



NEW LEAF

Sprouting Thoughts of Jamshedpur Scholastics

Vol.02, May 2019

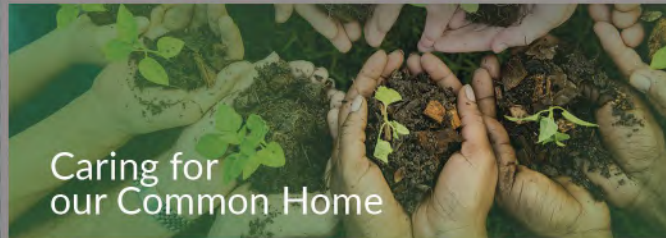
The Jesuit Priest Today



Promoting Discernment
and the Spiritual Exercises



Walking with
the Excluded



Caring for
our Common Home



Journeying
with Youth

Message from Fr Provincial



Message

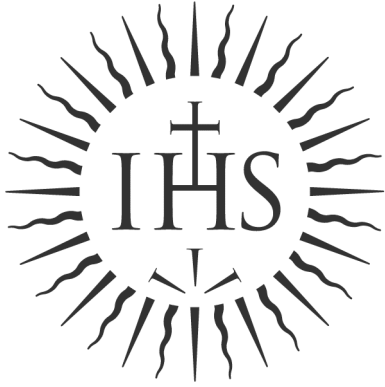
The Joy and Challenges of Priesthood!

The life of a Religious and a Priest is a call from God, to be in the footsteps of Jesus Christ and sharing the mission of God. At different times of biblical history, he called prophets, kings and priest to lead His people in the path light and at the same time, to be constantly in communion with the divine and experience the unity and joy of creation. While the call has unlimited scope, it has its own challenges. Throughout the history we see distortions, caused by relationship of persons with the divine, other human persons and with the nature. The effect of selfishness and jealousy was seen in violence and divisions. This has also adversely affected peace and harmony in communities and societies.

Jesus as a Sent One to do God's mission, took up the mission as a King, a Prophet and a Priest. Important aspect of His mission was to spread the joy and communicate love through the Good News, by being one of humanity, sharing the life of people, their joys and sorrows. His commitment went to the extent of offering Himself as a sacrifice – an example of being a priest of the highest order - in order to establish the peace and harmony among human communities and restore the order of creation. Today the world needs healing in every sense. As Pope Francis said in his address in Chili, “in the fragmented world in which we live, a world that can make us withdrawn, we are challenged to become builders and prophets of community. Fragmentation or isolation are not things that just happen “out there”... divisions, wars and isolation are found within our communities.” Highlighting the goal of the mission the Pope says, Jesus sends us out to build communion and unity. Therefore, our call invites us to rise beyond ourselves and gaze at the world with the eyes of Trinity, which invites us for a response. In the footsteps of Jesus and our First Fathers, our commitments has to be passionate and our approach has to be compassionate.

Today the priests' vocation is not without temptations. We are burdened by our ambitions and vested interests. One of the major temptations is clericalism, which gives rise to many other crimes, as has been emphasized by the Pope in his letter of 20 August, 2018 to the whole Catholic community. In addressing the seminarians from the Sicilian coastal city of Agrigento on November 24, the pope told them, “the priests must never forget their roots and that God chose them from among their people to serve. Clericalism, my dear ones, is our ugliest perversion. The Lord wants you to be shepherds; shepherds of the people, not clerics of the state.” Let us try to understand the meaning and implication of being a priest in today's world. Let us rise above our self-centered interests and ourselves, so that we have the clarity of vision and mission.

George Fernandes, SJ
Provincial

Message

MAGIS

Message from Fr PCF

Our Scholastics are back once again with their creative thinking. This time they have taken the theme, “Jesuit Priest Today”. The choice of the theme itself speaks of the aspirations, anxieties and desires of our men and their search for relevance as future priests. Looking at the theme a question arises in the mind, ‘Is priesthood different for Jesuits?’ We know that for Fr. Ignatius and Companions priesthood was not an end in itself but it was a means of serving God in the Church. They saw priesthood giving them greater opportunities to serve God and His people better. Ministerial priesthood lived in imitation of Christ, they thought, is the best way of proclaiming the Gospel in this world. It is in spite of the ordinary understanding of priesthood in Ignatius’ time and in the present time. A priesthood tied to the sacrifice of the Mass is still rather dominant in the Catholic imagination. “Vatican II brought back the true significance of what is really priesthood: in the New Covenant there is a single priest, Christ, and a single priesthood, which is that of Christ. In the Church, the bishop and the priests exercise the ministerial mission of the sole mediation of Christ. Priesthood in the sense that it is a gift from God, whilst all the baptized participate existentially in the one priesthood of Christ, by the grace which makes them able to offer themselves to God as a spiritual sacrifice.”

For Ignatius and his companions it is not merely offering Eucharist but living and becoming Eucharist was the meaning of priesthood. They perceived the real meaning of being a priest in Jesus, He became the sacrifice as He offered the sacrifice.

I congratulate our scholastics for the deep and profound insights they have brought out and the hard work they have put in to bring out the second issue of the “New Leaf”.

Fr Joseph kalathoor SJ
PCF

From the Editor's Desk

JESUITAS

GC 32 states: "What is it to be a Jesuit? It is to know that one is a sinner, yet called to be a companion of Jesus." [Decree 2, 1] Dear reader, we the Scholastics of Jamshedpur have come up with a new topic for our volume II of New Leaf - 'The Jesuit Priest Today'. In our first volume 'In the footsteps of Jesus' we invited all the readers to reflect upon the call to religious vocation, particularly to our vocation to the Society of Jesus. I am sure you benefited from it.

Late Rev Fr Carl L Dincher, our Jamshedpur Jesuit in his homilies kept on repeating a word JESUITAS, 'LIKE JESUS'. Who is a Jesuit then? Is he someone who is like Jesus, who is also a fellow human being with real qualities of head and heart, with feelings and emotions? The answer is a definite "YES". According to Dincher, a man is born with an ordinary human face in a family known for its religious faith, hope and charity and that makes him identified as JESUITAS.

It is true that the very word Jesuit is known all over the world. People of faith see him as a man of prayer, a committed person, a visionary and a missionary ever ready to go to the frontiers, and so on. And the Society of Jesus expects asks all her priests to replicate in their lives these qualities that will distinguish them wherever they are and wherever they are sent to serve. As for me, I was fortunate enough to watch closely the actions of several Jesuit stalwarts. For instance, watching Fr Dincher's smiling presence in the Muslim Bastis of Mango made a great change not only in the lives of those people but also in mine, leading to Ignatian indifference. It is common knowledge that today this indifference has helped many a Jesuit to take the courageous step of promoting discernment in one's own life and in the lives of others, enabling the individual Jesuits to walk with the excluded, care for our common home and journey with the youth.

One of the ancient philosophers Heraclitus said, "You cannot step in the same river twice, for other waters are continually flowing on." Similarly the topic, 'The Jesuit Priest Today' will give the male reader a similar flow to enrich his call for priesthood and religious life. So much so, one can see that the Jesuit priest today is destined for a greater and tougher mission. Accepting this call and fulfilling it will demand that the Jesuit priest embraces his priestly call with love and joyfulness so that he may work hard to transform this world in such a way as to ensure that all individuals will hope for life in a better tomorrow.

Dear reader, I personally take this opportunity to express my gratitude to the ones who made this New Leaf, volume- II possible. Sincere thanks to Fr. George Fernandes, our Provincial, and Fr. K.M. Joseph, our Province Coordinator for Formation for their support and encouragement. With grateful heart I also thank our proof readers for their patience in going through the works of our scholastics to accompany them in improving their writing skills. I also acknowledge the work of the members of the "New Leaf" Editorial Team in giving it a final shape. Finally, a "Big Thank you" to all the budding authors who have tried their writing skills in contributing to New Leaf.



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NEW LEAF-2019**Jesuit Priests**

General Congregation 34 expresses well how we choose our mission:

“Since the foundations of the Society, Jesuits have exercised their ministry most particularly where needs are greatest, where there are not others to minister to these needs, and where the most universal good may be found. [...]

This spirit continues to shape what Jesuits do as priests: their ministry is particularly directed towards those who have not heard the Gospel, those who are at the margins of the Church or society, those who have been denied their dignity, those who are voiceless and powerless, those weak in faith or alienated from it, those whose values are undermined by contemporary culture, those whose needs are greater than they can bear”.

(GC34, Decree 6, 11-12)

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“Come if serving Christ is at the very centre of your life”(Fr Pedro Arrupe)

Who is a priest?

Article

When someone asks us, “Who is a priest?”, surely we remember the many priests we have encountered in our lives since childhood: pious, holy, learned and knowledgeable persons who celebrate Mass and listen to confessions; persons who are free from all worries and difficulties of the world, persons living in their own peaceful world; in a word, lucky men! I am not generalizing this experience for everyone. I would venture to think that at least some among us might have had a similar experience. Now let us get back to the question: “Who is a priest?”

In very general terms, a priest is an ordinary man like any other normal human being, a man with a body and feelings. He is not someone who has descended from heaven.

He is born here on earth as any other human being.

Naturally, human strengths and weaknesses are part and parcel of his nature. It is this human being who has heard a call from God to serve Him as one of His chosen few, a priest. Many times we have heard that a priest is a mediator and a link between God and His people. To be worthy of such a position,

one needs first to be a man of faith and a man of prayer. This means that he needs to have had a God-experience which he will be able to share with others. Only then can he lead others also to have such God-experience which, in turn, will lead people to God. This explanation has its own weight. Though it looks very theoretical, it has its own meaning, importance and force.

Now, how do we understand this “priesthood” or “a priest” in the Catholic Church? Though everyone who gets baptised becomes a member of universal/common priesthood, only a few are called upon to participate in the sacred/ministerial priesthood of Jesus Christ. The letter to the Hebrews mentions that a priest is one who “has been taken out of mankind and is appointed to act for men in their relations with God, to offer gifts and sacrifices

for sins...” (Heb 5:1). Vatican II has emphasized this point: “The ministerial priest, with the sacred power of which he is invested, forms and governs the priestly people, makes the Eucharistic sacrifice in the role of Christ and offers it to God in the name of the whole people; the faithful, by virtue of their royal priesthood, contribute to the offering of the Eucharist and exercise their priesthood by receiving the sacraments, with prayer and thanksgiving, with the witness of a holy life.” (The Church, 10)

Is this all what a priest is expected to do? Not at all. A priest has one more big responsibility: it is to make his people encounter that God is love. As Patricia Lamoureux and Paul J. Wadell point out,

“the central task of the Christian moral life is to learn the art of love. We as Christians believe that God is love and God manifested this love when He created us in his image and likeness. He created us out of love. Thus we are called to love and to live in love. This love can be manifested only in and through relationships. That’s why one of the greatest

commandments given by Jesus himself is to love God and to love neighbors as one loves himself or herself. A priest is the one who tells us how to love God and our neighbors by breaking the word of God from the Gospels and Scriptures. Through the sacrament of reconciliation a priest rejoins us with God’s love. Thus the biggest task of a priest is to make all realize that God is love and He loves us abundantly.” (The Christian Moral Life, p.180)



Basil Sanga is a third year Theologian at Collegio Internazionale Del Gesu, Gregorian; Rome.

Why do I choose to become a Jesuit Priest?

“With God all things are possible” (Matthew 19:26). This is what I realized during my vocation camp when a vocation promoter straight away asked me, “Why do you choose to become a Jesuit Priest?” I answered, “I want to serve God.” I did not quite believe it was a convincing answer and so I doubted if I would be selected to enter the Pre-novitiate. I was delighted when I got the news of my selection. As a Jesuit scholastic, I have some knowledge about the Society and its mission. I am still a bud yet to bloom in the Society. I have a long journey ahead. I have many things to learn. Still I would try to articulate why I chose to become a Jesuit priest.

God created the world and its beautiful nature. Everything in the world is created for a purpose. God created human beings in His image and likeness. Human being is exceptional as he has responsibility over God’s creation. My privilege as a human being is to praise, reverence and serve my Creator.

God chose human beings as His followers. He blessed them with His call to be His followers. God says, “I have called you by your name, you are mine...I will be with you...whom I have created for my glory” (Is 43:1, 2, 7).

Through these words God invites all human beings and missions them to glorify His name.

Through Ignatius, God introduced a religious group, the Society of Jesus. Spiritual Exercises and the Society’s Constitutions became the means for the sons of Ignatius to praise, reverence and glorify God. The Spiritual Exercises, the Constitutions of the Society, the Autobiography of St Ignatius form the basic guidelines for the members of the Society of Jesus.

Jesuits are trained in the Spiritual Exercises which invite the sons of St Ignatius to follow closely

the footprints of Jesus. One such exercise is the contemplation on the Incarnation. This exercise enlightens everyone on the purpose of incarnation and also reveals that all human beings are the beneficiaries of the Incarnation.

Spiritual Exercises propose the values of Jesus. They strengthen all Jesuits to commit themselves to work for the glory of God and service of their fellow human beings. They give the power to live a sacrificial life. They are ready to serve God not counting the cost.

Jesuits are essentially men on a mission. Their mission is the service of faith and promotion of justice. The proclamation of the Gospel, evangelization and reconciliation are integral dimensions of their mission. They always try their best to do “magis” in fulfilling God’s plan and purpose for the world.

Jesuits are known for their high quality in teaching and leadership. Whenever and wherever called upon, they are ready to render selfless service to the needy. They are ready to go to the frontiers where others cannot or do not want to go. They are

motivated by the example of Jesus on the cross where he offered the ultimate sacrifice.

That is the kind of love all human beings long for. True love is sacrifice. Jesuit wants to be faithful shepherds and heroic leaders. I was and am inspired by their active and sacrificial life. And these have greatly attracted me to become a Jesuit Priest.



Vikram Kisku is doing his Juniorate at Vidyanketan, Trivandram, Kerala.

Every leader of a great revolution is a fanatic and a Jesuit.

-Gertrude Atherton

The Jesuit Priests of Today

Article

“You did not choose me, no, I chose you; and I commissioned you to go out and to bear fruit, fruit that will last” (John 15:16).

The Society of Jesus has brought great changes in the Church by responding to God’s call and by being rooted in the love of Jesus. It has a long formation programmed where its members develop themselves spiritually, mentally and intellectually. The Jesuit priests of today must centre their lives in Christ because vocation is a precious gift from him to each and every priest. Through the gifts of the Holy Spirit, a priest builds up the Church and guides his people to enter into the kingdom of God. Jesuit priests receive a special commission or authority through which the Society is able to fully exercise the specifically Jesuit apostolic mission of “serving the Lord alone and the Church, His Spouse, under the Roman Pontiff, the Vicar of Christ on earth.”

Jesuit priesthood is a gift from God for universal mission and, wherever the Society wants its priest to work in any corner of the world, the Jesuit expresses his readiness to be sent for the greater glory of God and the help of souls. St Ignatius and his companions placed themselves at the feet of the Pope for their priestly ministry because the Pope knew where there was greater need of such people for mission. While preaching the good news and baptizing people, the apostles had to go through many trials and persecutions. In the same way, a Jesuit priest is and must be

ready to suffer for Christ in the fulfillment of his mission. A monk says, “We are born to comfort the afflicted and to share in the joys and struggles of people and thus to accompany them in their daily lives.” The Jesuits priests of today try to empty themselves of their self-love, self-will and self-interest in their life and mission because they are influenced by the Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius of Loyola.

A Jesuit priest is expected to be a frontier person, someone who is expected to go to such places where no one else wants to go, and there he helps people through different types of ministries. This is a great work for the Church. And this is what St

Ignatius wants his men to do, to risk their lives for difficult missions and to open new ways of evangelizing and expanding the Church. Ignatius wants all his men to use the principle of ‘Tantum Quantum’ because all the gifts that a Jesuit has received are from God and he needs to use those gifts to help others to attain salvation. This is how the Jesuit priests of

today try to bring a lot of happiness and joy to the people by sharing their talents, time and resources with them and thus prove themselves to be truly ‘Friends in the Lord.’



Bikant Kullu is a second year Novice in Jesu Bhavan, Jamshedpur.

Jesuits, we believe an education is more than “book learning.” We follow the Jesuit ideal of forming the whole person: the mind, the heart, the body and the spirit.

The Jesuit priest in today's Church

“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; before you came to birth I consecrated you; I have appointed you as prophet to the nations” (Jer 1: 5). Jeremiah says, “Your words oh Lord are like sweet honey to my mouth and your name is like a sweet melody.” These words of Jeremiah become true only when we listen to the call of our beloved Christ and follow him. We know that we are called for a particular purpose and we are chosen for a cause and yet we fail to fulfill the purpose for which we are called.

All of us know what it means to be called Jesuits (Companions of Jesus Christ), but often we fail to live up to the name in our dealings. Today we face this challenge all the more because our world is changing much faster than we are. We always talk about our past and we say that Jesuits are competent and intelligent; but what about the present scenario? How far are we trying to prove these words in our lives? Are we trying our very best to follow the same roots of Ignatian Spirituality? How will I, how will we, respond to the question if we are living up to Jesuit identity today?

We should always keep in mind that we have to represent Christ wherever we go. Our inspiration has to come from our Lord. Only then will

our works produce the fruits that are pleasing to God. These days we seem to spend a lot of time rationalizing things rather than listening to the promptings of the Lord. True, reasoning is good in itself but along with it we need divine help to carry forward his mission; otherwise it may become our own mission and will not bear any fruit.

A New Way of being a Jesuit Pastor

A big question looms before us: “How am I as a pastor different from other pastors or am I merely following the crowd? Most of the time we fall into the temptations of having things and accumulating more things for us, and we may defend our actions saying, “It is for the mission.” Many a time we are deviated and distracted because of external factors like electronic gadgets or even persons. Quiet often we tend to forget the purpose of our very call that we have been set apart for the mission of Christ. So much so we need to reexamine our life as priests. A new way of being a Jesuit pastor will only begin when each one of us is convinced of our call to be a member of the Society of Jesus – be it as in charge of an educational institution or a parish or a social service centre.

Vowed Life

If we, as Jesuits, want to make some difference in the world, then first we need to bring about a difference in our own personal life. We are men vowed to God and we live our life entirely for God.

But, how far are we living this out? We need to question our religious life again and again. Just as Yahweh made the nomads of Israel into a people, the Lord God has made us from



almost nothing into something; He has made us to be fitting instruments in His vineyard. And this is why we need to give ourselves entirely to Him. We need a heart which is ready to be continuously formed and molded according to the will of God. If we do not do that, our vows will become a burden and not a sweet yoke which the Lord has placed on our shoulders. On the other hand, if we

continue to be conscious of our call and keep on loving it, then our vows will become meaningful and sweet to relish. We must admit that, as humans, we have our own drawbacks; some of us may find difficulty with Obedience, some with Poverty, and some others with Chastity. All these difficulties will disappear if we keep in mind that it is Jesus who has called us and He has not made a mistake in His choice; it is only we who should try to be as faithful to Him as is humanly possible.

Jesuits: Men for Others

When we survey the life of Ignatius, we find that he was a man for others. He was convinced that he was called to be a man for others. For this reason he used all his strength and energy to do whatever was possible for others. To be men for others, we need to have a humble heart to serve others as Ignatius did. Ignatius humbled himself like a servant and worked for the sick, the unwanted, the widows and prostitutes. Often we mistakenly think that when we serve others our image will go down. We are mistaken. If we really want to be men for others, then we need to humble ourselves like Christ who set aside his divinity and humbled himself to become one of us. If we try to do that, we will find true joy of being religious. There are many ways of being men for others; it may be through conversation, through showing compassion to others, through lending a helping hand to those in need, through sharing of our talents and knowledge with others

and the like. Pope Francis says that religious are men and women for others.

Men with Competence

People in general know us to be men of intellectual caliber. The knowledge we acquire makes us become more and more aware of the needs of the time. The knowledge which we get makes us see the urgent needs of the people around us. This knowledge that we get is not for ourselves but it is for others. To be men of competence we need to update ourselves with the knowledge of the happenings around the world. This will make us act prudently where our help should go. We cannot forget that the knowledge we have is to be shared with others, especially the poor, the marginalized and the neglected and unwanted in society. Only by doing so can we become truly men for others. One may do many things, but if one does not practice what one says, then there is no value to the words which proceed from the mouth. We too talk a lot about many things and they are very good. But if we can put them into practice, then they become really great. And it is thus that we can make a difference in being Jesuits in the Church.



Swethan is doing his first year College studies at St Aloysius College, Mangalore.

Becoming a Jesuit

The Society of Jesus is a community of priests and brothers dedicated to the service of God and the Church for the betterment of the world around us. Whatever our ministry — from university to parish to the service of the poor and refugees, our work is always for the glory of God and the help and salvation of souls.

As Jesuits and friends in mission, we invite you to become part of our story. In the words of Fr Pedro Arrupe:

“Come if serving Christ is at the very centre of your life.
Come if you have broad and sufficiently strong shoulders.
Come if you have an open spirit, a reasonably open mind
and a heart larger than the world.

Come if you know how to tell a joke and can laugh with others and...
on occasions you can laugh at yourself.”

The First Jesuit Pope in Church

Article

Jesuits are essentially men on a mission. "Though we are sinners, we are yet called to be companions of Jesus" (GC 32). Ignatius insists that to follow Jesus is to become like him. We do this in the Society by entering into the Society's traditions and "Our way of proceeding." This is the strong pillar on which we build our life from the novitiate onwards.

Jesuits are known as servants of Christ in their apostolic mission in the Church - to be at the service of the people of God. In other words, the mission of the Society of Jesus is service of faith and proclamation of the Gospel.

The heroic life of Ignatius began when the Church was decadent and needed real reform. Ignatius along with his six companions formed a universal companionship. Their togetherness helped them to defend the Church against all the evils from within and from without. From Ignatius onwards till today, the Society of Jesus has been and is vibrant in her mission. It is very effective in teaching and preaching the word of God across the globe. Jesuit priests try to root themselves

in the culture of the people they serve, whether they are urban or rural, especially if they belong to the socio-economically marginalized groups. They are vigorously seeking the integration of lifestyle, human development, spiritual growth and intellectual growth of the people. They are selfless in their mission work. They are ever ready to reach out to the poor with much

zest and zeal. They are continually being challenged to work towards bringing about peace and justice among people.

In the recent past, many Jesuit priests were behind the renewal of the Church during the second Vatican Council as experts. Their participation was vibrant and valuable. Frs Henri de Lubac, Karl Rahner and John Courtney Murray and other Jesuits from around the world worked hard to put into practice the Council's teaching with good results.

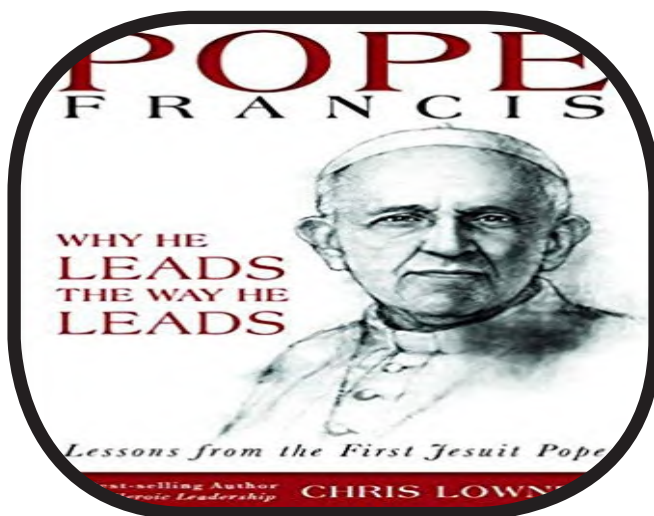
After John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI, Jesuits

are privileged to have Pope Francis, the first Jesuit Pope. Since the Church always stands in need of reform and renewal, Pope Francis has taken a number of initiatives to correct the mistakes of the Church as a whole and the Roman Curia in particular. After Vatican II, there has been a growing awareness of the identity and mission of the laity in the Church. And Jesuits engage themselves in promoting leadership of the laity in the Church.

In the Church there has been history of sexual abuses of minors and vulnerable persons. In many places the bishops in charge have covered up such instances in order to preserve the good name of the Church. Unfortunately, they have not taken the trouble to help the victims in such cases. Some of these were not brought into light. Quite a few Bishops tried to cover them up to protect the good name of the Church. But now such cases have come up in the open and so the Catholic Church is facing a big crisis. There have been people not only accusing the Church but also even the Pope himself.

There is this felt need that the victims of sexual abuse need to re-organize their broken lives. Pope Francis is setting up mechanisms and noted that there will be zero tolerance regarding abuse of minors and vulnerable persons. All good people know that Pope Francis is sincere in renewing the Church by correcting the mistakes of the past and establishing credibility of the Church both within and without.

Jesuits who are called upon to make their Final Vows take a special vow to obey the Holy Father regarding the mission of the Church. At the moment, defending the Church and the Pope himself against all forms of unfair attacks has become an important service of the Society of Jesus. Now is time to rise up as one body of priests of the Society to heal the wounds of the past and to make the Church a true sign of unity, love and service. Rise up, all fellow Jesuits!



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The Jesuit Priest is a pilgrim

Article

“What is it to be a Jesuit? It is to know that one is a sinner, yet called to be a companion of Jesus as Ignatius was.”(GC 32, Decree1) It is to know that one bears the name of Jesus and is called to mirror Jesus and be compassionate and loving like Jesus. A Jesuit priest is a pilgrim, who carries God in his heart and bears heaven with him, in whatever he does and wherever he goes. It is to know that one has to give and not count the cost, fight and not heed the wounds, toil and not seek for rest, labor and not seek reward. In other words, he lives out St Ignatius’s prayer for Generosity. “Act as if everything depended on you, Trust as if everything depended on God”.

To this day, the teaching of St Ignatius is applicable not only for the religious but also for the lay people. He trusts in Jesus because he is aware that “He who trusts his own promptings is a fool, he whose ways are wise will be safe” (Prov 28:26). Jesus’ life is an inspiration for all the Jesuits especially priests of today. Today’s Jesuit priest shares Jesus’ mission and always bears in his mind that Jesus is the way, the life and the truth. He always does more than what he is asked of and goes even beyond himself, whatever be the field be it pastoral, social, educational or in the area of formation. “The lips of the priest ought to safeguard knowledge; his mouth is where instruction should be sought, since he is the messenger of Yahweh Sabaoth” (Malachi 2:7).

Driven by the experience of Jesus and the charism of the Society, the Jesuit priest of today offers himself totally to the service of the poor, the sinners and the abandoned. In doing so, he experiences the healing force in his own life. He is ever joyful in his call to bring about a change

and challenge in this sinful world. He is able to do so because of the deep and unconditional love of Jesus. It is edifying that the whole world admires tremendously these selfless missions that God does, in and through His priest. It is a gift from the almighty to able to render His service to His people. While he preaches the gospel in and through his very life to all kinds of people in the world, he empathizes with them and reaches out to the marginalized, discriminated people and the victims of injustice and violence.

Living in a sophisticated and advanced world, the Jesuit priest may give in to complacency and live in a comfort zone and forget who he is and what he is expected to do. He cannot resist the social media in his life. Somehow he falls a prey to temptations coming from the mobile and computer. Gradually the social media become an obstacle to him from getting involved in the lives of others. He must refrain from imitating the world because the satisfaction that the world offers is only skin-deep. He must always imitate Jesus alone because only His love can satisfy his heart and give meaning to his life.

The Jesuit priest constantly asks himself “What have I done for Christ? What am I doing for Christ? What ought I do for Christ?” He is ever growing in his love for Jesus and the Church and becoming more and more compassionate and loving like Jesus.



Arun Prasath is doing his second year College studies at St Xavier’s College, Ahmedabad.

Jesuit Brothers

Jesuit Brothers form an integral part of the Society of Jesus:

“Brothers in the Society today engage fully in a wide variety of ministries and hold positions of leadership in them. They remind us...of the depth of consecration, the loving, joyful dedication of one’s whole self to the Lord in the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience.”

(Letter of Fr Arturo Sosa, 31st October 2017)

The Servant Priest today

Article

Does life has a purpose? This question, I hope, has crossed our minds at least once in our life time. I have just crossed my teen age and, as a teenager, I had this question haunting me quite often. And I have frequently wondered about the purpose of my life, especially when I had to discern about offering my life to God to be His servant.

I believe that today a life spent in service is a fruitful life. A purposeless life is a life that is lost. The Lord has called each one of us from birth for a specific purpose. Every minute of Jesus' ministry on earth was spent in the service of fellow humans. And the way Jesus lived makes clear the duty and privilege that we have to serve our sisters and brothers. Today people are charting their own individual paths. As a result, the temptation is to gradually forget that the Lord needs us. Our

first preference is to fulfil our personal plans and ambitions and so we become slack or even fail in our efforts to fulfil the mission entrusted to us. Looking at the world's reality today, one cannot but wonder if life's purposes have not been narrowed down to mere pleasure and wealth. Overcome by greed, human

society seems to have "lost" touch with life's true purpose. What about us? Each one of us is called to be a servant and not a comfort seeker. We are not expected to be great prophets or geniuses but true servants of the Master. We are not here by accident. We are part of the mighty plan of God. We need to remember this truth constantly and

challenge ourselves to try and realize this plan of God in our life and mission.

Let us not adopt the Epicurean motto of "eat, drink, and be merry for tomorrow we die." Rather, let us enter fully into that service which had its culmination on the cross. The service we render for others is but the rent we pay for our room on this earth. When we serve others with this spirit of detachment, we will really experience true evangelical freedom. As a consequence, we will be able to walk along with and among our sisters and brothers including those who have been ungrateful and hateful.

Furthermore, a priest is mainly a man of prayer. He is to be seen as a man who knows how to speak to God. His important prayer would be to represent the sacrifice of Jesus during holy mass, an

acceptable sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to the Father. At the end of life the question will not be: how much you have received but how much you have given, not how much you have won, but how much love you have shown, not how much wealth you have saved, but how much have you sacrificed, not how much you were honored, but how much



you have served.



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Where does the name Jesuit come from?

It was first applied derisively to the Society, meaning "one who used too frequently or appropriated the name of Jesus." While never employed by its founder, members and friends of the Society in time appropriated the name in its now positive meaning.

The Parish Priest and his Parishioners

Article

It is rightly said, “the call to be a priest is the call to die” and is true in every sense of the word. Listen to Jesus in John’s Gospel: “I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd is one who lays down his life for his sheep” (Jn 10:11-12). These are not mere words coming from the lips. Jesus carried out his promise by laying down his life on the cross.

In the Church, pastoral ministry is one of the very significant obligations laid upon the priests. The priest is called a “pastor”, meaning a shepherd who is set apart to take care of his sheep, the people. He is expected to lead the people of God from the shadow of darkness to the brightness of light. Because his life is Christ-centred, he is always ready and willing to risk his life for the sake of the Gospel.

Today the hearts of shepherds in the Catholic Church are gripped with terror and their minds are laden with fear triggered by fundamentalism. Over the years they are experiencing

perennial dilemmas. In the present scenario it is more obvious and widespread and is touching new heights more than ever before. India prides itself as a secular country and in its Constitutions guarantee equality of rights for every citizen, irrespective of caste or creed. In practice, however, the opposite is true. After the BJP came to power at the Centre, social polarization and fundamentalism have got new momentum. These, in turn, have affected the life of and mission of the Church.



One of the fundamental challenges experienced by the shepherds in the church is “modernism”. The gigantic wave of modern era has been drifting the faith of believers away from God. The use of technology has become more prominent than worship in the church. As a result, people – the sheep – do not have any qualms of conscience to spend Sundays in fun and frolic than to attend Mass for an hour in the church. Moreover, attendance at Mass has also become a fashion parade. The consequence is that day by day faith of the people seems to be fading. This is a matter of grave concern for the shepherds in the Church. As Pope Francis rightly said, the priest should

have the smell of sheep. This warning of the Pope must resound in the heart of every priest. True, the good shepherd will need to carry the wounded sheep on his shoulders. In other words, the parish priest should be ready to endure the trials and tribulations in his parish. His heart needs to be large enough to sustain the

love for his people. Ultimately this boils down to calling the parish priest to be a man of God who sustains in prayer in order that he may be a fitting and pliable instrument at His hands to look after the sheep entrusted to his care.



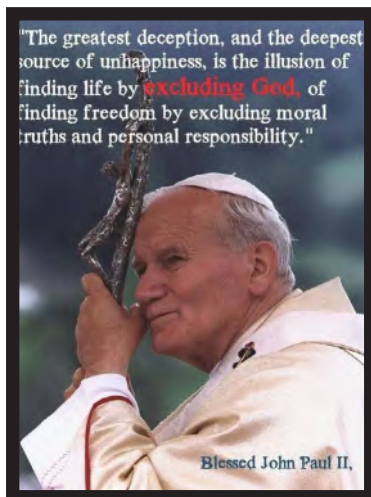
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“The Universal Apostolic Preferences are a call to conversion. They are an invitation to rethink how we live, how we work and how we relate to the people we serve.”

Joy of Being a Responsible Priest

Article

Being joyful is the foremost responsibility of a priest. A responsible priest is a joyful priest and a joyful priest is a responsible priest. Pope Francis calls each priest to be joyous consecrated ministers of Christ and share joyfully the peace and love bestowed upon him to the people among whom he is present. A priest has to be joyous because he is called and chosen by the Master Himself. "The word of Yahweh was addressed to me, saying, 'Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; before you came to birth I consecrated you; I have appointed you as prophet to the nations' (Jer 1:4-5). Therefore, it is not the individual who has made the choice to be a priest but it is God who has made that choice. Further, the priest has to be joyous for having responded to His call, for having been chosen to receive the sacrament of the holy orders and the authority to celebrate the Eucharistic sacrifice for His people.



Bishop Denis says, "The best example of priesthood for me is, joyful priests who love their faith and who love the church. Hence the priest is called to experience the mystery of the passion, death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, to have interior knowledge of the

Master's love and mercy and share this grace with his fellow Christians and with people of different faiths. The moon cannot dispel darkness because it cannot produce light on its own. It depends on the sun for light. A priest, whose primary responsibility is to assist people to approach God and attain union with Him, will not be able to do that if he does not derive resources from Jesus the Master. This means that a priest has to be in constant touch with the Lord, constantly discerning the plan of God through daily prayer and meditation. And in doing so, he should imitate Mother Mary and say, "Not my will but let your will be done."

The primary function of a priest is to assist people in accessing God so there can be union with Him. The priest does this through being a mediator between God and men while ministering the great sacrament of Eucharist, fulfilling the spiritual quest of people and through being a teacher of a way of life that improves upon the reconciliation established at the beginning of the relationship.

Beside this primary responsibility, a priest, like a good shepherd, has to organize his flock. He has to involve in the material and social needs of his people. Jesus not only taught the good news, not only forgave sinners but also fed the multitude; also, He healed the sick, the blind, the lepers and raised the dead to life and restored the dignity of the fallen men and women. These added responsibilities need to be contextualized in the place of his work. He has to assist the marginalized, the oppressed and the discriminated and restore their dignity; fight for justice for the victims of social oppression, those internally displaced from their land unjustly by the changing policies of the government; help the people to get benefits due to them from the state; strengthen the available human resources through valuable

advice and the like. Thanks be to God, Jesuits have long been doing this mission of Jesus at various levels in different capacity with success and failure; we are aware that this work is always challenging and still more so under the present regime. Imitating Christ necessitates us to raise our voices against the unjust policies of the state; but this effort may cost us to be branded as anti-national. It may even cost our life as we have seen from the experience of many people who have been silenced, if not altogether eliminated from the public scene. Standing for the truth is equal to calling your own end and if that is the will of God let that come. From the very inception the church, as we know through history, has grown through the martyrdom of its people. Surely each drop of blood of the martyrs has glorified the Father. Despite this perceived fear, the priest is called upon to be faithful to the responsibility placed on him by Jesus himself. This task of the Master can be carried out only if the priest is happy and joyful with his priestly vocation, if he finds shelter at the feet of the Lord. Needless to add that without joy and faith in the providence of the Lord, the life and mission of the priest will only become a heavy burden.

The Lord has chosen a priest out of the world, yet he is in the world, in the midst of temptations. Every step he takes is full of challenges. He has to walk through this, there is no escape from it. Even Jesus himself was put to test. He was tempted not just one time but several times, even at the cross, the very last moment of his physical journey. But he had the humility to obey the 'will of the Father joyfully' even while going through physical torments. We are in the midst of modern

civilization which has been and continues to be revolutionized with glamorous and attractive modern technologies. Around us we see fast development due to free market system. Though such rapid development may be good for every human society, such a development is always at the cost of the poor. A priest may be tempted to believe that such a faster development is good for him, thereby not serving the will of the master but only his personal interest. Remember Jesus was not tempted with evil things but with good things and necessary things. He could have washed away all sin, jealousy, crime, poverty,

enmity and so on because he had the power to do so. But He didn't because He knew that was not the will of the Father who sent Him. A priest may be tempted to do good for the people with whatever means available.

His action is not just following the impulse or instinct coming from within. The same or similar good work can be done by NGOs and by government. What makes a priest different is there is always discernment of the movement of the spirit within to know the will of the Father. He takes every one of his actions to prayer, surrenders himself to God and seeks enlightenment to find the will of the Father. Once it is revealed to him, the priest begins or continues to live his commitment with a joyous spirit.



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Collaboration

Article

Last year, when Fr General visited Karnataka Province, he found some time to interact with the scholastics. Speaking to them about collaboration, he said, “we need not only think about how to make others to work with us; we need also to think about how we can collaborate with others.” Somehow these words touched me very much. Soon my own companions and I began to reflect on what Fr General had said on “collaboration”. I would like to share with you what transpired during our informal conversation.

Collaboration in Creation

One of the most interesting facts that I found in the Bible is that the almighty and powerful God has never done anything alone except creation. God seems to have always looked up on some others to do things for him. It is not that God needed collaborators but He wanted others to share in fulfilling His plans for the world. Thus we find him calling Moses to liberate the Israelites from the oppressive hands of Egypt. He appointed Saul to be the king for His people. He sent prophets to speak His words. Above all He sent an angel to a young virgin in Nazareth to invite her to join in His greatest plan for humanity. In short, we can say that the Bible tells us a story of God’s collaboration with His creatures.

Collaboration in the Life of Jesus

The whole life of Jesus is a life of collaboration with God and human beings. From His incarnation onwards, He lived in collaboration with humans. As He began His mission, He did not do it all alone but called different people. The more interesting fact was His invitation went out to many, but only a few responded to it. Those who readily followed Him were the least and unwanted people in society. One of the most interesting facts is that when He chose Apostles, He chose a variety of people. There were four fishermen (Peter, Andrew, James, John), a tax collector (Matthew), Simon, the Zealot (Simon) and others whose background is little known. This is the simplest example on collaboration we can show in life of Jesus.

When some of His disciples told Jesus that someone else was performing miracles in the name of Jesus, He only replied to them saying, “anyone who is not against you is for you” (Lk 9:50). In other words, Jesus did not think that He and His followers were the only one who could do things to bring glory to God.

Collaboration in the Society of Jesus

“But we experience joy in knowing ourselves as sinners who, in God’s mercy, are called to be companions of Jesus and ‘co-workers

Ignatian Leadership
for Mission

Rooted in the Graces of the Exercises



with God” (GC 36, D1:33). Here the words companion and co-workers give a deeper understanding to collaboration. Being a companion of Jesus is the primary identity of a Jesuit. That is how Ignatius and his first companions liked to identify themselves as those who were in collaboration with Jesus and in His mission.

In fact, St Ignatius himself had spoken about collaboration in a letter written to Fr Gaspar Barazaesus in Goa, on 24th December 1553. St Ignatius said: “The others can become collaborators, helping the society in converting those without the faith and in teaching Christians and giving the others spiritual assistance that the Society usually undertakes.” Here Ignatius was speaking about the students in Jesuit colleges who might not wish to join the Society but could still collaborate in missions and ministries of the Society. This shows us that collaboration is not the felt need of recent time, but has been a part of the Society from the time of Ignatius. Even our recent GCs 31 to 36 talk about collaboration.

How do our Three Vows help us in Collaboration?

Our religious vows are the means to us to live our life in an effective way. Now let us see how our vows help us in collaboration. The following ideas are from the book of Fr Kurien Kunnumpuram on religious life entitled ‘Prophets of the Lord Friends of the Poor’.

Chastity is relatedness. Relatedness is a main quality we should have in our social life that will lead us to healthy relationship in our personal and religious life. By pronouncing the vow of celibacy, we free ourselves from having personal love for a few people. In this way we live in relatedness with all equally.

Obedience leads us to accept the will of God willingly. This is the vow that brings us a mutual collaboration with God and His plan.

The best way to practice this vow is having personal and community discernments.

Poverty invites us to have a mutual concern for the creation of God, rather than having the greed to possess things for selfish needs.

In short, the three vows invite us to have concern for others, which is indeed an attitude of collaboration.

The Qualities that a Jesuit Requires for Collaboration

Flexibility: When Ignatius and his first companions were in Venice, they had taken many decisions like whether they needed to live together or disperse, or whether they needed to be obedient to one among them and so on. At this point of time they came together and discerned the will of God. They brought their different opinions for open dialogue. At last they found the will of God and got ready to follow it with full heart and mind. Here we see the flexible mind of the First Companions. They did not stick on to their preconceived ideas but were flexible to accepting the will of God after discernment. Today a possible challenge we face against this is individuality. Often when we come to do a work or any mission, we come with some preconceived ideas and are not prepared to accept any other. So it is time that we go back to imitate what Ignatius and his companions would have done in this regard.

Spirit of Magis:

As we all know Magis invites us to be better, rather than being satisfied with what we have achieved. We should not be satisfied with the minimum nor should we keep it to ourselves as if it is meant only for us. We should share that spirit with others. In order to do it, first we should cultivate the spirit of Magis in our daily life. It may be as simple as improving the handwriting or practicing dribbling in basketball or drawing a cartoon whatever. The two things that challenge us from living

the spirit of Magis properly are mediocre and business-mindedness in our mission. By being mediocre, we will be satisfied with what we have been able to do and not try to go the extra mile for our mission. The second challenge is business-mindedness in our mission. Often we do things to bring profit in some ways than doing better good for others. In this way we may have the cooperation of many people in achieving our goal, but it will only be a shared market, not collaboration. So, let us keep the image of a river of Galilee and Dead Sea. River of Galilee is the image of Magis; it continues its flow and as a result there is life in it. But the Dead Sea is the image against the spirit of Magis. It does not flow, it is steady and there is no life in it. Let us be the river of Galilee and flow as long as possible.

The Ignatian Efficiency:

The Ignatian efficiency is marked by Sensus

Christi, the sense of Christ and the value of the Gospel. Just as Jesus invited his disciples to collaborate in His mission, Ignatius and his first companions too collaborated with God's will for them. Similarly, we need to collaborate with others. We must encourage and accept varied opinions and efforts among us and respect them all equally as companions, though the responsibilities may differ. This requires our presence with our collaborators as religious, even more as companions. Here I would like to give Fr Pedro Arrupe as the image for it. He was a person who always lived in the sense of Christ and in the Gospel values. Let us keep in mind the reply Fr Arrupe gave when he was asked who Jesus

is for him. He replied "Jesus is everything for me". That is Ignatian efficiency.

My Role Model for Collaboration

A living thing grows. As human beings, we strive to grow not only physically and mentally but also in our own good attitudes and habits. For this we look up to some role models who can inspire us. Of course, for the religious our ultimate role model is Jesus Himself. But it is good to have a person who followed Jesus in a special way seriously practicing one or other attitudes of Jesus. For me St Joseph, the foster father of Jesus is the role model for collaboration. He was a person who always sought the will of God and lived it. More

particularly, he lived in collaboration with the plan of God in silence. His silence was not a silence of confusion whether to say yes or not but it was a silence of complete trust in God's plan. This we can see in the

flight to Egypt. The angel spoke to him in a dream telling him to go to Egypt one night. He left for Egypt that night itself. He did not know what would happen in Egypt. But he went forth in faith. He knew if he collaborated with God then nothing to worry, God will take care of everything required.



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Who Am I?

Human beings are far different from one another because each has different thinking capacity and reasoning power. Yet they are happy. Animals and trees also seem to be better than I am. They communicate with each other through what is known as “sensing power”; unfortunately I do not possess that power. You might be wondering who I could be. Don’t you worry; I am not that famous as any one of you. I do not live in the communities. I regret why God put me in this world. I wonder if I am empty! It seems that He did not give me ears to hear, eyes to see and not even sensing powers to feel.

However, I acknowledge God as my origin. I am different from all the living things in the world. I am not like any one of you being born and start living, but I am being born every second. My birth place is far away from the lands occupied by humans. I am protected by the huge Himalayas. Each drop of water from me falls into a small stream. After becoming a stream, I realize that I am helpless and weak. Each step of mine is blocked by some pebbles on the way. Why to think about fighting when I am created weak. I make my own way to reach the end. Sometimes I have to jump from the mountain top and it is like a suicide. But compared to the struggles on the mountain, the humiliations and struggles I face in the lands occupied by humans are worse. All my expectations such as being a source of harmony and peace are wiped away at once.

As I enter the lands occupied by humans, I am blocked by thick walls. I feel like I am in a prison. I want to reach out to many but they stop me from spreading out. I think people have reasoning power but they are selfish and egoistic. Many creatures cry for water but some people make me imprisoned in a dam and do not allow me to reach out to others who need me. However, when

I am able to gather much beyond the capacity of the dam to hold me, I get the strength to break out. Unfortunately, a lot of people lose their lives and belongings and cultivation too is destroyed; but you cannot count it as my fault. They name me killer, flood, destroyer, calamity, etc. Yet believing in God, the source of everything, I keep surging ahead.

Think! Who will not be angry when people spit and throw all dirt on your face? Surely you will be. You will even plan on taking revenge on those people. But what about me? People keep throwing their stinking corpses on my face and poisonous water from the factories, thus killing the fish that live in my company. Thereby many nick names I receive. I regret why I entered into the lands occupied

by humans. But I do not utter a word in anger or think of wrecking vengeance on the humans who continue to pollute and destroy me. I keep on walking and running towards my destination. Lo and behold, I see an expanse of waters beyond me. Its roaring seems to me as if it were in anger, hatred or cruelty. But on entering it, I feel the warmth of welcome. I could review the unrealized fruits of my life. Now I feel I am not a killer but a masterpiece in God’s hand. In my life journey, I became the bridge between two states. I quenched the thirst of many creatures; I became the source of cultivation. I carry all the dirt of the people and animals and carry them to my destination. Now I feel contented. It is the contentment of becoming one with the final destination. Here I gain my true identity. I AM no more a stream, river, a killer or a flood, but I AM OCEAN.



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Groping Love

Article

“A man can have no greater love than to lay down his life for his friends” (John 15:13).

Love changes everything, Love drives the world. God loved the world that He sent his only son who gave his life for us. It was love that attracted Ignatius to Jesus. “The love for Jesus” led him and the first companions to begin the Society of Jesus. “En Todo Amar y Servir” (In all things to Love and serve) was his life goal.

It was the same love that drew me to become a Jesuit. I was not seeking love, but Love itself called me, Love formed me and Love will lead me on because I believe “God is Love.” Throughout my life I have been receiving love from many people but was never able to find true love, love that would never die. All my life I have only been receiving love; but when I joined the Society of Jesus, I found true love. The society taught me that true love consists in giving more

than in receiving. Since their foundation, Jesuits have shown their love to the Church with their zeal for souls, and compassion for those in the periphery and the downtrodden. Their love for children, care for creation and to love and serve through the “Contemplation to attain Love” have

shown me the importance of finding God in all things. So much so now I too want to share this love with the broken world -- to love the unloved, to love the abused, to love the refugees and those who are afflicted. It is through sharing the little that I have that I receive much, much more. Thus my vocation has been groping for love. God IS Love and He is great!



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Does the Society of Jesus have a women’s religious order or lay third order?

The Jesuits do not have a female religious component in the Society. However, there are a number of congregations of women religious that have modeled themselves on Ignatian Spirituality, such as the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph, the Handmaids of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, etc.

General Congregation 34 launched a small scale project into a third order type relationship, but at General Congregation 35, the project ended (See GC35 Decree 6, Paragraph 58). The Jesuits do have many lay partners that are integral in numerous Jesuits works such as Apostleship of Prayer, Christian Life Communities, Jesuit Volunteer Corps, Ignatian Volunteer Corps, among others.

The Journey

Experience

The world is constantly on the move; it seems to me that each and every thing in this world is moving towards something. On the one hand there are perceived movements of some and on the other indefinable moments which cannot be seen by physical eyes. Ever since science started making headway, exploration into the heights and depths of this planet have continued – and all this with a view to acquire and accumulate. Strange as it may seem, there are people who do not give much attention to the material things or this material world because their focus is on the spiritual things or on other-worldly things. As a result, these two aspects - science and spirituality – have been progressing steadily and gradually. One can notice this phenomenon happening even today. It is mostly because of the human needs and wants. When the needs are sufficiently met, humans tend to aim for still more wants that will ensure more comfortable life. However, there are also some other needs which are deep in the heart, most of which are abstract; one such need is to find meaning in life and existence. Therefore, people travel far and wide in order to find a way that will satisfy their need. St Augustine was one such seeker. After several long years, he ended up saying: “Our hearts are restless, O Lord, until they find their rest in you”. Needless to add that any serious searcher for truth will end up thirsting for the divine; it is there that one can find a satisfactory answer to his quest - God.



As a member of this complex society, I too share these rich experiences, striving for more, more than my material needs. I feel that I am indeed blest to be born in this part of the world that is India which has a long history of multi-religious and rich cultural background. Today people from different parts of the world are flocking to make a meaningful spiritual journey in order to find the answers to their perennial questions.

No one who visits this ancient land leaves without a spiritual experience and a new heart, if not also answers to his/her queries. I have heard a lot about this right from childhood but have not paid much attention to it until

I had a personal experience by being in this city of lights, Varanasi. At first, my experience of this city was not that exciting. I saw this city as densely populated, unclean with dusty streets and dangerously built buildings. But when I opened my interior eyes, I was able to see beyond

these perceivable aspects of this holy city. I was able to feel the spirituality of this place and this made my experience similar to that of lakhs of pilgrims who visit this holy place with faith and devotion. I was able to see beyond the litter, dirt, and dust. I witnessed a world full of spirituality. It is just like Jerusalem. It is not only the city of Lord Shiva but also the city of lights which provides knowledge of one's self and of the world and beyond. A lot of people travel from all over India at least to step into this place once in their life time. I was

moved to see a lot of elderly men and women walking barefoot with their strong belief in the life beyond the shores of this world. They were only waiting eagerly for the moment when they will leave their mortal body. They strongly believe that they will attain salvation if they could visit Kashi at least once before they die. I noticed that most of them had travelled from south India where they have different kinds of languages, food habits and cultural behaviors. It is a real challenge for them to come to Varanasi to have the Darshan of Lord Shiva and to take the holy dip in the Ganges. In fact, I was amazed to see their pure and simple faith. It was indeed a big challenge for me to re-examine my own faith and belief system. I sensed that a lot of my faith is rationalized and skeptical about various aspects of life.

Faith when it is pure will work miracles. The early Christian church experienced it to a great extent. Too much of rationality and skeptical thinking could easily destroy faith. As a result, our hearts become hardened and nothing can move us. As I went ahead towards the banks of the holy river, I was awe-struck seeing the crowds squeezing themselves in the queues in order to enter the Viswanatha temple and have a glimpse of the Jyothirlinga. They are ready to face all these momentary pains in order to gain the everlasting happiness which is clearly visible in their eyes once they came out the holy places.

I also got the chance to visit one of the famous places in the history of Buddhism that is Sarnath where the Buddha had preached for the first time after his enlightenment. It is a historical site. More than that it is a holy place where thousands of years ago people had meditated and prayed. As I was visiting that place, I felt within me the positive energy of those prayers. A lot my unconstructive

thinking about other religions vanished with this great journey. Whereas millions of Indians wish to visit this holy place at least once in their life time and a lot of them die without fulfilling this dream, I was fortunate to visit and experience the spiritual richness of this place.

During the second week of my visit, I had another most memorable experience in Matridham Ashram. I saw this kind of set up of a Christian institute for the first time in my life. The spirituality of this place is simple and pure. Narada-bhakthi sutras gave me a significant experience. The importance of devotion and the consequent results were really enriching. They revealed people's experiences and their deep knowledge from ancient texts of Hindu religion which are universally applicable. Talks by Fr. Anil Dev also were helpful for my personal growth in spirituality; he gave us a lot of tips and suggestions to live a true Christian and a better religious life through Astanga Yoga. The Krista-Bhaktas movement was another refreshing amusement for me. It was amazing to see thousands of people coming to worship Jesus with such a deep faith and getting healed of their sicknesses or finding solutions to their problems. The Narada-bhakthi sutras got actualized in this experience of Krista-Bhaktas. Over all it was a great experience and useful journey of my life and I will cherish it throughout my life.



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What is the IHS?

IHS is derived from the first three letters of the Greek name of Jesus, iota-eta-sigma. IHS is also featured in the Jesuit crest.

Whither Migrants?

Article

Today our country is facing the issues of displacement, migration, unemployment, divorce, bonded laborer, issues related to transgender, quality education for children, child labour and the like. These core issues centre on dignity, respect and acknowledgement of individuals as persons. And who are those people caught in this web of life? The answer is simple: it is the migrants who seem to suffer the most - almost as stateless citizens in their own country, our country!

A recent study has revealed that 51% of the people who live in Chennai are migrants. The railway department has sold 9 million unreserved tickets to Chennai and this mostly for people from the northern States of India. And the corporates are happy to welcome them because they are prepared to work

for lower wages, to work longer even up to 12 hours and with no provident schemes and so on. This only shows that the corporates treat them almost as bonded labourers or slaves taking advantage of their need for money to take care of their families back in the north. Although these migrants as well as the sons of the soil are well aware of the treatment meted out to the migrants, no one will raise their voice against the corporates because they will surely lose even the meagre wages that provide them (and in several cases their families too) some money to get their food and a tin sheet roof over their head.

UP Chief Minister, Mr Yogi Adityanath, is

trying to rename Allahabad as Prayagraj even amidst protests; India's Prime Minister, Mr Narendra Modi, is engaging himself to make several cities into Smart cities and is calling on foreign investors to "make in India". It is in this context that people who have come into several cities of Tamilnadu seeking for work have been christened "migrants". More. They are being treated as low class people just as Manu has introduced the system of Varna with the Brahmins being the highest caste and the Sudras as the lowest.

Now let us move on to another point. There are IT workers in all big cities of the country. They work in high-rise buildings and live in similar apartments which are the outcome of the labours of these unidentified, unorganized workers from the north. Strange thing again: thousands of IT workers too have to



the south from different parts of the country; but they are not called "migrants"; only the voiceless, hard working, cheap, unorganized workers from form the north are labelled "migrants" in their own country! To repeat. They have not only lost their face and dignity; even their contribution to the field of construction, agriculture, hotel business does not get any recognition whatsoever.

This is not all. There is little or no safety and security for these migrant workers. Any time they might face threats, violence and even sexual abuse from the corporate owners, from the sons of the soil and even from fellow workers from other States. The powers that

be are hand in gloves with the corporate and so will not safeguard the interests of these migrants; mired in corruption, those in power will only take orders from those who fill their coffers and care a hoot to meet the lawful demands of these citizens, albeit from other States.

Another saddest thing must also be mentioned. Since they work for long hours, these people do not have the time to look after the formation and education of their children. For one thing, the schools in Tamilnadu cannot provide education to children speaking different languages; for another, the migrants cannot afford to send their children to schools that offer instruction in English medium. The pity is that these very same children will very soon become uneducated adults and will face the same treatment as their parents receive today.

Let us take a moment to reflect on what we Jesuits have done or not done to alleviate the plight of these migrant workers. We call ourselves people who should be ready and willing to do any work which no other group is willing to undertake; more than that, we have promised ourselves to go even to the frontiers. What has come of that collective promise of our Society? Has it become just a slogan? Where, then, is the depth in our Jesuit way of life? It seems to me that we waste a lot of time and energy in things that are not that very important or urgent; our focus seems to have dissipated as a result. The need of the hour is to accompany these migrant workers. True, some attention is being paid to look after the needs of these people, but a lot more

has to be done. I am aware that we Jesuits cannot go it alone in working for the migrants or other oppressed sections of our people. I wouldn't like to be labelled a firebrand when I suggest that more Jesuits should take interest in looking after the legitimate interests of these migrants. More so, in our pastoral and educational ministry, we should find ways and means to educate the children of these workers lest they, when they have grown up, should turn violent against the society which has not cared for them as they were growing up. No one should be surprised if several of them were to become members even of terrorist groups!

We speak so much about Jesus; surely he must have learnt how his parents had to suffer as migrants in Egypt! Why, as religious, each one of us has migrated from our own family to another family – the Society of Jesus. Fortunately for us, we are being looked after with dignity; our needs are taken care of; we experience love, appreciation and accompaniment. Probably because of this we are not able to empathize with these marginalized people. Won't you agree with me that it is high time that we not only commit ourselves to doing what ought to be done for these people? But let us not stop with making resolutions but make sure that our resolutions are translated into action – and that, soon!



Jubin Nath is a second year Philosopher at Satya Nilayam, Chennai.

What is AMDG?

AMDG is the abbreviation of the Latin phrase *Ad maiorem Dei gloriam*, sometimes called the unofficial motto of the Jesuits. In English this translates to “For the greater glory of God.”

Miracles do happen - A Life-Experience

Experience

It was a beautiful Saturday evening. The chill weather of November added coolness to the evening. All the regents were arriving, one by one, in Upasana, Jamshedpur, for the monthly recollection. The recollection begins after supper with a talk by the Director. We utilized the time just before it got dark to do a little shopping.

Therefore, my friend and I went to the market by a motorcycle. We parked it in the crowded parking lot. As I parked the bike and began to move and merge in the crowd to do the shopping, someone from the crowd touched my shoulder. At first I was shocked. But when I turned to see who it was, the sight thrilled me. There stood an ugly looking elderly man with long shabby and unkempt hair and beard.

He smiled at me and now I was all the more confused as to who it was. This old man extended his hand and I saw the keys of the motorcycle. He handed it over to me and I immediately put my hands in the pocket to check whether that key was really mine or not. Shocked and confused I said 'Thank You' and lifted my face to see who it was that found my lost key and brought it to me. Even before I could thank him, the old man had already disappeared

and mingled in the crowd. I searched for him everywhere but in vain. Many questions rose up in my mind: "Who was that old man? Why did he help me? Why did he not wait even to receive a 'Thank you'? Is he Jesus?" A feeling of joy as well as gratitude was welling up within me.

I do not know the answers for those questions that arose in my mind. But for sure I know that it was a miracle. The reason is this: As I put my keys back to the pocket, my fingers touched the rosary that I had taken with me. It was that time that I realized how powerful Holy Rosary is, how powerful Jesus is, how powerful Mother Mary is.

It was, indeed, a lesson for me to deepen my faith in the Lord and the Holy Rosary. I cannot find words to express fully my feelings I had when this miracle took place. I have somehow tried to share with you what I still experience. So, if you want to see miracles in life, "Have faith", as Jesus would say.



Cajetan A is a second year Regent at St Xavier's school, Lupungutu, Chaibasa.

What are the vows that Jesuits take? What is the fourth vow?

Poverty, Chastity and Obedience. The fourth vow is of obedience to the Pope with regard to mission.

Impact of Media on Youth in the 21st Century

Article

Social media has gained astounding worldwide growth and popularity which have led to attract attention from variety of researchers globally.

Although with time all generations have come to embrace the changes social network has brought about, teenagers and young adults are the most fanatic users of these sites.

It has become a fashion to blame the media for everything that ails the society today. Media today - be it Television, Computers, Mobiles, Video games, Facebook, WhatsApp or other networking sites - have a huge influence on teenagers. Yes, it cannot be too well emphasized how nowadays social network exercise huge impact on all aspects of a teen's life.

But all is not bad with the media. If used right, media can change one's life style. It all depends on the user what kind of life he/she chooses to live. We must remember that social media serve as a place to interact and serve to disseminate relevant and helpful information. Thereby the youth are able to know about the current events from several sites. With exposure to various media outlets they are able to come out of their shells and develop awareness about society and the world. They also get a number of opportunities to develop and enhance their social skills. Being in a circle of acquaintances makes one feel like one can relate with what most of their peers youth are engaged in. Video games draw a lot of folk these days. But there is some good in video games too! There are some video games that can help teens develop and fine-tune their motor skills and coordination. It is here that social media help to bring out the creativity inherent in the youth and encourage them to share their ideas with others.

In the last few years, we have seen an explosion of social media and networking sites like Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp and such other sites. Children especially cherish this new and high-tech way of remaining connected with friends and meeting new people. Unfortunately, they are unaware of the risks of disclosing unnecessary personal information. The

amount of video games, movies and violence that is shown in today is scary. Youth spend their precious time in watching video games and movies, reading and sending messages on Facebook, WhatsApp, etc. Many teenagers are unable to distinguish between reality and fantasy and so are easily led

to imitate to experiment what they watch on videos - violence and sex. A few months ago blue whale challenge game became so viral. Several youth have committed suicide by playing this online game. The experts say that blue whale challenge game does not affect all kids but only those with low mental stability. The internet is a dangerous place where

danger is lurking in sites where the youth is easily drawn to especially when he/she is alone or away from human contact. When invited to open certain sites which seem to provide attractive offers, the youth is easily tempted to open such sites only to be gradually led away to addictions like drinks, drugs and sex. It is really unfortunate that youth are unable to distinguish between what is right and what is wrong so long as they find "happiness" in what they are invited to do or what their peers encourage them to do. Add to this advertisements. Advertisers target youth to shore up their revenues. Little do the youngsters know that happiness comes at a price! We might add that it is not only the youth who fall prey to such allurements; even adults fall into the same pit! Therefore, we need to ask ourselves, "Do we also fall prey to such commercialization of happiness?"



Binay Kerketta is a second year Philosopher at Satya Nilayam, Chennai.

Experiences from Power House - Jesu Bhavan

Experience

Miracles do happen - A Life-Experience

The month-long Spiritual Exercises brought me a great awareness of God. I learnt to find God in all things and all things in God. I am created for God. I come from Him and I go back to Him (The Principle and Foundation). All things come from God and they go back to God. My life is bound up with the rest of creation. I am chosen and called to help others to reach God, and in doing so, I myself attain fullness of life. Thus I love and serve my God in all things and give glory and praise to the Triune God, the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit.

God gave, and gave unconditionally and forgave; I got, got unconditionally and forgot. I was not aware that God gave me everything before my spiritual journey. Really God gave me everything, but I neglected Him and forgot Him. But He never forgot me, as He has said: "Does a woman forget her baby at the breast, or fail to cherish the son of her womb? Yet even if these forget, I forget you. See, I have branded you on the palms of my hands..." (Isaiah, 49: 15-16). God never stopped loving me unconditionally.

I wanted to do great things in a perfect way and looked for name, fame, possessions and so on in all things; but I was not ready to accept pain, suffering and cross. I wanted only joy, pleasure and comforts. I had become a prey to lust, pride,

greed, anger and many other negativities. During my long retreat, Jesus brought me to an awareness that all my desires, possessions are nothing but worthless chaff. Jesus revealed to me everything and showed me the way to His Father as I walked with Him. Jesus gave me a mission to serve His people and assured me that He will be with me till the end of the ages (Mt 28:20). As God forgave my sins, during my month-long retreat, I also learned to forgive those whom I had not forgiven. I experienced that God was with me and helped me during my retreat and He is with me always. I

know that God is with me (Is 43:21), that He delivers me from evil (Ps. 50:15), that He watches over me (Ps 32:8), and that He listens to me (Jer. 29:12).

One of the best prayers for me was the following: "Dear God, I kneel down before you at this moment. Please enlighten what is dark in

me, strengthen what is weak in me, mend what is broken in me, heal what is sick in me and revive whatever peace and love that have died in me. This is my prayer for me, my family, my friends, my enemies and even for those who hate me. Amen."

**Everything
you need is
found in God.**
©TrustGodbro



Arundeeep Kujur is a first year Novice at Jesu Bhavan, Jamshedpur.

"I could not carry out my mission without the support of the community at the Curia" -Arturo Sosa SJ

 The Jesuit community is a concrete space in which we live as friends in the Lord. This life together is always at the service of mission, but because these fraternal bonds proclaim the Gospel, it is itself a mission. (GC36, D. 1, No. 9).

A Unique Gift and a Life-Giving Experience

My month-long Retreat in November-December 2018 was a unique gift and a life-giving experience for me. It was my privilege to make it as a first year novice of the Society of Jesus. I believe that our founding Father Ignatius himself and his first companions as well as all those who went through the long retreat had a very special experience of God which began with reformation followed by confirmation leading to transformation. These two dynamic movements I also experienced during my month-long spiritual journey and they have brought changes in my life-style to a great extent. There were days and weeks of fears, hesitations and many negative feelings in my mind prior to starting my spiritual journey. At the same time, there was also inner joy within my heart because I was very curious to meet with my true self. But the lurking fear in me was that I may not be able to realize it.

But the Lord, my guide, has been my companion whenever I was experiencing the dark night of my soul. The light of God which was lit in my heart had always been dominated by my core sinfulness. Prior to my long retreat, whenever I was in self-doubt and frustration, I prayed constantly with great trust and confidence, "Lord, let not this long retreat be a burden for me; instead let it be a means for me to lighten the burden which I am carrying." And behold, I could experience the effect of the prayer. I observed during the retreat that a number of disturbances I faced remained ineffective in front of the abundant moments of consolation during my month-long spiritual journey.

During the retreat I discovered the novitiate as my second place of birth, birth in Christ Jesus. This long retreat has been my second baptism ceremony, and the Novice Master, Fr. James Kalapura, my source of inspiration, has become my second parent here on earth, for he has nourished and guided me in a very extraordinary way. I was much taken up by his sermons and conferences laced with very inspiring anecdotes as well as by the sharing of touching experiences of his own

personal life. They have really strengthened me spiritually and created in me a great desire to be a zealous missionary. I am aware and I accept that I am a fragile human being. I fail often in doing good things, unfortunately sometimes even deliberately. But the grace I have received through the four key contemplations of the second week helped me a lot to distinguish between the values of Christ and those of the world and to have right discernment. All those four contemplations have somehow become a source of inspiration and strength to do good always in my life.

During this spiritual journey I was able to develop a very personal relationship with Jesus, my Lord, and throughout the retreat I was able to remain intimately united with Him. I was like a man who went into a mango orchard, and busied himself in counting the leaves, and examining the color of the leaves and the size of the twigs or the number

of the branches and so forth, and thus kept my eyes blind to the ripe mangoes in the tree. What I mean is that I am very familiar with our Holy Bible. I have read it time and again from the day I learned to read, and that too, in three different languages. But I just remained with the words, statements or phrases that were

written in the Bible. I never went deeper into them. But this long retreat has taught me how to grasp the history, mystery and the message for myself.

In short, at the completion of my long retreat, I experienced a wonderful newness in me. I can surely say that the sentiment expressed by St Paul has come true in my life: "For anyone who is in Christ, there is a new creation; the old creation has gone, and now the new one is here" (2 or 5:17).



Stephen Murmu is a first year Novice at Jesu Bhavan, Jamshedpur.

My Month-long Spiritual Journey

Experience

When God pushes you to the edge of difficulty, trust Him fully; either of the two things will happen: either He will catch you when you fall or He will teach you how to fly.

My month long retreat following the Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius was a beautiful experience that I never even imagined or expected in my life. Every Jesuit has gone through it and I am sure everyone has reaped much fruit from it.

One whole month, fully keeping myself away from the world and going beyond my ways and limitations to get connected to the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit and with Mary, was the golden time of my life. In the beginning I struggled to find God. My disposition days helped me to purify myself and to know myself a bit more. Experience of my core-grace was something marvelous that happened. For the first time, I experienced the love of the Father, the Father who loves his child so much that He has carved its name on His palm. Being silent, having less worries and more eager to experience God made me go forward.



No experience has an end. Similarly my experience of God also was not reaching an end. The Kingdom Exercise, one of the most beautiful exercises, helped me to receive the confirmation from God. As I was making my oblation, I was very happy, because here I also received Mary as my mother. The best thing in life is finding someone who knows all your mistakes and weaknesses and yet thinks you are completely amazing and wonderful. I found that person during my Passion Week, and it was Jesus. Accompanying Him in His pain and suffering opened my eyes to see Him who gave His life for me. For the first time I experienced the flow of tears from my eyes while I watched the movie, The Passion of the Christ,

which stirred my heart and soul to leap into the pool of love and to know the depth of His love. Pain makes us stronger. By partaking in the passion and death of Jesus, my faith and trust in Him also became stronger. In that movie, the figure of Mary holding the dead body of her Son in her lap and gazing straight ahead of us towards the future, with her face etched with sorrow and hope, helped me to look at my own future with Jesus, her Son.

My contemplations on the various apparitions of the Risen Lord filled my heart with tremendous joy and I was moved to celebrate the victory of my Lord over the powers of sin and death. As the Holy Spirit began to work on the disciples, I also experienced the shower of His blessings upon me and my companions. St Paul wrote to the Philippians, "The One who began this good work in you will see that it is finished when the Day of Christ Jesus comes" (Phil 1:6). With this assurance, I moved to the fifth week of my Exercises to live out the experiences of my month long spiritual journey. My prayer for my companions and myself these days is: "Lord Jesus, help me and my companions to remain with you as we were with you during the spiritual journey of ours. Your presence and action made our lives meaningful. Your gift of the Holy Spirit and your Mother Mary to us along with your own life made us realize how precious we are to you and how loving you are to us. We thank you for your love. We thank you for this beautiful gift of the Spiritual Exercises through our Father, St Ignatius of Loyola. Bless all those who make these Exercises in various places."

Finally, with a heart filled with gratitude, I praise the Lord for this wonderful opportunity to go through such a spiritual journey.



Vijay Rayappa Adarsh is a first year Novice at Jesu Bhavan, Jamshedpur.

God deals Directly with the Retreatants

My long retreat at Jesu Bhavan in November-December was a touching experience for me as I received abundance of graces and blessings from God. Above all, it was like a second birth which I cannot forget in my life. This long retreat has given me the aim of my life which is to be with Jesus and to find Him in all things. In this long retreat, two fathers were involved: Fr Socius gave us instructions. Fr Master gave us talks for the prayers, and he met us and guided us every day. The sharing of his personal experiences as well as the number of stories he told us during his homilies were very inspiring to me. Thus the support of the two Fathers and my sincere efforts made my long retreat very meaningful and fruitful.

As I started my long retreat, I was filled with great enthusiasm to make it well. On the 14th of November, 2019, I stopped talking to my friends. I was completely silent exteriorly, but interiorly I was not. I was lost in the world of my imagination. I was not able to be in the present. I went through various kinds of problems, challenges, difficulties and negativities. In truth, I was always a man of negativities: I reacted negatively and responded negatively. Thus there was no place for anything positive. So during the first few days of my retreat, there was no consolation at all. My head was heated like a burning fire. Prayers became a burden for me. But one thing I made sure was never to give up; rather six to seven times I restarted my prayer sessions and sat the full hour to do my best during the allotted time.

One miracle changed the whole thing. During the afternoon conference one day, the topic was the 'Love of God.' During his talk, Father read out an imaginary letter to the novices from God. In it was written, "Dear son, the goal of your life is to live with me forever... I give you life because I love you." These two sentences touched me so much that throughout the day I was immersed in those words. When I saw the copy of that letter on the notice board, I read it again and again, and whenever I read it, there were tears in my eyes and consolation in my heart that I brought that letter to my room after the night prayers

and started reading it again very slowly. I could not control myself and I started crying. I wrote down that letter in my diary so that I could read it again and again. Again I read that letter repeatedly for an hour, all the time sobbing. Then I went to bed and slept. At midnight I had a dream in which I saw Jesus, the same Jesus whose statue in a meditating posture is in our novitiate lawn. In my dream I heard him knock at my door and I opened it. Jesus came inside and kept the

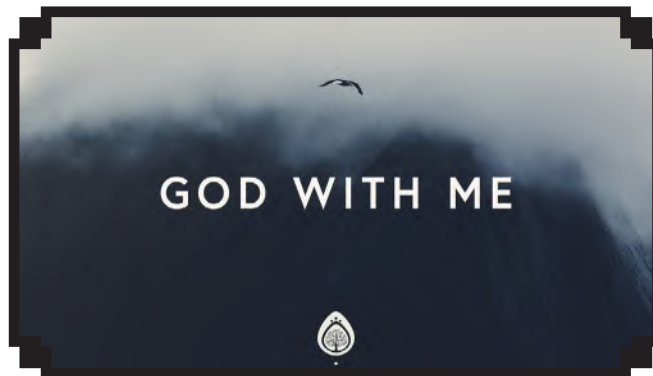
same letter on my table and told me that it was His time to pray to God. Still I am confused whether it was a dream or reality, but I found myself on the corridor in the same night. I received the grace of love. I spent a long time on the corridor to look at Jesus and to receive graces and blessings from Him.

From that night onwards, there was no distraction at all in my prayers. I became the master of my body and my mind. I could easily defeat Satan and his evil designs, because thereafter I surrendered all my intentions, actions and operations for the greater glory of God throughout the retreat. I spent more time in prayer. Without praying, I did not feel good. Through the long retreat I received the grace to imitate Jesus; I hope I would continue to do that all my life as a Jesuit. Before the retreat I used to react negatively, but now there are only positive thoughts. I received the core-grace. Now I find myself a changed person in my behavior.

This peak experience of encountering God changed my life for the better. Now I live a new life and I can clearly see that the aim of my life is to be with Jesus. I am very grateful to my parents, my siblings, my friends, and my novice master, because through their prayers and guidance I have come to know the aim of my life.



Paulus Tala Marandi is a first year Novice at Jesu Bhavan, Jamshedpur.



God Experience at Bishonpur

The most important and heart-touching experience of mine during my first year of novitiate was my month-long spiritual journey. It prepared me well for the rest of my life in the novitiate, the fifth week. During my second year of novitiate, I was once again blessed with another wonderful experience in the form of my village experiment. During this experiment, I was able to experience the passion of Jesus in the world today, especially in the remote villages of my state, Jharkhand. For my village experiment, I was sent to a village called Bishonpur, a very interior place

surrounded by mountains, rivers and fields. The inhabitants of the village belonged to two different economic groups, the middle class and the below-the-poverty-line group. The poorest of them had no chance to see doctors and get other medical

helps, if they ever fell sick. Illiteracy was another big curse in the village.

In spite of their poor economic situation, there was great love for each other among the villagers. They were hardworking, committed and lived in wonderful harmony with nature. My main occupation in the village was harvesting paddy. From Monday to Friday, I spent the whole day in the fields. On Saturday and Sunday, I was free and so could spend the days enjoying nature, visiting neighboring villages and meeting people. I could see that all of them were overjoyed by my visits. I encouraged children to join religious

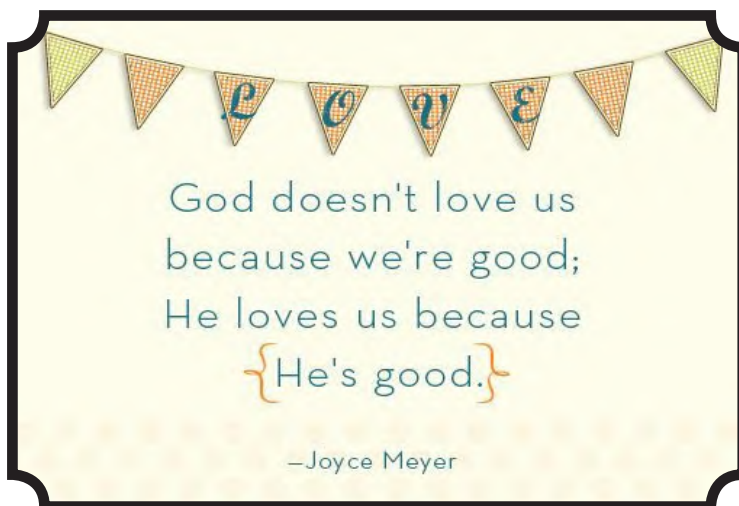
congregations. Every evening, I helped the children with their studies and taught them Santhali hymns which they enjoyed a lot.

On certain days I went to graze the cattle in the fields. While doing this, I got a chance to speak with non-Christian Santhals who were also grazing their cattle. I talked to them about their faith in God (Bonga). I found them genuinely religious in their faith. During my stay in that village, I also had a very pleasant encounter with an old man who was able to cure the people by blowing over the affected area. I really saw and witnessed people getting cured.

I believe that there are good spirits which help people to overcome their difficulties.

I was much inspired by the faith of the Christians in the village. After a whole day's work, they would gather for

the rosary. Their devotion and their way of adoration of God really touched my heart. I was inspired to take up pastoral ministry among such people in the future.



Anup Marandi is a Second year Novice at Jesu Bhavan, Jamshedpur.

Jhingadand Experience

I would like to share with you my sentiments during my village experiment. First of all, I begin with my journey. My bus journey to Jhingo was not cozy as I expected. It was irritating for me, because the crowded bus pulled its way slowly through the bumpy road to my destination. So it was a great relief when at last we reached Jhingo parish which comes under the Diocese of Ambikapur in Chhatisgarh.

We were four of us, and we were sent to the villages two by two. Virendra Toppo and myself were sent to a village called Jhingadand, located in an interior place just below a mountain. We reached the village in the evening. Both of us were given accommodation in the house of a family who were recent converts. There were 26 families in that village; out of them 12 were Catholic and the rest Protestant. The parents of the house where we were expected to stay were out in the field. I felt that I was lost in an unknown place. But soon I started feeling at home. There were four members in the family: father, mother and two children.

On the very next day after our arrival, both of us helped the family in harvesting and carrying maze and firewood. We also harvested, thrashed and winnowed the paddy and gathered the grains. A very enriching experience of mine was visiting the houses of people and coming to know about their struggles. I was full of compassion for the people when I heard about their struggle for survival and their other difficulties. We spontaneously reached out to them and helped them in whatever they were doing without even knowing whether they were Catholics or Protestants. We would talk very cordially to everyone and we did our level best to help them. They expressed their heartfelt

gratitude and happiness for whatever we did to help them

Another wonderful experience of ours was teaching prayers and hymns to grand-mothers and grand-fathers. They were like small children who were just learning to speak. I enjoyed a lot with them. Gradually we came to be like part of the family and the whole village as well. We were emotionally

attached to all the people. I could experience the love of many more mothers. We taught the children of the village too. We taught them English, Maths and prayers and hymns, holding their hands and teaching them to write. We had a really fantastic time with them.

Finally came the time for us to leave the place. All the villagers bade us farewell. They expressed their heartfelt gratitude and also gave us a few words of encouragement. They all had tears in their eyes and I too felt like crying.

It was as if I was leaving my own family. I am very grateful to the Society of Jesus and to the fathers in the communities who gave us such a wonderful opportunity to expand our knowledge and experience the struggles of the people in our villages, and thus infusing in us a sense of compassion and concern for such people. I shall always remember the generous hospitality of those poor villagers and I continue to pray for God's choicest blessings upon them as they struggle to make both ends meet. May the good Lord fulfill all their hopes and aspirations!

**"THERE IS
NO GREATER
LOVE THAN
TO LAY
DOWN ONE'S
LIFE FOR
ONE'S FRIENDS."**

IN HIS FULLNESS.COM

JOHN 15:13



Khelsai Toppo is a second year Novice at Jesu Bhavan, Jamshedpur.

Jhingo Experience

I, Virendra Toppo, a second year novice would like to share with you all about my one month village experience. In my novitiate at Jesu Bhavan, I go through various enriching experiences, experiences which have become part of life and they are very touching and motivational for my future.

My village experience was extraordinary, new and fresh. I was prepared for my hospital experiment. But since that could not be materialized due to the presence of more than enough volunteers in the institutions run by the M C Brothers, we were sent for the village experiment. Since I received this message just a few days before the starting of the experiment, I was a bit anxious and worried, because I had not done any preparation for that. Many questions arose in my mind about how and what I would do there. I took heart and surrendered myself and my plans to the Lord.

As I reached Jhingo parish, I was completely exhausted, because the roads were too rough, the bus was not in good condition and my health too was not good. Till I went to bed at night, I found the atmosphere and temperature good. But as I got up early next morning, I could experience the chillness of the place. Even though I had warm clothes on, I started shivering and I could not stand properly; even the words of my mouth were not clear. After three or four days, I got cough and cold which lasted for two weeks. But I did not bother about it except when I was taking classes for the children and teaching prayers and hymns to the people of the village. Sometimes my sneezing became a source of laughter and fun for the children and for me too. Whenever I sneezed during my classes and sessions, there was spontaneous laughter. I saw that everyone enjoyed it and some children even tried to imitate my sneezing when I passed by them.

In the house where I along with Khelsai my companion stayed, there were four members- father, mother and two children. The father of the house was often out, working in different places to earn a bit of money for the family. During the day, the children went to school, and both of us novices stayed at home. Every day, after breakfast, we did the works assigned to us like threshing the paddy and winnowing it to remove the chaff from the grains, gathering the hay and arranging them on a raised platform, cutting sugarcane, collecting corns from

the cornfields and watering the potato plants. The whole day we did such works. In the evening we took classes for the children, teaching them prayers and hymns and other practices of our Catholic Church. At times we taught the parents also. In the village there were both Protestants and Catholics. The latter were newly converted. On certain days, we visited the families. During our month-long stay in the village, we visited practically all the houses, including those of the Protestants. I found everyone good and cordial towards one another without any sectarian attitudes. All of them were gentle, loving and simple. Though they belonged to two different denominations, they worked together and helped one another in every aspect of their life. I was inspired by their simplicity, unity and other good qualities. Wherever we saw people working, we joined them without even their asking us for our help.

On certain other days we went to the forest to enjoy the nature. Surely it was a wonderful and happy experience to spend my time in the forest, enjoying the fruits and flowers of the trees and the beautiful scenery. We did not even feel hungry when we were in the forest. Every day we went to the riverside for bathing and for morning and evening walk.

Staying in Jhingadand was like being in my own native place and I felt very much at home. While being with the people, and especially with the children, I could remember my own childhood days. Towards the end of our village experience, both of us became very close to the villagers. As the days of our experiment were coming to an end, I was feeling more and more troubled in my heart which was filled with wonderful feelings for them. On the day of our farewell, there were abundance of tears in our eyes, and the villagers were also crying. Really it was very hard for me to leave them. I was really affected emotionally. They still come into my mind and I fondly remember them all. I feel as if my heart is empty without them. This, in short, is my beautiful experience during my village experiment.



Virendra Toppo is a Second year Novice at Jesu Bhavan, Jamshedpur.

With the Suffering Christ

Experience

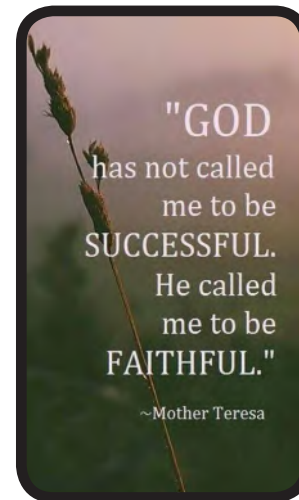
During my school life, a catechist asked me a question, "Where do you see Jesus?" I was speechless, I had no answer. Then he himself said that we see Jesus in the abandoned, downtrodden and the poorest of the poor. These words of a simple catechist came alive in my life, during my month-long hospital experiment with the M. C. Brothers in Noorpur. It gave me a new understanding of my life and my mission. Our founder, St Ignatius of Loyola himself had gone through this type of experiment and he wanted every Jesuit to go through the very same experience. I don't know about others, but for me – to be with the poorest of the poor was itself a very mystical experience. When I reached out to them with tender love and self-sacrificing service I experienced profound joy and true love. While being with them, I realized the very the meaning of my life and in particular the very purpose of my call.

On the 8th of March, 2019, I, a second year novice, along with my companion, went to Shanti Bhavan in Noorpur in West Bengal for my Hospital Experiment. The M.C. Brothers warmly welcomed us on our arrival. The campus is very eco-friendly and welcoming. The brotherly concern and warm hospitality of the Brothers made us feel quite at home. So much so, we lacked absolutely nothing.

Let me now speak about my experiment" proper. Seeing the miserable condition of the patients, initially I faced a lot of difficulties and hesitation. The assignment was too challenging and I had my doubts whether I would be able to carry on for long. However, meeting with the patients daily, hearing their respectful greeting - , 'nomoshkar' - and the cheerfulness on their faces in the midst of suffering not only impressed me, but also affected me deeply. While conversing with them I learned how they contracted the diseases and how much they were suffering. Expelled from their family and village, and abandoned by their near and dear ones, they have been condemned to live a miserable life. Some of them had even contemplated suicide. But, thanks to the loving concern of the M.C. Brothers, in spite of such misery, they have become very positive in their outlook on life. More, they were all active in prayer, and this was very consoling for me. I felt God's strength and deep love within my heart and it gave me clarity of the purpose of my experiment.

Every day I visited the ward. Whenever the patients saw me, the expressions on their faces told me how much they longed for my help and service. All of

them would extend their hand and greet me. I also gave them always a very broad smile which reassured them and brought much comfort to them deep down in their hearts. Even in the midst of their terrible suffering, there was always joy and happiness on the face of each and every patient. They really drew me close to them. I allowed my heart and mind to be fully involved in the service of those poor people, and that could be the reason why I did not know how one month had elapsed so very fast.



Among the patients there, I encountered a man who was unable to do anything by himself. So every day I used to feed him with much love and affection. A week later he died. I really felt very sad, and I prayed for him. During the funeral, I also helped in carrying his body to the cemetery. To be a part of his last journey in the world

was a very satisfying experience for me. I was much touched by the life of the M.C. Brothers who are emptying themselves and rendering selfless service to the poorest of the poor; they taught me how to practice poverty for the better service of God.

Once I got a chance to visit the Mother House of the Missionaries of Charity sisters. The holiness of the place was very palpable. I saw many sisters spending their precious time in prayer. The silence of the place really gave me joy and peace. While going through the various articles and sayings of Mother Teresa, I felt she was very much present there.

I really relished and cherished every activity of mine during my hospital experiment, which was possible due to the outpouring love and grace of Jesus. Every experience comes and goes, but what stays with me are the moments which touched my heart. I experienced deep love of God and the power of his working in my life through the whole family of the Shanti Bhavan Community.



Bikant Kullu is a second year Novice in Jesu Bhavan, Jamshedpur.

Me and the Suffering Christ

Experience

Experiences are the tools which make human beings perfect. They are part and parcel of our lives. They give a lot of energy, power, enthusiasm and happiness to our lives. I would like to share about my hospital experiment during the Lenten season of this year. I was in a place called Kachrapara in the outskirts of Kolkata. The name of the centre run by the M.C. Brothers is Shanti Niketan. Five M.C. Brothers and a worker regularly looked after some 42 patients who were mostly physically and mentally challenged. A few of them were leprosy patients.

While being with them for a month, I experienced their suffering, and I was deeply touched by their lives. Through my small little acts of service to them, I made them happy; I consoled them and made them smile. The works assigned to me were rather simple, but in the beginning it was really tough. The whole place terribly smelled and I could not bear it at all. During the first few days, I really struggled to come to terms with the situation. But gradually I overcame

my hesitation and reservations; I prayed to God for courage and strength to serve them better. My prayers were truly answered and I was able to adapt myself to the situation and I loved the patients genuinely from my heart, and that made my work much easier.

Honestly speaking, I was doing the simplest of works like feeding the patients, giving them bath, cutting their nails and hair and shaving them. I used to be with them all the time. Therefore, they were very happy and delighted, and they kept smiling all the time. I could recognize and assimilate their joy which was very visible on their faces. Seeing all these, I was energized and enthused to the core, and I felt as if they were my own brothers and they truly became part and parcel of my life.



Alok Toppo is a Second year Novice at Jesu Bhavan, Jamshedpur.

Me and the Suffering Christ

I am a second year novice, and I would like to share my experiences of the suffering Jesus in the poorest of the poor. On the 8th of March this year, all of us second years went to Kolkata to be with the M.C. Brothers at various centers in and around that city. I was assigned to Nobojibon (New life) at Kadamtola, close to Howrah, along with Bro. Anup Marandi.

In the hospital there were 54 patients in our ward. Very few could communicate, since most of them were deaf and dumb or mentally and physically challenged. Some of them had chicken pox too. I was very happy to have this wonderful opportunity to put into practice what I had gathered during my long retreat, namely, to serve the suffering Jesus in the poorest of the poor. From day one, I decided to involve myself totally in my ministry by unreservedly reaching out to those disabled people. But it was not that easy. There was a little bit of hesitation in the beginning since I was not sure how they would react. Besides, I was also hesitant to get closer to them because of the unpleasant smell emanating from their wounds.

Naturally, I did not like even to touch their dirty clothes. But within two or three days, I was able to shed all my inhibitions and hesitations. I believe that it was what I had learnt during my Spiritual Exercises that helped to me get rid of my hesitations and to see the suffering Jesus in all those patients suffering for days and months. From then on, it was an ecstatic moment of my entire life, since I could add a little smile on the face and in the life of each of the patients. They were God's present for me. Gradually I could go closer to them with real love and affection. I found them very simple, lovable and wonderful. I absolutely loved their company. I was also much inspired by the dedication of the M.C. Brothers and that of their co-workers. I really admire them for their dedicated services to the poorest of the poor.



Khelsai Toppo is a Second year Novice at Jesu Bhavan, Jamshedpur.

Divesting Oneself

Hospital Experiment is one of the experiments through which a novice is helped to divest himself of his self-love, self-will and self-interest. He sees the suffering Jesus in the form of the abandoned, the marginalized and the poorest of the poor. He tries to experience the agony that Jesus went through and still goes through in the lives of such people. In spite of facing stumbling blocks, he cultivates the plant of love, peace, patience hope in the hearts of such people.

I had my hospital experiment in Kausalya Mission Hospital in Kharagpur where physically and mentally challenged people

are well taken care of by the M.C. Brothers. There were 70 in-patients (inmates); besides, a large number of out-patients also come in for treatment. I was much inspired by the M. C. Brothers who have dedicated their life for the service of the poorest of the poor. Though my service was very simple, it was something great for the sick and the suffering. It was God's plan that He would reach out to those people by making use of me as His instrument by showing them love and concern.

Thanks to God's grace, within the limited time available, I was able to do a lot of things for the patients such as giving them bath, washing their filthy and stinking clothes, feeding them as well as dressing their wounds. Listening to the pain and suffering of the patients was a touching experience for me. I felt that I was a source of comfort to them. Though I did not know their language, I listened to them attentively and tried to respond to them by sign language – the language of love.

I must admit that at the initial stage, I was hesitant to dress the wound of a particular patient, because it was very big and filled with maggots. The wound was fully decayed and the smell was so terrible that it remained with me the whole day. I could experience in my own body the terrible pain of the person. Looking at the maggots in his wound, I experienced much compassion for him.

As a result, within a short time, my fear and abhorrence disappeared slowly. I became so much involved in my ministry that I did not even realize how one month went by so fast. I was able to help them out, because I loved them. The

yardstick by which the Lord will judge us namely, "When I was hungry, you gave me to eat, and when I was sick you cared for me...", strengthened my spirit to love the patients more and more and it helped me to overcome my weaknesses.

By giving my services, I received many things in return, like inner peace and happiness, confidence to touch the wounds of persons and received strength and courage to face challenges yet to come in my life. This hospital experiment was a wonderful opportunity for me to empty myself by extending my service to the poorest of the poor. I enjoyed serving the patients as a novice. And I hope I will get many more opportunities to serve the downtrodden people later in my life.



Photo © Mary Ellen



Anuranjan Dung Dung is a second year Novice in Jesu Bhavan, Jamshedpur.

Prayer for Priests

Eternal God,
please bless our priests,
who represent You on this earth.
Make them more greatly aware of the grace
that You pour out through them
when they minister the sacraments,
and help them to fall more deeply in love with You
after each and every Mass that they celebrate.
Please strengthen our priests,
who shepherd Your flock,
when they are in doubt of their faith,
that they may be examples of Your Truth
and guide us always on the path to You.
We ask these things of You our Eternal Priest.
Amen.



We the Jamshedpur Province offer our deepest condolences and prayers to the Srilankan families and friends of the victims who lost lives or faced injury at the deadly bomb blasts on the Easter day.

