people that the search for meaning often invites them away from comfort into unfamiliar

and challenging spaces where God becomes more visible.

Thus, MAG+S turns out to be a spiritual pilgrimage where youth journey together, learn from one another, and encounter God in new and surprising ways. Its five foundational pillars—the Eucharist, Prayer, the Examen, Outreach, and the MAG+S Circle—offer a complete spiritual rhythm that touches the human heart at multiple levels. By making Ignatian spirituality alive in the lived experiences of young people, MAG+S continues to shape a new generation grounded in faith, guided by reflection, strengthened by community, and inspired to build a more hopeful world. ❖

| Dheeraj Adarsh, SJ (KAR)



How can Jesuit colleges help transgenders?

*A few years ago Loyola College, Chennai admitted, for the first time in its history, **Jency**, a transgender, as a doctoral student. When she completed her Ph.D., the hundred-year-old Loyola recruited her as an Assistant Professor at the Department of English. **A. Irudayaraj, SJ**, who teaches at Loyola's Department of Visual Communication, and a Jivan Correspondent, interviewed her for INI:*

What are the problems faced by transgenders in today's India?

In contemporary India, transgender persons continue to face a wide range of unique and deep-rooted challenges. Social stigma remains the foremost problem, as many are excluded from

their families, communities, and public life due to prejudice and misconceptions about gender identity. This rejection often forces transgender individuals into lives of isolation, poverty, or dependence on limited support networks.

Education is another major hurdle, as many transgender children drop out of schools at an early stage because of bullying, ridicule, and the lack of gender-sensitive environments. Without proper education, their chances of building stable careers are severely limited. Employment opportunities are also scarce, as stereotypes and discrimination prevent many from entering mainstream professions. Even qualified transgender individuals often face workplace bias, making it difficult for them to sustain meaningful jobs.

Healthcare inequality is another pressing issue, as access to gender-affirming treatment and mental health support is limited, and many face insensitive attitudes from medical professionals. Although India has passed the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019, its enforcement is weak, and many transgender persons still struggle with identity documentation, affecting their ability to obtain passports, voter IDs, or bank accounts.

Safety is another major concern, as transgenders are vulnerable to harassment, violence, and exploitation. With limited livelihood opportunities, many are forced into begging or sex work, further exposing them to risks. Thus, while legal progress has been made, transgender persons in India continue to face a variety of problems that hinder their full participation in society.

What would transgenders expect from those who understand their plight and care for them?

Transgender persons, like all human beings, long for respect, dignity, and acceptance in their everyday lives. From those who care for them, they expect genuine recognition of their identity by being addressed by their chosen name and pronouns without judgment or hesitation. Respectful treatment is a simple but powerful way to affirm their humanity.



They also seek equal opportunities in education and employment, so they can build independent and dignified lives. Transgenders do not want charity or sympathy, but rather fair chances to demonstrate their skills and talents. Another expectation is the creation of safe spaces whether in homes, schools, workplaces, or public areas - where they can live without fear of bullying, harassment, or violence. Access to quality healthcare is also vital, especially mental health care and gender-affirming treatments, which are often neglected in the current system.

Additionally, transgenders hope for solidarity from people who are ready to stand up for their rights and support the implementation of protective policies. They seek not just legal recognition, but also social acceptance that allows them to participate fully in cultural, religious, and family life. In essence, they expect equal treatment, respect, and inclusion as valued members of society.

How can Jesuit educational institutions help transgender persons?

Educational institutions such as Loyola College can play a transformative role in creating a more inclusive and equitable society for transgender persons. First, they can ensure access to admissions, scholarships, and financial assistance, encouraging transgender students to pursue higher education without discrimination or financial stress.

Awareness is equally important. By organizing sensitization programs for students, faculty, and staff,

colleges can break stereotypes, reduce prejudice, and build a culture of respect and inclusivity. Strong institutional policies like anti-discrimination rules, grievance redressal mechanisms, and gender-neutral facilities can provide transgender students with a safe learning environment.

Colleges can also support career development by offering skill training, leadership workshops,



and placement assistance, preparing transgender students for diverse professions. Counseling centers that provide non-judgmental mental health support can also be life-changing for those struggling with identity-related challenges.

Beyond the campus, colleges like that care for transgenders can collaborate with NGOs, policymakers, and local transgender communities in research, advocacy, and outreach projects. By combining inclusive policies with practical action, institutions like Loyola can ensure that transgender persons not only receive education but also live with dignity and self-respect. ❖



“Owning your story is the beginning of freedom”

What Tanmay Sadhana did to a young Jesuit

There are places we visit, and then there are places that visit us. Tanmay Sadhana, tucked away in the quiet green embrace of Lonavala, was both. I arrived carrying the invisible luggage many of us shoulder—well-managed on the outside, but carefully concealed within.

Childhood, I discovered, had left impressions on me far deeper than I imagined. Growing up, I learned early to strive, to excel, to meet expectations with a smile. Praise tasted like validation; silence felt like failure. Subtle comparisons at home, high anticipation in school, and cultural expectations quietly shaped a hunger to perform. Like many children, I adapted. But the echo of those early lessons traveled with me into adulthood. At Tanmay, through a mosaic of guided silence, group work, prayerful solitude, and therapeutic exploration, I revisited my memories. I learned to differentiate between the facts of my childhood and the interpretations I had carried for years. Slowly, fragments began to find their place.

As a priest, these patterns matured into competence. Formation polished my gifts: clarity of thought, efficiency, leadership, presence. Many have described me as confident, sorted, and reliable. And I have carried those words with gratitude. But beneath the clerical composure



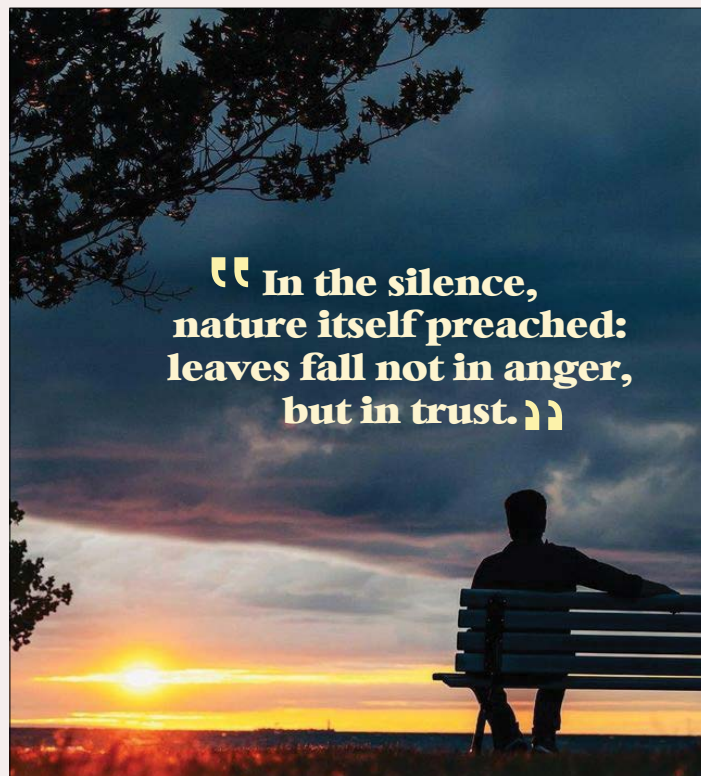
were subtle knots - small fears of misunderstanding, a reluctance to reveal vulnerability, and the occasional pressure to remain unaffected. Ministry trains us to respond, rarely to pause. Yet Tanmay offered the sacred luxury of interruption. With every exercise, I felt roles peeling away—the pastor, the counselor, the problem-solver.

What emerged was the simple human being beneath the vestments. I confronted moments when my emotional withdrawal had hurt others, when perfectionism had silenced joy, and when pride led me to defend myself instead of entering into a dialogue. Strangely, acknowledging these faults did not diminish me - it deepened me. It taught me that authenticity is strength, and that holiness is not the elimination of weakness, but the honest integration of it.

Equally profound was the invitation to confront the pain others had contributed to my story. For years, I was eager to move on and so had practiced automatic forgiveness – quick and polite. But Tanmay revealed a gentler, wiser truth: forgiveness that bypasses truth becomes suppression. Naming the wound is not bruising myself again; it is liberating. I revisited memories of family dynamics, community tensions, friendships that frayed, and moments where colleagues dismissed or misunderstood me, or projected onto me. Through sharing circles and deep listening, I learned that acknowledging someone else's fault does not condemn them—it simply honours reality.

Slowly, the rawness softened. I began to see the fears behind their actions, the wounds behind their words, the insecurities behind their choices. Compassion expanded where irritation once resided. Reconciliation happened - not always through dramatic apologies, but through the quiet shift of my heart. I learned that sometimes peace is not a handshake between two people, but a handshake between memory and maturity.

And then began the subtle art of letting go. Tanmay taught me that not everything broken must be repaired; some pieces simply need to be released. I let go of relationships defined by obligation rather than joy, expectations that had begun to suffocate rather than motivate, and responsibilities I carried because I feared disappointing others. I learned to grieve quietly the versions of myself I had outgrown



- the pleaser, the fixer, the perfect one. In the silence, nature itself preached: leaves fall not in anger, but in trust. I realized acceptance is not surrender; it is wisdom. Accepting the limitations of family, the imperfections of community, and the unfinished edges in myself brought an unexpected peace. I understood that letting go is not losing anything but becoming free. I experienced healing and with healing came joy.

When I left Tanmay Sadhana, I carried no souvenirs, yet felt fuller. I did not return changed into someone else, but restored into who I truly am. I remain confident and dependable, now with softer edges, kinder eyes, and a braver heart. Vulnerability feels honest, and empathy walks beside efficiency. Tanmay offered presence more than answers. It does not let you escape but leads you to encounter. I am grateful for the gentle guides, sincere companions, and the silent hills that held our prayers. One whisper stays with me: "Owning your story is the beginning of freedom." Today, I walk within my story - its shadow and its light - loving life for its courageous beauty. ❖

Francis Lobo, SJ (PUN), served as the Vocation Promoter of the Pune Province for three years. He is currently pursuing the Early Formators Course at the Sadhana Institute, Lonavala.



“I could open windows that had long remained shut”

- What a woman could bring in as the Editor of a religious magazine

I don't know how many men were surprised three years ago when they learnt that a woman had been appointed the Editor of the *Magnet*, CRI's magazine, published from Delhi. Those three years are over and someone else has taken my place. During those three years *Magnet* was not just my workplace - it was a space I entered with attentiveness, responsibility, and hope. These years taught me that editing a magazine is not simply about producing issues, but about shaping conversations and opening doors.

Finding my voice: When I took on the responsibility of editing *Magnet*, I entered a new area. It was a landscape where women's voices, both lay and religious, were often underrepresented. The Church's intellectual and pastoral conversations tend to privilege clerical perspectives, sometimes inadvertently, because older structures continue to shape our imagination. I felt this immediately. Yet I also recognised that as a woman editor I could open windows that had long remained shut and usher in voices waiting on the margins.

From the outset, I understood editing was not just a job, but also a form of intentional advocacy. Which stories were we amplifying? Which perspectives were missing? Who was being overshadowed by familiarity or hierarchy? These questions guided my decisions. The editorial desk, I learned, is a space of moral responsibility. And navigating it as a woman required steadiness and clarity. Over time, I realized that the most grounded feminist act available to me was consistent honesty in the work — naming what needed to be said and ensuring that others could say it too.

Bringing in new, young voices: A turning point in my journey was recognizing *Magnet* as more than a magazine for religious men and women; it was also a vital platform for young voices — novices, scholastics, young religious, lay scholars, and pastoral workers who had few or no spaces to write.

Established writers already had multiple avenues to publish. But these emerging voices often

hesitated, feeling unseen or unsure of their place in the Church's intellectual landscape. This became a constant concern for me. I made a conscious decision to bring in new writers consistently, even though it significantly increased my workload. It required persistence: searching for promising contributors, encouraging shy or hesitant writers, reshaping early drafts, and accompanying them through the writing process.

Feminist editing, I realized, is not only about critique; it is deeply generative. I was not only increasing representation but also creating opportunities for those with no platform, encouraging first-time writers, and nurturing voices that could shape the magazine's future rather than merely maintaining its present.

Why did this matter so much? Because representation is not merely a matter of fairness; it transforms imagination. When readers encounter women theologians, young religious, lay thinkers, novices with fresh insights, and writers from diverse regions, they see a Church shaped by many forms of wisdom. Representation widens the centre. Expansion creates belonging. And together, they cultivate a culture where creativity can flourish.

To make this commitment sustainable, I developed a simple three-step editorial process:

- *Active Sourcing*: I deliberately sought out women, young religious, and lay contributors who had never published before. I listened to recommendations, paid attention during visits, and personally invited those whose voices were rarely heard.
- *Accompanied Writing*: Many emerging writers struggled not because they lacked insight but because they lacked confidence. I walked with them — helping clarify ideas, offering gentle guidance, and assuring them that their voices were needed.
- *Consistent Integration*: Every issue had to reflect balance, generativity, and renewal. I examined each table of contents with the question: Who is missing? If new voices or women's perspectives were absent, I reshaped the lineup. Over time, this discipline changed the magazine's tone, reach, and identity.

A Journey of empowerment: Looking back, these three years have been a journey of empowerment, service, and responsibility. I learned that feminist work is not always loud; often, it is patient and consistent — month



after month, widening the circle. I learned that relational labour sits at the heart of good editorial practice. And I learned that excellence, pursued quietly, can transform cultures accustomed to predictable voices.

Most importantly, I saw how women's perspectives and emerging voices enrich the Church. They offer depth, honesty, creativity, and lived wisdom. Through *Magnet*, I discovered that women and young writers do not simply contribute to the narrative — they expand it, deepen it, and reimagine its possibilities. And as I continue my work as a writer and editor, even though I have completed my term as editor of *Magnet*, I remain convinced that the future of Catholic media depends on nurturing spaces where these voices will be essential. ❖

Pushpa Joseph is a former Editor of the *Magnet*, the magazine of the CRI, published from Delhi. A feminist theologian, she writes on various topics. She can be contacted at raipush@gmail.com.



The God Who Finds Us in All Things

Ignatian spirituality often invites us to find God in all things. The phrase feels familiar, comfortable, almost heroic. It suggests that the spiritual life is a kind of quest, that if we look hard enough and pray earnestly enough, we will detect the traces of God in the ordinary. Yet there is another way of interpreting the same truth, one that reverses the direction of our search. What if it is not we who find God, but God who finds us?

Ignatius himself hints at this reversal. In the Spiritual Exercises, he speaks of God as one who “labours for me in all creatures.” God is not hiding, waiting to be discovered, but constantly at work, drawing near through every movement of life. The problem is not God’s absence but our distraction. If we imagine ourselves as the seekers, we risk slipping into a kind of spiritual control, where God becomes an object we identify or a feeling we summon

will. But if we see God as the seeker, the story changes. We are no longer the main characters in the search. We become the ones who are being pursued.

This shift changes everything. It moves the focus from activity to receptivity, from mastery to humility. To be found by God means allowing grace to reach us where we would rather not be reached. It means giving up our preferred narratives about how the divine should appear. Instead of asking, ‘Where can I find God today?’ we might ask, ‘Where might God have been trying to find me?’ The question is unsettling, because it exposes our evasions. God often arrives through what interrupts us, what disorients or humbles us, what we quickly label as inconvenience. In those moments, God is already close, waiting not for our analysis but for our attention.

Scripture is full of this divine initiative. Adam hides, and God walks through the garden calling, ‘Where are you?’ The disciples retreat in fear, but the risen Christ finds them. He appears among them, uninvited. Again and again, God crosses thresholds we never intended to open. To be found by God, then, is not passive resignation but a kind of active surrender. It requires attentiveness, even vulnerability – the willingness to be interrupted by grace, to be surprised by love that takes us off guard.

This is something we can practice. In the Examen, instead of reviewing the day as a hunt for moments of presence, we might review it as a record of pursuit. Where did God seek me today? Through whom did God come close? Where did I resist being found? Perhaps through a conversation that stung my pride, a delay that broke my rhythm, a gesture of kindness I almost ignored. Grace often hides in the unplanned and the unwelcome, in the quiet edges of our day where our attention grows thin.

God also finds us through others. Ignatius knew that God speaks through the voice and need of the neighbour, and not always the agreeable one. The person who challenges our comfort, tests our patience, or reveals our limits may be the one through whom God approaches us. The God who finds us is not limited to the tender or the tranquil. God comes through friction as much as through consolation.

If we are able to see the world as a divine dwelling, we can allow ourselves to be found in this way. There is a quiet paradox here. We spend much of our lives trying to locate God, but the deeper grace comes when we realize that we have already been spotted. The more we try to control how God appears, the more we hide behind our efforts.



Sometimes the holiest thing we can do is to stop searching and let ourselves be seen. To stand still long enough for God to catch up with us, to let divine mercy recognize our face before we recognize God’s.

To find God in all things, then, is to acknowledge that God’s desire always precedes our own. It is to trust that every created thing, every human story, and every fragment of history already belongs to a divine movement larger than our seeing. The search does not begin with us; it begins with God’s longing to share life. Even our capacity to notice is itself a grace, a sign that the Seeker has already drawn near.

God’s presence fills the world not as a secret to be uncovered but as a love continually revealing itself. The miracle is not that we manage to find God, but that God never ceases to find us and our world – again and again, with patience, tenderness, and joy beyond all naming.

Inspiration

In his *Autobiography* (nn 27-31), Ignatius recounts his interior transformation at Manresa. He does not describe himself as mastering a new spiritual technique, but rather as being found and taught by God: “God treated him at this time just as a schoolmaster treats a child, teaching him.” He realizes that he is being instructed, guided, corrected, and consoled by God. The initiative belongs entirely to God, who actively forms and finds the soul in its confusion, not after it achieves perfection. ❖

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



Lebanon's Miracle Worker

Film: *Charbel* (2009)

Director: Nabil Lebbos

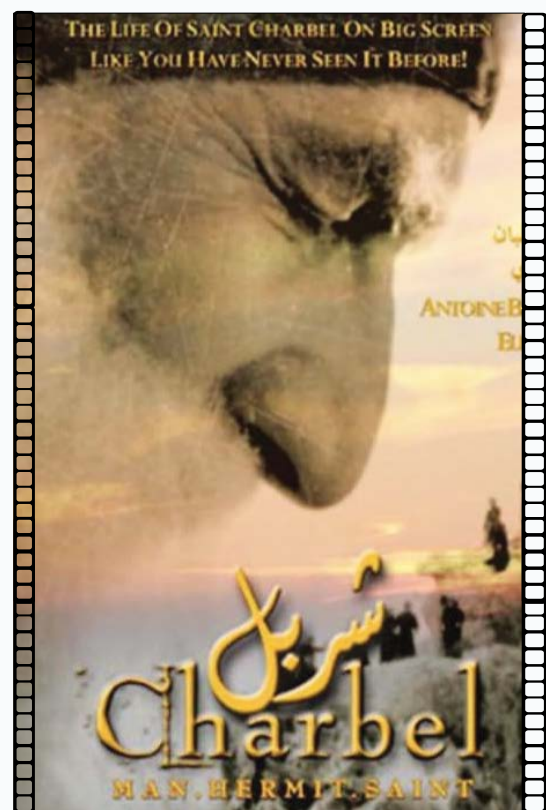
Run time: 106 minutes

Lebanon is the land of cedars, beauty and God's glory. Mentioned in the Old Testament, it has a rich history. It was a center of early Christianity, preserving its Maronite tradition established by its founder, the 4th century St Maron. Among its martyrs and saints is Charbel Makhlouf, Lebanon's patron saint, revered by Catholic and Orthodox believers and even Muslims today. Charbel's body remained uncorrupted for many years. Over 30,000 miraculous healings have been attributed to him. He was beatified in 1965 by Pope Paul VI. This movie takes a contemplative look at Charbel's life.

Youssef was born the youngest of the five children of Antoun Makhlouf and Brigitta, a pious hardworking Lebanese couple, on 08 May 1828 in the high mountain village of Bekaa Kafra. At age three, he lost his father who was forced to labour away from home. Little Youssef was a prodigy of prayer and devotion, adored by his mother. But against his mother's expectations, under the influence of his ascetic uncles, Youssef showed signs of religious aspirations, spending hours alone in prayer, while he tended goats in the mountains. The handsome young man was admired by those around him; and a local maiden wished to marry him. His mother also wished for it. But Youssef stole away to the Monastery of Annaya, joining the Maronite Order at 23. His mother went after him, but he would not return.

Aspiring to be more disciplined and rigorous, he shifted to another monastery. In 1859 he was ordained and he chose the name of the 2nd century Syriac martyr St Charbel of Antioch. He was a spiritual guide and counselor in the mountains, engaging in manual labour and prayer. For the rest of his 23 years he lived in the hermitage in the Annaya Mountains very much like the Desert Fathers of the past. His life was marked by severe asceticism, and intense devotion to the Eucharist.

He was sought after for healings and blessings by many who had come to know about the miraculous powers he possessed. The grotto where Charbel worshipped the holy



Eucharist was seen by many to be bathed in a strange luminescence, while he was inside. Some historical events such as the 19th century Turkish persecution of the Lebanese monks, leading to armed resistance and martyrdom, are also shown in the film. Charbel prevails on the fighting monks citing the Lord's words not to resist evil with evil. Charbel entered eternity on Christmas day in 1898. ❖

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

Training for South Zone Pastors in Kozhikode

On 04-06 November '26 the South Zone JEPASA (Jesuit Pastoral Services of South Asia) team successfully organized an intensive training programme at Christ Hall, Kozhikode, Kerala, for pastors serving in the South Indian Jesuit Provinces. It was hosted by the Kerala Jesuit Province, marking a significant step toward strengthening pastoral commitment, emotional maturity, and professional competence among Jesuit pastors. The programme brought together 22 pastors, including Fr. Leo Anand, SJ, Conference Secretary for Service of Faith, urban parishes, rural mission stations, retreat ministries, youth apostolates, and social outreach centres from across South India.

families, and individuals experiencing anxiety or grief. Fr Joye James, SJ underscored the importance of self-awareness, child protection, and legal responsibility in pastoral ministry. He challenged the pastors to be vigilant, well-informed, and proactive in ensuring safe pastoral environments, especially for minors and vulnerable individuals. The training programme concluded with a meaningful sharing on expectations and insights. This sharing helped the organizers evaluate the programme's impact and strengthened the sense of fraternity and mutual support among the pastors. Many noted that the training had rekindled their enthusiasm for ministry, offering



Intended to respond to emerging pastoral challenges, the training programme offered a balanced combination of psychological insights, pastoral skills, legal awareness, and collaborative reflection. Sessions were on Transactional Analysis (TA), Pastoral Counselling, Therapeutic Techniques, Guided Breathing, Mindfulness-based-awareness, grounding exercises, and narrative reframing.

Participants thought these techniques would be very useful especially when working with youth,

them new perspectives and practical tools for their day-to-day pastoral responsibilities. Overall, the South Zone JEPASA training programme succeeded in creating a space for learning, reflection, and renewal. It reaffirmed the Jesuit commitment to holistic pastoral service that integrates psychological wisdom, spiritual depth, ethical responsibility, and collaborative mission. ❖

| Xavier Tharamel, SJ (KER)



Book on Spiritual Ecology

Title: *Sacred Ecology: Cosmologies, Ecologies and Rituals in Colonial India (1886-1936)*

Editors: Subhadra M. Channa and Lancy Lobo, SJ

Publisher: Routledge: London and New York

Pages: 115

What inspired you to write this book?

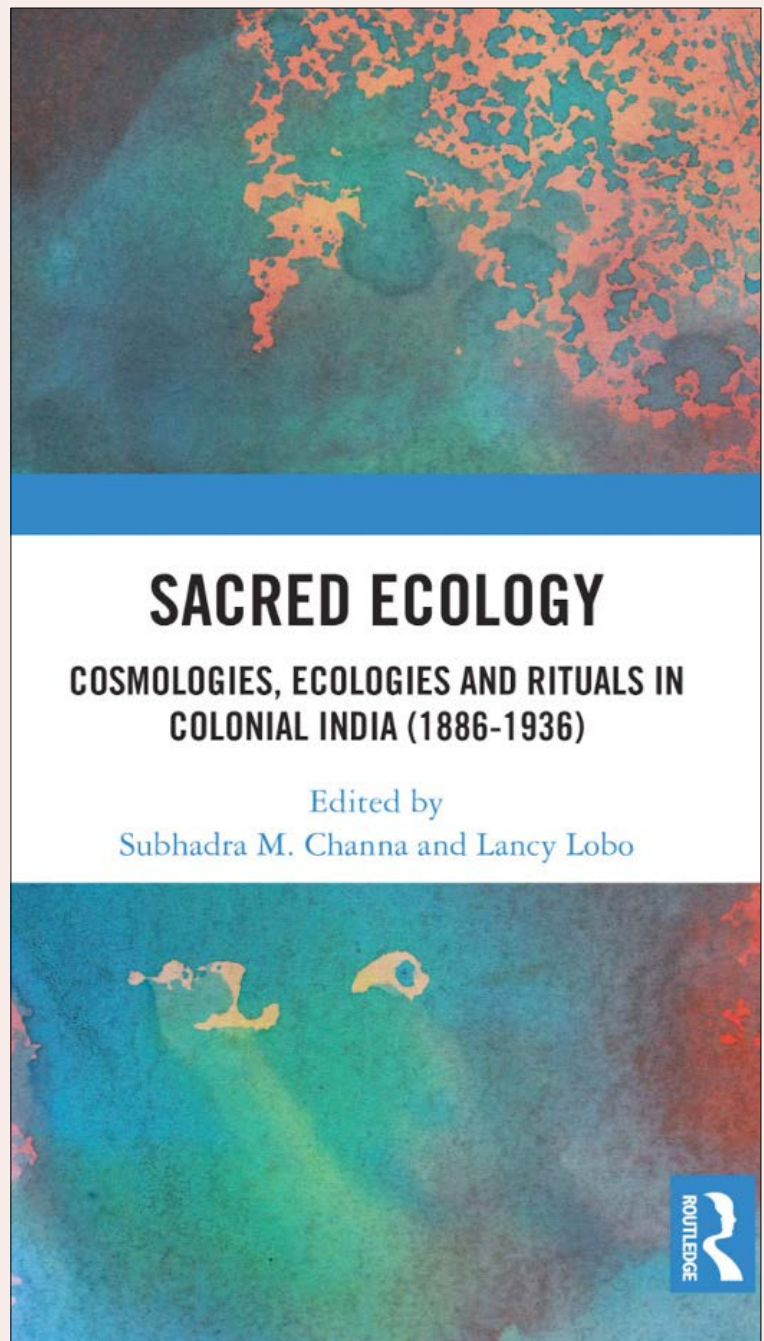
A form of ecological fundamentalism seems to have emerged within our institutions, focusing primarily on planting trees and collecting plastics in the name of protecting ecology and Mother Earth. Well, this book deals with some key issues that are often overlooked but are vital. One must return to our spiritual, philosophical, and epistemological heritage to rediscover the elements of nature, flora, and fauna, and reinstate what was once considered 'superstitious' as a worldview that is no longer so. This book will help the reader rediscover these elements.

What is special or new about this book?

The awareness of the ozone hole in the eighties, created by anthropogenic activities, has engaged human minds to handle the ecological crisis by resorting to a change of mindset towards nature, flora, and fauna. This book critiques the Western scientific epistemology and invites readers to explore their own cultural and religious worldviews. Indian philosophy was based on the unity of humans and nature. Western philosophy looked upon nature as wilderness without humans. What was considered 'superstitious' in non-Western societies needs to be seen through a new lens. This book pits native epistemologies against Western 'scientific' epistemologies. Humans are not the dominant species on Earth; they are one among others. The forces of nature are to be revered and not ignored. They are life-giving and life-sustaining. This book focuses on spiritual ecology.

Who will benefit the most from this book?

This book will be helpful to students, teachers, environmentalists, religionists, Indian culture and society and disciplines of social sciences.



Lancy Lobo, SJ (G.U.) is the Founder-Director of the Centre for Culture and Development in Vadodara, Gujarat, since 2001.



Fr Anthony Jurschik, SJ (BOM)

Fr. Anthony Jurschik, SJ, affectionately known as Antonio among his Spanish companions, and Tony to his Indian brothers, was born in Spain in 1940. Gifted with a generous spirit and a missionary heart, he responded to God's call early in life. In February 1964, when only 24, he left Spain and landed in India - a country that would become Anthony's home for the next 60 years! Drawn deeply to the rural apostolate, he felt called to serve where life and ministry were most challenging. His early years were spent among the farmers of rural Maharashtra, living close to the land and to the people. To serve them better, he learnt to speak Marathi fluently, immersing himself in their language, culture, and struggles.

Antonio loved Jesus deeply — and it was that love that he longed to share through presence, companionship, and compassion. Over the years, with his warm and inclusive heart, he “adopted” the parents and siblings of many Bombay Jesuits! Whenever fellow Jesuits were away for long stretches on mission or study, Fr. Tony would “fill in” for them, visiting their families on birthdays, anniversaries, and other special occasions.

Tony's quiet witness, deep humanity, and steadfast service have left an indelible mark on each heart he touched, and he touched very many!

■ Oswald Gonsalves, SJ



Anthony V. D'Souza, SJ (BOM)

Fr Anthony V. D'Souza, affectionately called Tony V., was a cheerful, generous, and good-natured Jesuit, who spread happiness wherever he went. Be it a province gathering, or a family reunion, or a parish event, Tony was the life of the party, keeping everyone engaged with community songs and group games.

Tony was born on 02 May 1948, in Bandra, Mumbai. He entered the Society of Jesus in 1965. Through his earliest years, Tony's inner life, nourished by the Eucharist, reflected the deep relationship he enjoyed with the Lord. The experience of being accompanied by Jesus taught Tony how to accompany others. Indeed, ‘accompanying others’ could well be the defining characteristic of Tony V's ministry. His early years were spent in schools where

he endeared himself to students and staff alike. Then Tony was called to take up the ministry of early formation, working as Vocation Promoter, Director of Pre-Novices, Novice Master, and Spiritual Director.

This work brought out the best in Tony, who, in the role of friend and mentor, brought out the best in others. Scores of young men fondly recall the personal care Tony showed them as they discerned and then embarked upon their life vocation. Tony's skill at personal accompaniment continued through pastoral work in parishes and the Lay Associations of CLC-India and Caritas Christi. Thank you, Tony, for marking our lives with your joy and compassion!

■ Luke Rodrigues, SJ

Arockiaraj Pushpanathan, SJ (MDU)

“Excellent human Jesuit” is the best way to characterize Fr. Arockiaraj Pushpanathan. He cultivated amiable relationships with the young to old, and from many different social classes and faiths. Being involved in school education for the most part of his life, he loved and cared for his students in an extraordinary way. His former pupils never forgot him and hence stayed in touch with him till his last days.

Fr. Arockiaraj held important responsibilities as Minister at St. Xavier’s College, Palayamkottai and Andhra Loyola College, Vijayawada; as pastor at St. Mary’s Cathedral, Madurai, St. Joseph’s College, Tiruchi, and in the parishes at Batlagundu, Thirumanur and Mullaikudi. He served as a formator and counsellor for candidates and students and as a spiritual guide.

He was the Rector at St. Mary’s, Madurai, Headmaster at St. Mary’s Hr. Sec. School, Madurai and De Britto Hr. Sec. School, Devakottai. Whichever position he held, and wherever he was, he served with joy and happiness, and made others joyful and feel at home in his company. His lively jokes were enjoyed by all.

Always carrying a pen and a piece of paper, he used to write down poems whenever he felt inspired. Being well-prepared to meet God, the Lord made him fearless of departure from this world. At his funeral Mass the famous offertory song in Tamil he had composed - “Kaanikai Thandhom Karthaave” - was sung.

|| Cyril Antony Samy, SJ



Christuraj Arputhasamy, SJ (CCU)

Br. Christuraj, affectionately called Christu, was born on 23 August 1957 in Gingee, Tamil Nadu. After pursuing his training as a welder, he worked in Neyveli and Bombay. In 1981 he joined the Prenovitiate in Kolkata, followed by his novitiate at Dhyan Ashram and pronounced his First Vows there in 1984. After the Juniorate, he did theological studies at XTTI, Patna and pronounced his Final Vows in 1999.

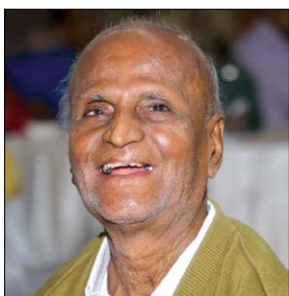
From the beginning of his Jesuit life, Br. Christu offered himself for varied missions with simplicity and dedication, as Minister and Consultor at Prabhu Jisur Girja, Administrator, Sadhana Institute, Lonavla, Maintenance-in-charge at St. Xavier’s Kolkata, Minister and Treasurer

at Satyanilayam, Chennai, Minister and Director of Campus Ministry at Britto House, St. Xavier’s University, Kolkata and as Minister at St. Xavier’s, Burdwan. He carried out his duties quietly, with dedication and availability.

He lived a simple life, content with little, and without seeking any recognition. He was a silent worker, soft-spoken but firm in his convictions. He was a man who stood with the poor and defended the dignity of the workers. Br. Christu bore his sufferings with patience and dignity. On 21 September 2025 he passed away peacefully at Belle Vue Hospital, Kolkata, at the age of 68.

|| Sunny, SJ





Dominic Devraj, SJ (BOM)

Fr Dominic Devraj, SJ, was born in 1941 in Mahim, Bombay. He entered the Society of Jesus on 20 June 1965 in Vinayalaya, and was ordained on 03 April 1976 at St Peter's Church, Bandra, Mumbai.

Fr Dominic was a silent worker. By nature, he was quiet, unassuming in his ways, yet always dedicated to the task assigned to him. He worked in various district centres of the Bombay Province – Shirpur, Tara, Manickpur, Manmad, Nashik, Ashagad, etc. His love for the poorest endeared him to many. He had a way with simple tribal people. He loved them with a sincere love and served them wholeheartedly. At Seva Niketan he dipped into the waters of Jesuit spirituality and shared its fruits with the CLCers and other laity. In his short stint as Chaplain at Holy Spirit hospital, Andheri, he spent time

visiting the sick, and patiently listening to them.

Fr Dominic was faithful in his spiritual life. Even in the last years of his life, which he spent in the Jesuit infirmary at Vinayalaya, he was regular for Mass and rosary, and participated with devotion. This outward act revealed an inner reverence for what the Lord had done for him in his long life as a Jesuit.

Fr Dominic also valued family. And his family members maintained a close bond with him till the very end. His own sister, Sr Pushpa, of the Helpers of Mary, would visit him unfailingly, and be his strength and confidante. Fr Dominic now rests with the Lord he loved. May he enjoy eternal peace!

┆ Learoy Rodrigues, SJ



Kustas Lima, SJ (GOA)

Fr. Kustas Lima, the beloved Parish Priest of St. Anthony Church, Gadhinglaj, was called to his eternal rest on 7 November 2025, at the age of 50. Affectionately known as the “ever-young priest,” Fr. Kustas was admired for his humility, simplicity, and closeness to his people. For 26 years as a Jesuit, he lived the Ignatian spirit with zeal - a man who sought to “enkindle other fires.”

Deeply rooted in Christ, he was a man of prayer, compassion, and conviction. His love for the Eucharist was evident in his thoughtful and creative homilies, which touched many hearts. Blending faith and action, he lived as a true shepherd who “smelled of the sheep.” He served in several mission stations of the Goa Province with generosity and dedication.

Since his appointment as Parish Priest of St. Anthony Church in 2023, he led his community with gentle strength, inspiring especially the youth through his simplicity, faith, and personal care. Knowing many languages, he connected easily with people of all backgrounds, truly a man for others.

Though we grieve his sudden loss, we celebrate a life lived in faith, love, and service. His legacy of courage, humility, and compassion will remain in the hearts of all who knew him. May his soul rest in peace, and may we continue to draw inspiration from his life and witness!

┆ Joe Nazareth, SJ





Time to begin again and to act in bold new ways

As I lay in that little hospital in Kodaikanal, the well-known hill resort in the southern State of Tamil Nadu, India, completely reliant on the oxygen being delivered through a face mask, and the expertise of the medical staff, I saw obesity had a huge and deleterious bearing on recovery. That was probably a disruptive, “cannonball moment.” Faced with serious post-Covid complications in my health, I had to get my weight under control. It meant I needed to control my diet.

Slowly, with God’s help, I have started correcting some of the imbalances associated with my eating. My challenge this New Year is to become less focused on food and more focused on God’s loving presence in my life.

Jesuits and all who follow the Ignatian spirituality focus on deepening their relationship with God, practicing ongoing conversion, and striving to “see all things new in Christ” through discernment. St. Ignatius calls us to a spirit of detachment – to free ourselves from those things that may have taken on addictive qualities in our lives. In my case the spirit of detachment involves food. This means continuous self-reflection on what I eat and its effects. My health issues are not everyone’s. So everyone is called to examine their addictions and to resolve to be freed from them.

Ignatian examination of consciousness offers concrete steps for identifying our attachments. Each evening, I now ask: What drew me toward or away from God today? When did I feel most free, most myself? When did I act from compulsion rather than choice? This daily practice reveals patterns; whether around food, work, comfort, or control, that may have quietly assumed unhealthy prominence in our lives.

The paradox of Ignatian spirituality is that personal detachment increases our availability for service. As I work toward healthier relationship with food and my body, I discover greater energy for the marginalised communities I serve. Physical wellness becomes not

self-indulgence but stewardship; caring for the vessel through which God’s love flows to others. How can we walk with the excluded, if we are imprisoned by our own compulsions?

The coming year offers grace-filled opportunities for what Ignatius called ‘beginning again.’ My slow recovery in Kodaikanal taught me that transformation happens through small, daily choices, empowered by



Picture courtesy: turuhi.com

divine assistance. In 2026, may we each identify our particular attachment that limits our freedom and apostolic effectiveness! It may be food, technology, approval, or comfort, but God invites us to “taste and see” the freedom found in detachment. This calls for daily conversion - allowing God to make all things new through our willingness to begin again each day.

May the coming New Year see us experiencing a new spiritual conversion and embracing God’s invitation to act in bold new ways for justice and peace, for showing the path to God, walking with the excluded, journeying with youth, and caring for our planet! May 2026 be the year we discover that what we thought we needed was actually preventing us from receiving what God longs to give us! ❖

Rev. Dr. Meath Conlan is a Counsellor and Adult Educator. An Australian, he travels frequently to India. He can be contacted at meathconlan@icloud.com.



"I can't remember any of my past or present sins as I have Alzheimer's. Don't give me any advice or penance, just absolve me, Father."



"It is Jesus who is taking me away from this parish so that I work somewhere else."

Choir sings: "What a friend we have in Jesus".



"It took forever to reach here because we had to cross the desert. Let's help build a road, so next time we come by car."

"Or how about a helipad?"



"When he grows up, make sure you send him to a good Jesuit school."

Source: K.P. Joseph, SJ/ Xavier Antony, SJ

JESUIT HUMOUR

"I am looking for..."

A Portuguese Brother, who was a good tailor, was at De Nobili, Pune. He didn't know English well, so he kept trying to learn the language. One day he came to the library, looking for a book. Someone, trying to help, asked him, "Brother, what are you looking for?" The Brother replied, "I am looking for a copy of the circumcised Oxford Dictionary!"

The one who tried to help him couldn't help laughing when he understood he was asking for 'Concise Oxford Dictionary.'





Begin the year in God's name!

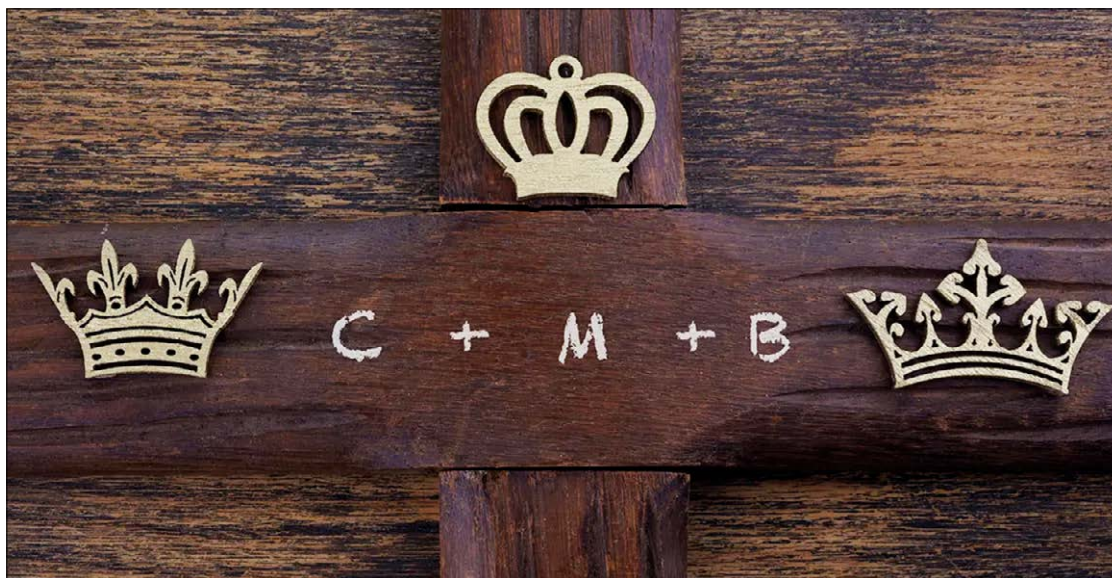
We are beginning a new year in secular life, not a new Church year. But the earthly year, everyday life, the life of work and worry, is, of course, the field in which our salvation has to be worked out in God's sight. And so we have every reason to begin this year too in God's name. Let us in God's name then begin once more, go on once more, honestly and unwearied. Time presses. One can fall into despair or melancholy when one realizes on New Year's Eve that yet another part of one's earthly life is irrevocably past. But time presses on towards God and eternity, not towards the past and destruction. And so — in God's name!

There is a pious custom of writing C+M+B [the names of the Three Wise Men] above the doors at Epiphany. Let us inscribe above the gate of the New Year the name of God, the name of God in whom is our help, the name of Jesus. Jesus means: Yahweh helps. Yahweh was the proper name of the God of the Old Testament nation of the Covenant. That we can give God a name, God the nameless and incomprehensible, whom man of himself ultimately knows only as remote and obscure and incomprehensible, is due to the fact that he made himself known in the history of his own action and speech. We can perceive from the way in which he acts how he really wills to be in our regard.

All the experiences which man has had with the living God in his action in us are summed up in the "name" of his God. Only a proper name, never a merely abstract general concept, comprises the

full, indivisible and irreducible totality of what can be experienced of a living person through lasting relations with them. And Jesus as a proper name tells us how Yahweh willed to be in our regard: close, loving, helpful, faithful to the end. In Jesus and by him we know what we have in God. Otherwise, we do not. He is the Word of the Father, in whom God expresses himself to the world as the word of mercy.

Consequently, if we wish to say who our God is, we must say "Jesus." If we are to forget this Word, God would disappear for us into the dark



Pic courtesy: wp.en.alteia.org

inaccessibility of an incomprehensible "ground of the world." But we Christians know the definitive name of God: Jesus. For that is the name which that Child, who is God, received.

Let us give this name to the coming year. Let us sign the Cross of this Jesus on our forehead, mind and heart. Let us say with relief: our help is in the name of the Lord! And then stoutheartedly let us cross the threshold of the New Year. If his name shines above it, even its darkest hour will be an hour of the year of the Lord and of his salvation. ❖

(Courtesy: <https://courage.org.sg>)

WELL SAID

*Every day is a fresh start,
a blank canvas to paint upon.*
- Craig Sager

Pic courtesy: pinterest.com