



NEW LEAF

Sprouting Thoughts of Jamshedpur Scholastics

Vol.04, JULY 2021

The Path Less Travelled By

Fr. John Deeney - The
Apostle of the Hos

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Ignatius

To see all things new in Christ



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Provincial's message

The world is still in the grip of COVID and people all over are learning and finding new ways to keep their hopes alive. The dream for a better world pushes the humanity forward. Jamshedpur Province in many ways finds itself identified with the happenings around the world and shares in the agony of thousands struggling to come to grips from the fallout of the pandemic.

Against such a backdrop, there comes the little ray of hope: the life of people who fought their way forward against all odds. The New Leaf, a magazine by the Scholastics of Jamshedpur Province offers the life of men of such calibre, who also have hoped for a better and brighter future.

On 22 July of this year 2021 we celebrate the Birth Centenary of Fr John Deeney, who is aptly acclaimed as the Apostle of the Hos. Fr. Deeney has been a pillar of the Church in Kolhan area and, it is indeed consoling, to see that our young men have chosen his life as the theme for their Annual Magazine. Fr. Deeney has been a man of hope – he was hopeful of a better and brighter future for the people of this region whom he made his own. And his life and mission has been to build a hope-filled future for generations through the proclamation of faith in a God who offers such hope. Among the many qualities of Fr. Deeney, what I would like to single out are his simplicity, life

of commitment and love for the people whom he served.

The Magazine, New Leaf, offers a wide variety of reflections on the life and work of Fr. Deeney. It gives me great joy to present this work as this effort of the Scholastic points to a brighter future. It is commendable that the younger generation finds inspiration in people like Fr. Deeney.

My heartfelt appreciation of the painstaking, hard work of the Scholastics, in particular of the Editorial Team.

Jerry Cutinha SJ

Provincial



PCF's message

The Path Less Travelled aptly captures the thrust of the message the Scholastics of Jamshedpur want to share. Fr. John Deeney was such a man who travelled the roads of Kolhan, carrying the message of hope and love of God. It is fitting that our Scholastics are focusing their

attention on Fr. John Deeney – Gomke Deeney (in Ho) - who worked tirelessly to lead people to God through the Good News of the Gospel

The Fourth Edition of NEW LEAF focuses on the life and work of Fr. John Deeney who is considered

the Apostle of the Hos. Through their articles our Scholastics have done extremely well to portray the Life and Works of Fr. John Deeney, from his early life through the mission in the heart of Ho land until his last days. I am sure that Fr. Deeney is an inspiration for all and especially for the Scholastics – Fr.

Deeney is a Jesuit par excellence - who lived a life of commitment and total dedication.

There are new leaves coming from the 'sprouts' of our Jam Scholastics as they reflect on the life and mission in the Society. This issue has been extra special

with the Centenary Celebration coming to a close; the Universal Apostolic Preferences (UAP) and the celebration of the Ignatian Year provide a good soil for new sprouts. Congratulations to the writers who have shown a creative streak in their write-ups and a big thank you to the Editorial Board

for the efforts made to reach these leaves out to others.

Happy reading!

Somy M Mannoor, SJ

PCF



Editor's Desk

Christ chose his Apostles and sent them out to spread the 'Good News'. St. Ignatius of Loyola was guided by the Holy Spirit to a very deep union with God and to a life of service of the Gospel, to 'Save Souls'. We, have been called to be Jesuits, also been given great graces to share in this vocation.

We the Scholastics of Jamshedpur Jesuit Province are immensely pleased to invite you to be inspired by this year's 'New Leaf' magazine Fourth Volume entitled "THE PATH LESS TRAVELLED BY" It gives us the idea of the Universal Apostolic Preference (UAP) that challenges our way of living as Religious, serving the Lord alone under the banner of the Cross.

Change is the only thing that is constant. Never, did any of us imagine that our existence at one point of time would be so difficult that we would even struggle to breathe. The terms starvation, migration, isolation have today turned out to be scary terms of hell

in real life. People are depressed and have become weary and burdened. Our response to this time of Covid crisis in the light of Ignatius must bring changes in the lives of people we encounter. But how?

Just like the new leaf that gives hope of a newness everywhere, we too become the leaves of Christ in strengthening the hopes of people through our mere encounter with them. The first step towards this is what brings great changes everywhere. So, let us build up courage to make that reality come true.

New Life, New Leaf, and New Hope...

"Whatever you do to the least of my people you do it to me" (Matthew 25:40)

We need such Religious men who can be critical thinkers and those who stand for human values. We need those men who can raise their voice for the least of the society and raise their voice against the

corrupt society. Here is a man Who stood for the least in society. We would like to stimulate a thought process of Fr. John Deeney's voice on various issues pertaining to downtrodden society especially to the Hos. Fr. Deeney, who tirelessly showed the way to God through Gospel values, brought education, raised his voice for human rights, and collaborated with all kinds of people. As we flip the pages of this magazine, it leads us to reflect on what the purpose of our living as religious is. What is our attitude towards others and many more?

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to all those who made it real and would make this 'New Leaf' real in the years to come. Our sincere thanks to Fr. Jerry Cutinha, S.J., our Provincial of Jamshedpur, who never said 'no' and reached out his generous hands to the Scholastics for the inside reports on Fr. Deeney SJ.

We highly appreciate Fr. Somy Matthew S.J., our Province Coordinator for Formation (PCF),

for initiating the work on Fr. John Deeney, which was indeed a challenging one, yet it was a grace-filled moment for us to admire and emulate Fr. Deeney.

To act as an external advisor for our magazine, Fr. Eric Cassel SJ was an automatic choice, who graciously accepted our invitation. One cannot forget Fr. Eric's meticulous work and unstinting support. He became the backbone of this magazine for proof reading of the articles written by the Scholastics and the Novices. Thanks a lot, Fr. Eric. I wholeheartedly acknowledge the efforts made by our Scholastics in collecting data on Fr. John

Deeney. Thank you, dear brother-companions.

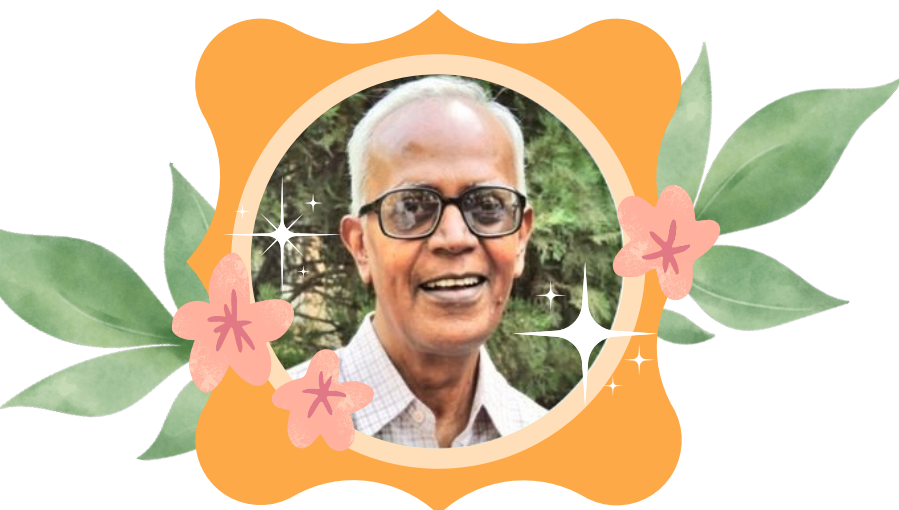
We have heard of Jesuits called "to the frontier". However, in this issue we would like to go "to the roots" - the Novitiate - to give the young Novices a chance to share their news and views, to connect and allow them to make a splash of their own with their "baby steps". We acknowledge with gratitude the efforts made by the Novices as well.

A warm pat on the back for the members of the Editorial Team: Schs. Anjum Lomga, Ashish Digal, Jobin Sebastian and Telesphore Toppo, for collating all the articles

and giving it a final shape. Thank you for joining hands with me in making this magazine of the Scholastics, for the Scholastics, by the Scholastics. With Jesus, we are no longer servants, but His friends. God calls whom He chooses and makes them partners of His Mission. Today, Christ needs 'Apostles' to continue His mission. Come as you are and respond positively to His Call - to be vine dressers in His vineyard, good shepherds in His vast pasture.

Sch. Arun Prasath I
Chief Editor

FR STAN SWAMY (1937 - 2021)



Born	- 26th April 1937
Joined Jesuits	- 30th May 1957
Ordination	- 14th April 1970
Final Vows	- 22 April 1981
Died	- 5th July 2021

Servant in Mission of Justice and Peace



Fr John Deeney the Man and the Mission



A silent man - soft spoken, humble, simple, hard-working is he. He did not aim to please anyone, but the people were well-pleased with him. He is not an eloquent speaker, but many listened to him in his lifetime. He did not put up a big show of self or project himself to be great, yet the people he lived with were fascinated with him. He did not hold high Degrees or Doctorates from the universities except for an MA. Yet he did commendable

work among the people --- for their language, culture, and customs. This personality is none other than Fr John Deeney.

Fr John Deeney was born to late Mr. George C Deeney and late Mrs. Mae A Deeney on 22nd July 1921 in Philadelphia, USA. He had an elder sister who was a Religious, a younger sister, and four younger brothers. He was baptized in St Malachy's Parish Church, Philadelphia. He did his Primary Schooling in Immaculate

Conception School from 1927 to 1935. He did his Secondary Schooling in St Jo's Prep School, Philadelphia from 1935 to 1939. He grew up as a good Catholic student.

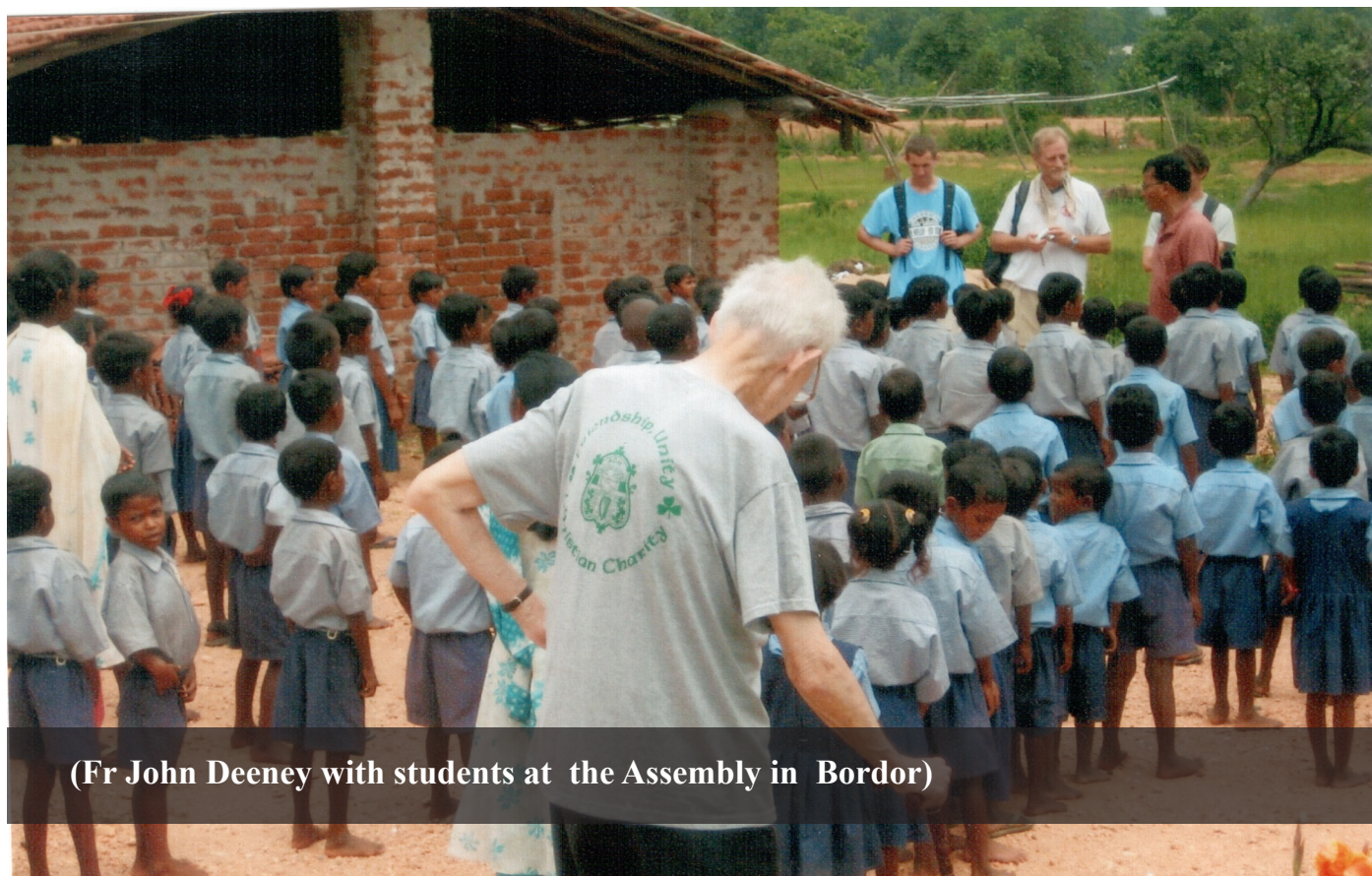
He said "yes" to God's call in the year 1939. He joined the Jesuit Novitiate in Wernersville, PA on 14th August 1939. He did his Juniorate in Wernersville from 1941 to 1943 after he pronounced his First Vows in the Society of Jesus on 15th August 1941. He did

his college studies and Philosophy in Weston College, Massachusetts, PA from 1943 to 1946. He began to teach after completing his studies. He had a keen interest in going to the Missions. He expressed his desire to the Superior and the higher officials of the Mary Land Jesuit Province. Finally, his long-dreamt dream came true in the year 1949. Along with other Jesuit missionaries, he opted to work in the Jamshedpur region of India as a missionary. He did a year of Theological studies in De Nobili College, Pune from January to December 1950. He continued his Theology in Kurseong from 1951. On completion of Theology, he was ordained a priest on 21st November 1952. Two years after his ordination, he was sent to

Sitagahra for his Tertianship. It is to be noted that in the year 1956 on the same date (15th August) of his First Vows, he made his final commitment to the Lord in the Society of Jesus.

Fr Deeney spent his life thereafter in the 'Ho Land' (Major part of the West Singhbhum District of Jharkhand, India where the people of the Ho Tribe live) serving the people there. He was well-versed in four languages namely English, Hindi, Latin, and Ho (Tribal Language). He fell in love with the Ho Tribe. He spent the rest of his life mastering the Ho language, culture, and the customs. He published several books for the learners of the language as well as for the Ho people. The local people

fell in love with Fr Deeney. His love for the people was seen in his keen interest in visiting them and working for their betterment. They began to call him lovingly 'Abua Gomke' (Our Father/Priest). He is the first American Missionary to have been given 'Indian Citizenship' on 21 February 1991 in recognition for the contributions he made for the uplift of the Ho tribe. His work among the Ho Tribals moved people to love him very much. That could be seen when they carried his mortal remains in procession on their shoulders till St Xavier's Church. His death left the people with grief and sorrow. Though he left us from this earthly world, he continues to live in the hearts of the people to this day.



(Fr John Deeney with students at the Assembly in Bordor)



First Encounter with Fr John Deeney in the Early 70's

Our group of “Formees” was the last to see that we got the FULL traditional course – 3 years of Philosophy and 4 years of Theology. Ours was the first group to be allotted pocket money of Rs. 20 (twenty) rupees a month for toilet and local travel by PMT bus or for hiring a cycle. Ours was the first group that was told that there would be no Quinzaine (15-day organized vacation) in DNC, Pune but that we had to return to the Province for the holiday period.

Those 30 days of holidays, before we returned to DNC for the Annual Retreat, were to be spent, partly for language study and partly for a vacation on the burning sands of Gopalpur, in Orissa, where the Province had bought a Villa just for R&R (Rest and Recuperation). I came to Lupungutu for language study. There, for the first time I met Fr. John Deeney. He was tall and lanky, lean as a rail, not the least bothered that he had not shaven for a full day. He wore an ill-fitting, oversized T-shirt, with baggy cotton trousers that had not been ironed in days, with ill-fitting sandals from where his long toenails struggled to peek out. But, when he got to teaching us Ho, it was pure fun all the way. No tension. It was a delight. As a teacher, he was superb – never in

a hurry to move on – his gestures with his long hands were expressive as he explained “aayer te, aayerte– “emenenge” “nepa” “alang” that we had to control our ourselves

from bursting out into laughter. That we did. And he liked it. It meant he was on target.

My next encounter was right after Ordination when Fr. John Deeney



invited Fr. Joe Lacey and me on our first mission experience in the old Willy's Jeep. We learnt to feel every bump on our rump on those country roads where the dust would come through the front with the shield raised up for the air to pass through. I was coughing up like I had TB. But Fr. John was nonchalant and unperturbed as though he was driving in the US. It was something that had become part and parcel of his life.

It was winter. We were allotted a hut to spend the night in. But before we retired for the night, we were served supper. It was like a "congee" - "Maar Bhaat" - boiled rice in water- salt - a few green chilies. Mind you, it was winter. The atmosphere, outside and inside the hut, was ice cold. So too was the food! We spent the night, sleeping on "puhaal"- straw. I never could imagine sleeping on straw could be so pleasant and warm!

The next morning, at the crack of dawn, on an empty stomach except for tea that had salt in it and not sugar, the Willys Jeep took off. As we neared a stream, Fr. John prepared us for the next surprise. There were no toilets and so "do as the natives" - defecate - attend to your morning ablutions - and use a large peepal leaf for the final swipe. My whole city-bred -upbringing in Pune revolted. My entire system refused to cooperate. The urge to relieve myself just never disturbed me. But I could see Fr. John Deeney return from his call of nature as though he were coming out of a Five -Star-Hotel! I could not figure it out - me, an out-and-out native of the soil unable to relieve himself in public while an American used to flush toilets was able to do it with such consummate ease, such nonchalance.

That was Fr. John Deeney - a person who learnt the Ho language like he spoke his native English-

dressed simply, not concerned whether his trousers had a knife - edge crease in them - ate whatever was given him as though he were at a McDonald's Restaurant.

This was not the life for me I said to myself as I neared the first year of being a priest. Little did I realize at the end of the fourth year of Theology, I would be assigned to Maluka, an in-coactive parish in the middle of nowhere - live out of a thatched hut like the natives around - with no running water - no toilets- no electricity- no newspapers. Thank God, Fr. John Deeney was there in Chaibasa to encourage me, 'Never give up, Eric'! Yes, hang in there, even with your fingernails - but - never give up!

Fr. Eric Cassel, S.J.
(Golden Jubilarian)





Fr. John Deeney's Early Years

Fr. John Joseph Deeney was born in Philadelphia, USA, on 22 July 1921. He was baptized in St Malachys Parish, Philadelphia and was confirmed in Immaculate Conception, Parish, Germantown Philadelphia. His parents were Mr George C Deeney and Mrs Mae A Deeney. He had one elder sister who was a nun, one younger sister and four younger brothers. He attended Primary School in Immaculate Conception School, Philadelphia in 1927 to 1935. For his Secondary Education, he joined a Jesuit High School St. Jos's Prep School, Philadelphia, from 1935 to 1939. After completing High School, he joined the Society of Jesus on 14 August 1939 at Wernersville, PA. His missionary vocation seeds were sown when he was in Class 4 of Grammar School when a visiting missionary from Africa organized a motivational talk program in the school. All students were asked to take part in the program. This cute child took part in this particular program. The talk was based on the life of Jesus Christ and the life of Saints and their work - what they did for the people to save their souls. It was so inspiring that it touched the heart of young Deeney, and he was moved by the Spirit. This transformation moment left a lasting impression on him and in his life, and that made him very close to God. His family was very

prayerful, and his parents used to encourage him to pray and grow in his prayer life. During his final year in the Jesuit High School, he made a 9-day Novena to St. Francis Xavier, during which he was inspired to pray for "the strength, the will, the way, an inexhaustible initiative in winning the souls of all men to Christ", a prayer he kept throughout his life. From that time, he had a great desire to serve God, and with a strong determination, he entered the Novitiate on 14 August 1939 in Wernersville. PA. From the

Novitiate, he used to write letters to his parents occasionally. He often used to mention his experience of the Novitiate and used to express his desire to volunteer to join the Missions. His Novice Masters were Father John E Mc Envoy and Dougharty SJ. He pronounced his First Vows on 15 August 1941 in Wernersville PA, in the Diocese of Philadelphia.



Fr. Deeney and his family



Vocation Life

“He who carries God in his heart bears heaven with him wherever he goes”

St. Ignatius Of Loyola

Nothing stops a person from attaining greater heights in life when he/she is associated with God and His people. A man of great calibre known as the Apostle of the Hos is none other than Fr. John Deeney SJ. Even as a young

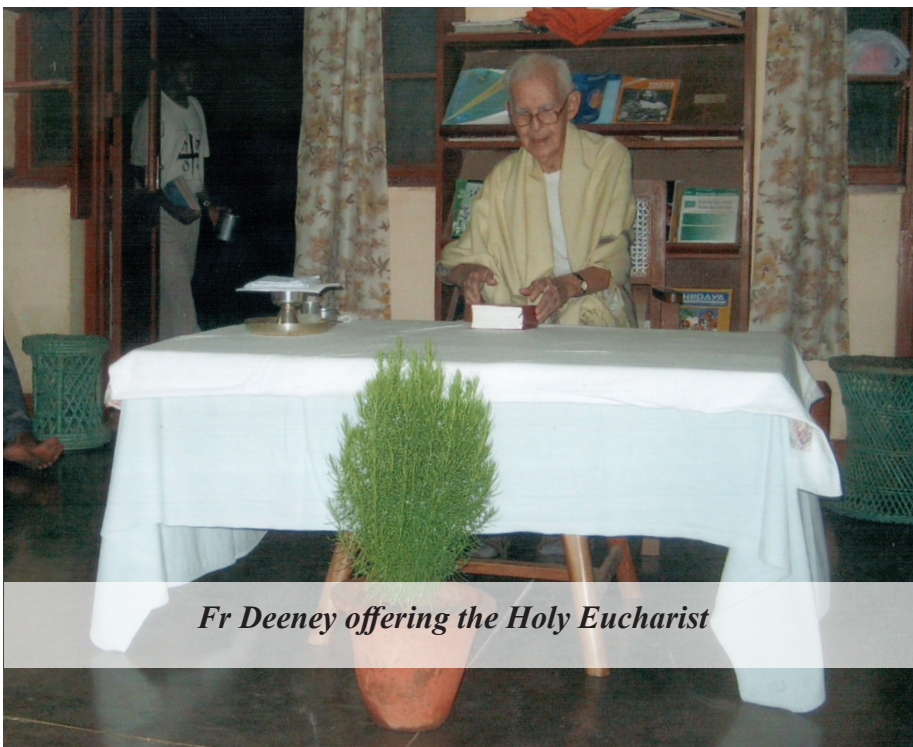
himself, people thought it likely that he was in Church.

At a very young age, he knew how to discover and reflect God’s presence in his life. The seeds of his vocation were sown when he was in class 4 of Grammar School

his final year at Jesuit High School, he made a 9-Day Novena to St. Francis Xavier, during which he was inspired to pray for “strength, the will, the way, an inexhaustible initiative in winning the souls of all men to Christ.

Fr. Deeney knew he had a vocation but was unsure whether to join the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, where his uncle, Monsignor John Daly was a priest at Most Blessed Sacrament. He went through a period of uncertainty whether to become a Vincentian where his uncle belonged or a Jesuit in whose institutions, he did his early education. In his autobiography, he stated that he received a clear message from the Holy Spirit that he should become a Jesuit. He had no vision, heard no voice, but there was a sudden deep conviction about which he could have no doubt that he should be a Jesuit. He remembered the exact place he was standing when that happened. From then on, there was no doubt in his mind that God wanted him to be a Jesuit.

An extract from Fr. Tomm Brz’s E-mail about the vocation story



Fr Deeney offering the Holy Eucharist

boy, he had a great experience of God. He spent his life in prayer. As a child, he attended Church every day and spent time there. If he took a walk by the seashore by

when a visiting missionary from Africa gave a talk to the boys. This left a lasting impression on him for doing something for the Lord. In

of Fr. John Deeney, “About my vocation: while I was alone, quietly waiting for a trolley I suddenly had this firm conviction, almost like a message, that God wanted me to become a Jesuit. It was a very strong urge, which left no question of doubting it. After that I just knew that I was to become a Jesuit. I considered that very sacred and never spoke about it until recent years. When I was asked to write something about my vocation, I wrote that with hesitation, and asked the Socius to the Provincial whether I should include that. He advised me to include it. In recent years, I have come to think of it as a kind of intellectual vision (i.e., no

sight nor sound). In the Spiritual Exercises #330 Ignatius writes about consolation without previous cause. This was something like that. It came to me suddenly out of the blue.”

Fr. John Deeney joined Maryland Province of the Society of Jesus to become a Jesuit priest. From his novitiate days, he was very fond of working in missions. During the Second World War, Maryland Province was divided from New York and in 1947, Maryland Province was given a new mission in Jamshedpur, India. Thus, Fr. John Deeney had a great opportunity to work for it voluntarily and was

assigned to India in 1949. Soon after coming to India, he started his 1st Year Theology in Pune and his Second, Third and Fourth year in Kurseong. During this time, he came to know more about the life of the Hos of West Singhbhum District and developed a keen interest to work among them for the uplift of their social, spiritual, and economic welfare. After his Ordination to the Priesthood, he was assigned to work among the Hos till his last breath. He was never a foreigner in a foreign land. He loved the people and accepted their culture as his own.

Sch. Jobin Sebastian SJ



The Apostle of the Hos

From the time of St Francis Xavier, Jesuit missionaries not only came to India but did something unique for the growth of the Church of India. Among them, Fr. John Deeney S.J.’s name stands out. His apostolate made us realize that the Risen Christ lives among us today. In this paper I would like to present the apostolic work that Fr. John Deeney devoted an entire lifetime.

Getting Mentally Ready to be a Missionary

In the Novitiate itself, Fr. John Deeney, expressed his desire to be a missionary to his Superiors.

When Maryland Province adopted Jamshedpur as a new mission, he volunteered for the Mission. During his last 3 years of Theology, in Kurseong, he came to know about the Hos and started to read about them. Furthermore, he met up with early Ho missionaries Fr. Defrijn, S.J. and John Guidera, SJ who poured oil on his burning desire to be a missionary in the Ho land.

From 3” by 5” Cards to Dictionary

In 1955 he was appointed as the Headmaster of St. Xavier’s High School, Chaibasa and assistant

Parish Priest of Chaibasa Parish. It was here that he started to learn Ho. As the Assistant Parish Priest, he went through the records in the parish and visited all the families and those who went away from the faith. Later, in 1957, when the school was shifted to Lupungutu, he started to visit the homes of the schoolboys. On his bicycle, he visited the schoolboys, within a radius of 10 miles. Although he used the book Vocabulary of Burrow’s Grammar for communicating with the Hos, he found that the book lacked many words. He planned to carry a 3” by 5” cards to write down new words.

Later, the number of the cards increased, and he published them. It became the first Ho-English Dictionary. It was the start of his works on Ho publications.

A Bridge Between the Church and the Hos

Some of the earliest Ho missionaries were not open to the Ho culture: they banned the traditional rituals, dances, and some customs. It was like one can either be a Christian or a Ho but not both. This brought many challenges to the Christians and many of those who accepted Christianity became outcasts for

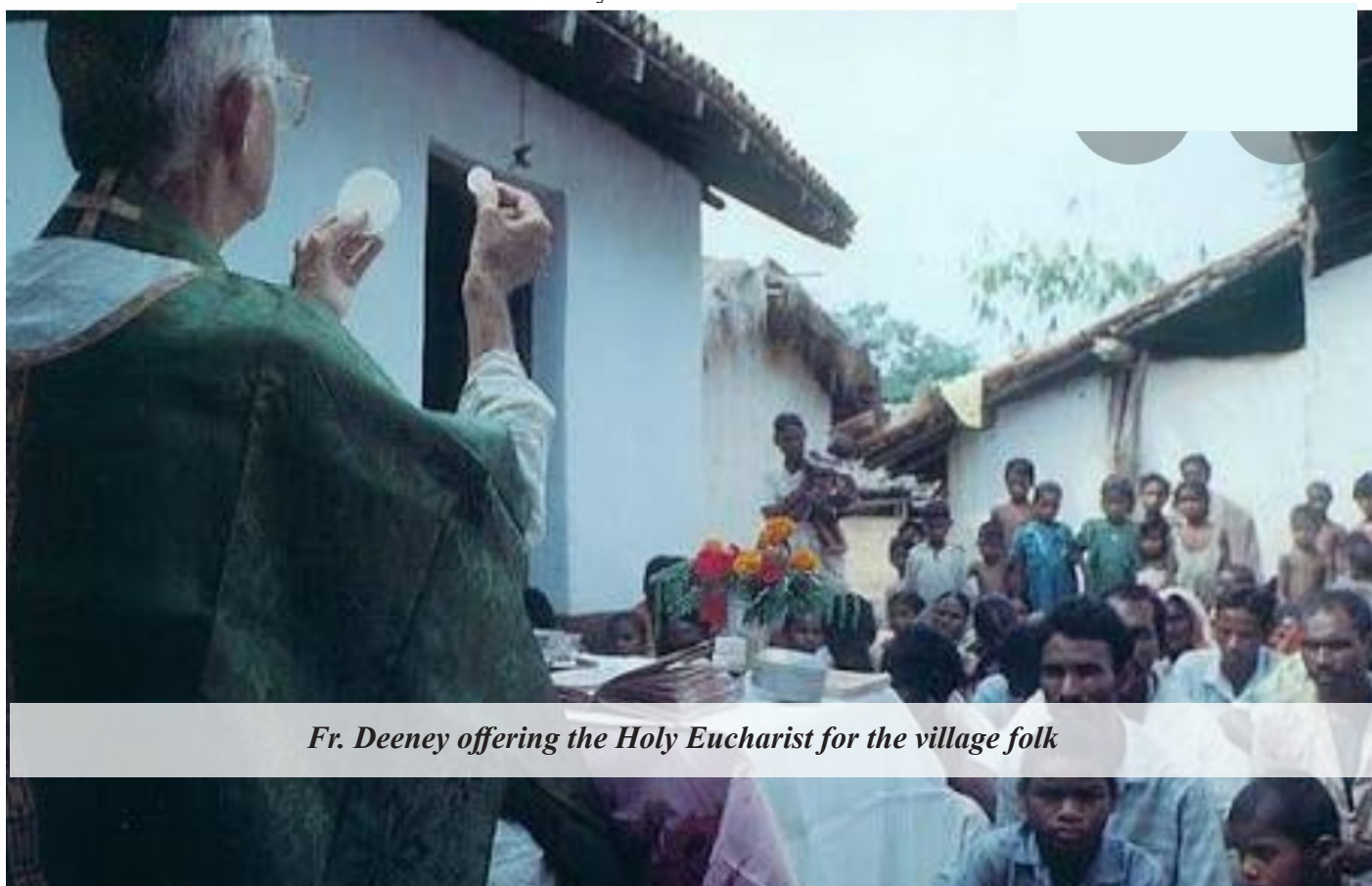
a study of the Ho culture, customs and rituals.

In 1962, as the Parish Priest of Chaibasa, Fr. Deeney, started to translate prayers into Ho. Translation of the word 'God' touched off many disputes. Fr. Deeney studied the word 'Sing Bonga' (in Ho it means the creator of all beings and a supreme spirit) and came to a conclusion that the word 'Sing Bonga' would be a perfect Ho word for God. This was a great step, a breakthrough, to bring the Hos closer to the Church; by using the word 'Sing Bonga' Fr. Deeney confirmed that the God

Ranchi Diocese decided to use Hindi for Mass and Sacraments due to the diversity seen in each parish. However, Fr. Deeney wrote a letter to the Bishop requesting that his parish to make use of the Ho language for the Mass and Sacraments, since his parish, Chaibasa, had only Hos. Ranchi Diocese gladly approved his request. In this way, Fr. Deeney strengthened the bridge between the Hos and the Church.

Apostle on a Bicycle

Fr. John Deeney's heart was that of the Good Shepherd. In



Fr. Deeney offering the Holy Eucharist for the village folk

others. However, the efforts of Father De Jardin, SJ (during 1930s) made the Hos accept that they are not an outcast by accepting the Christian faith. Knowing the past, Fr. Deeney decided to make

they were worshipping was the same God that the Church preached.

After Vatican II, all over the world Mass and Sacraments were translated into the vernacular.

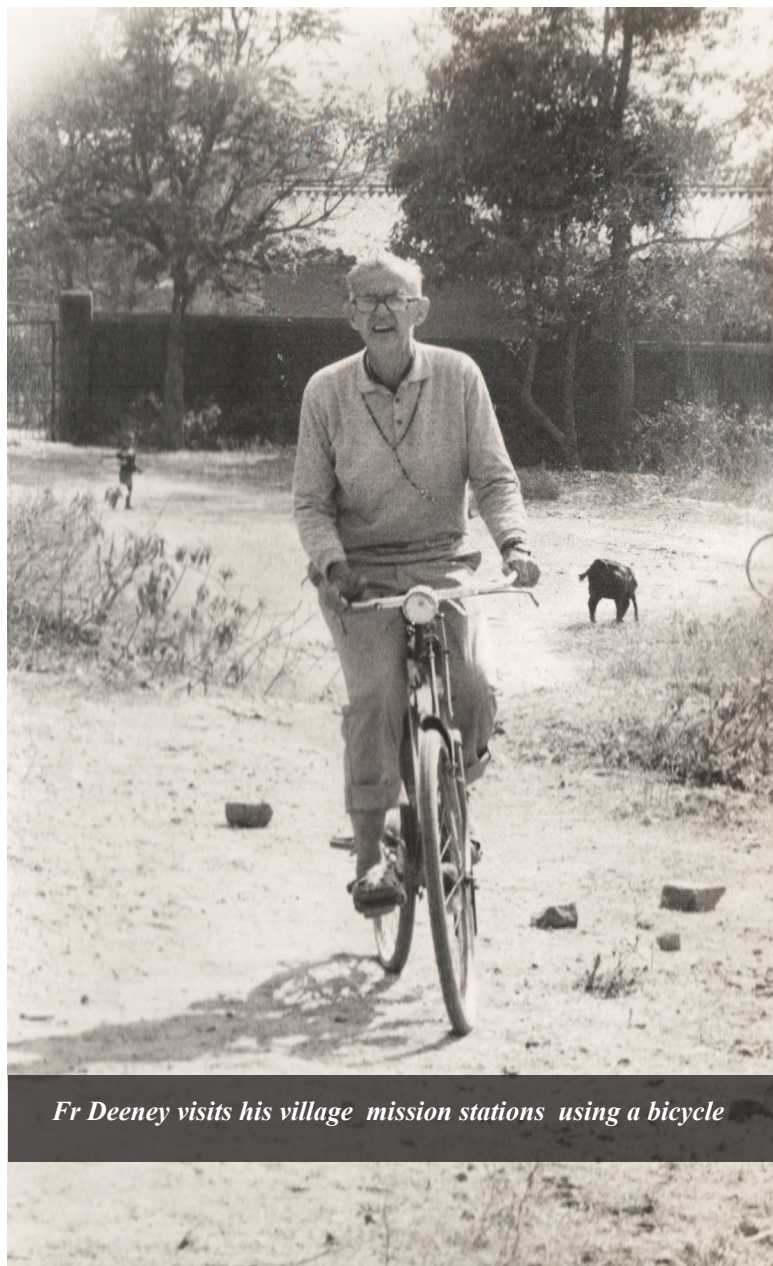
Chaibasa and Lupungutu, he visited parishioners and students regularly on his bicycle. From 1974 onwards, every Sunday, he went to Bordor for offering Mass. In 1995, he requested permission

for a break from schoolwork and to allow himself to be fully involved in the pastoral field. He was appointed to Amda, from where he not only rode his cycle to the small chapel in Bhoya but also to the villages nearby for pastoral needs of the people. Later, in 1998, Fr. Deeney was appointed as the first Parish Priest of Basahatu. His story of riding on a bicycle is a just

another expression of how much he loved to be a Good Shepherd.

We need to open ourselves to the guidance of the Spirit showing us in what way God wants us to serve Him as He pointed the way to Fr. John Deeney. The book of the Acts of the Apostles narrates an account of how the Holy Spirit led the first Christians. Fr. John Deeney

became an Apostle of the Hos by just following the promptings of the same Spirit that led the Apostles in the First Century. All his works give us the message that the Spirit is still working. All we need is to be open to the Spirit.



Fr Deeney visits his village mission stations using a bicycle



Contribution to the Ho Language and Culture

“Si monumentum requiris, circumspice”, this is the inscription carved at the base of the statue of Mr. J. N. TATA erected in Jubilee Park, Jamshedpur, which means, if you’re looking for a monument, look all round. Similarly, if you’re looking for a monument to Fr. John Deeney, look around Kolhan- Porahat and the Church of Kolhan- Porahat. His contribution to the Ho people

contribution to the Church of Kolhan-Porahat, especially to the Church and culture as well as language in Ho land, is immense. He had the thirst to know more about the Ho people, their language, their culture, and customs. However, Fr. John Deeney is a visionary, the prime mover and the pioneer par excellence and a committed missionary among the Hos. He not only began it all, but he took solid

to learn the Ho language and later spent his entire life among the Hos. In 7 years of work in the school as a Headmaster in St. Xavier’s High School, Lupungutu, he further developed his knowledge of the Ho language, and also came to know the surrounding Ho villages. On holidays, John would regularly take his bicycle and visit homes of schoolboys. John knew the homes of almost all Ho boys, most of whom were non-Christian, who lived within ten miles of the school. When John would find a Ho word not in the Vocabulary of Burrow’s Grammar, John would write the word and its English meaning in a copybook. This was the start of what would later become the First Ho-English Dictionary. He brought out his first authoritative book, entitled ‘Ho Grammar and Vocabulary’ in 1975. Besides a thorough explanation of Ho Grammar, this book gives the English meaning of about 3000 words and the Ho meaning of about 2300 words. It also contains a list of 124 Hokilis and sub-kilis. In 1976 a ‘Pictorial Life of Christ’, 64 pages with a picture on each page and the explanation, usually a Gospel passage, in Ho was put out. In 1978 the ‘Ho-English Dictionary’ was printed. In 376 double column pages this gives the meaning of almost 12,000 Ho words, including scientific terms



and to the Ho culture and society cannot be easily enumerated and evaluated. His contribution to the growth of the Church in that region can be described as a modern miracle in Kolhan-Porahat. Fr. John Deeney is universally known as the ‘Apostle of the Hos’. His

steps to strengthen and sustain the growth of the Ho culture.

Shortly after his Ordination, John’s journey in Ho land began with a copy of a Ho Grammar and Vocabulary written by Burrows in 1910. From that time, John started

for many botanical species, names of birds, snakes, etc.

In 1984 the Bihar Textbook Corporation wrote to him asking him to prepare a textbook for Ho children in Class One, saying that they had selected others to do so for classes 2, 3, 4 and 5. John realized that this would be a time-consuming effort, but John saw a big advantage in that it would help stabilize our conventions for writing the Ho language using the Devanagari script.

With the help of Dhanur Singh Purty, he worked hard and relentlessly: He brought out his monumental 7 volume-encyclopedia entitled 'Ho Language and Customs'. This is the fruit of his life-long quest to know more and more about the

Ho people and their culture. No one ever has contributed to the development of the Ho language, culture, and literature as much as Fr John Deeney! The people called him with great love and respect, "Abua Gomke" meaning, "our Father".

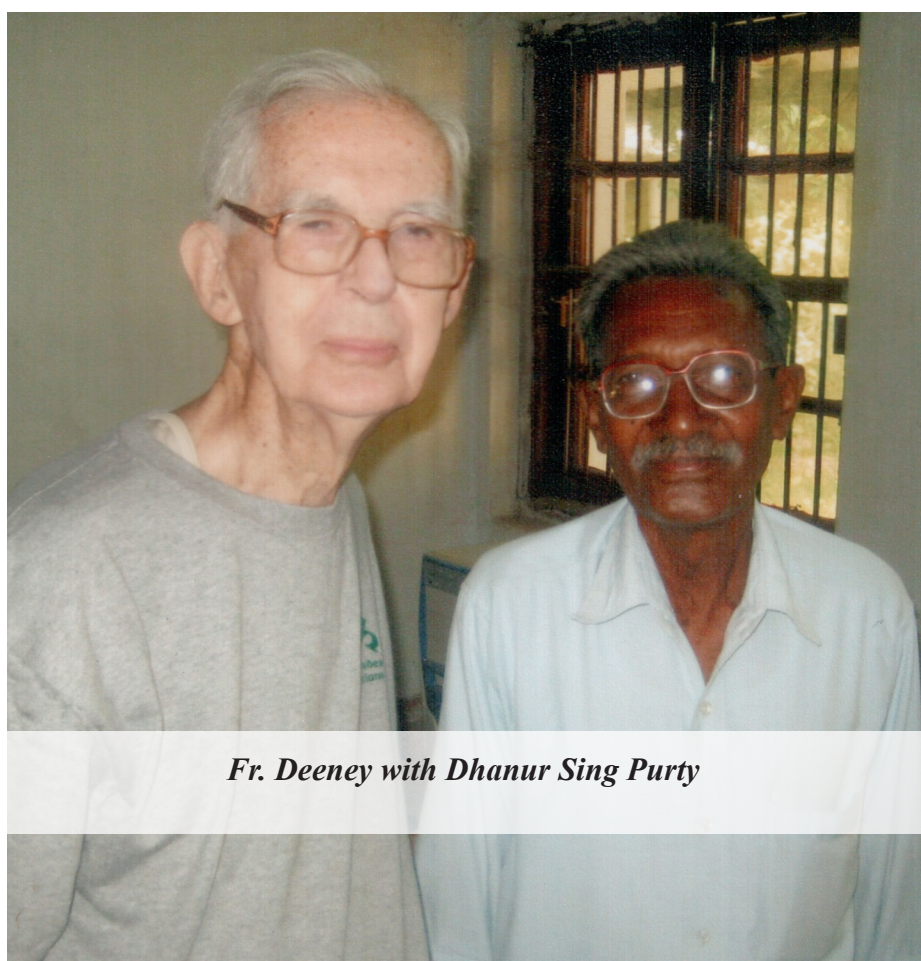
In 1968 a 64page 'Ho Hymnal' with hymns was published that could be used in any Ho Mass. In 1970 a 320page 'Ho Prayer Book' was brought out. Later John was involved in a joint effort with the Bible Society of India (BSI) to translate the 'Gospel of St. Luke and Mass Book into the Ho language.

Similarly, his contribution to the growth of the Church cannot be adequately described. Right from

the beginning, he only used Ho in all village liturgies. He prepared all necessary liturgical books in Ho, namely, the New Testament, Selected portions of the Old Testament, the Missal, the Sunday and Festal Day's Readings, the Hymn Books, the Rituale and several other booklets in Ho, got them printed and made them available to priests, catechists, people in the villages. The entire Liturgy was conducted in Ho. He also integrated all possible Ho festivals like, Hermut, Hero, Jomnama, Baa, in our liturgy, whatever could be Christianized, he did it, long before the rest of the Indian Church dreamt of doing it.,

In 1991 their New Testament of the Bible was printed by Catholic Press Ranchi. In 1991 John put out a book entitled "An Introduction to the Ho Language", which gives an approach to learning Ho which has been found more effective than that given in "Ho Grammar and Vocabulary". In 1992 they put out in Ho a 'Bible History', a book summarization of the history of both the Old and New Testament. In 1995 they put out a book on the role of 'Saints in Church History'.

Fr. Deeney spent his entire life in contributing to the Ho language, culture, and education. He became one among them and was mostly involved in Ho land, in his mission for the development of Ho people. He always cared for the common home and walked with the youth and never left them till his last breath. That's why he is called the Apostle of Ho land.



Fr. Deeney with Dhanur Sing Purty



Works of Fr Deeney

“There is no exercise better for the heart than reaching down and lifting people up,” – John Holmes.

Fr. John Deeney exercised his heart by making use of his skills and abilities in learning a strange language as the tool kit for the mission. He read all the books written about the Hos in detail. He came with very strong convictions that he must know about the Hos, their culture, customs, and language thoroughly. He did some research through the parish records and learnt about their background.

Initially he learnt the vocabulary. He authored the Ho Translations by writing down on his note book.

Every day he would learn three to five new words without missing a single day. He practised what he learnt. Hence, he learnt fast. He would encourage the students to write essays on the different aspects of the Ho life and culture. He had the humility to learn the language as Ignatius had the humility to sit down and learn Latin with small kids. Being a foreigner, it was not a cup of tea for him, but he also knew that this was the only way to expand the mission. Language was and is an essential tool. He took this as a challenge and dedicated himself to learning. He learnt not for himself but for others.

He authored translations of the

Psalms, Prophets- Isiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and Hosea.

He also wrote some articles based on the Ho culture and customs.

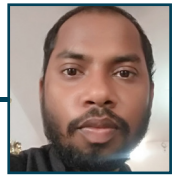
Fr. John Deeney still continues to live among the Hos through his great contributions to Ho Literature. It was through his effort and hard work that people received education in their own mother tongue that benefitted them a lot. As a result, many have flourished and are living a good and dignified life. He dedicated his entire life for the uplift of the people, particularly for the Hos. Fr. Deeney experienced inner joy and peace because he gave of himself without counting the cost.

Names of Books Authored by Fr. Deeney

1. 1968 *Ho Hymn Book* (64 pages)
2. 1970 *Ho Prayer Book* (320 Pages)
3. 1975 *Ho Grammar and Vocabulary*(237 pages)
4. 1976 *Pictorial Life of Christ* (64 pages)
5. 1978 *Ho English Dictionary* (387 pages)
6. 1984 *Ho Missal Book* (800 pages)
7. 1991 *An Introduction to the Ho Language*
8. 1991 *New Testament of the Bible*
9. 1992 *Bible History*

Names of Well-Known Articles by Fr. Deeney

1. “Some Theological Reflections on Ancestor Veneration among the Ho” printed in the *Sevartham*.
2. “Cultural Traditions of the Hos”
3. “How the Hos Foretell Weather”
4. “The Hos Continued Relationship with the Dead”
5. “The Husband in the Role of Midwife, a custom of the Ho Tribe”
6. “Ho Kilis compared to those of the Mundas”
7. “Development of Catholicism among the Hos of Singhbhum”



Interviews with Jesuit Priests

During the time of my Regency, I stayed with Fr. John Deeney in the same community of St. Xavier's, Lupungutu, Chaibasa. Fortunately for me, he was also my Spiritual Guide and, being his spiritual son, I could experience the simplicity of his life, who had a large and humble heart which was wide open for any Ram, Shyam or Gyan. I have never found such a person with such a great commitment and zeal which he kept till his last breath. That commitment was for the people around belonging the 'HO' tribe. He was a spiritual person. I could

feel it the way he used to deal with the people of every age, child or grown up. He is the one who started night classes for the local people in Chaibasa, using kerosene lamps! Later, I got a chance to become a part of that movement of Night Classes for the locals. Before that could happen, he learnt the local language. He did not stop there but he mastered the language in order to communicate with them. All the more he started teaching HO to young Jesuits. What a commitment I would say, coming from so far – "Saath Samudra paar ke" to a new place, among

unknown people and a language he was bent on mastering. Such a great dedication! He followed the traditions and culture of the 'HOs'. He won the hearts of the 'HOs' and he still lives on in their hearts.



(Fr. Benedict Soreng SJ)

As a Parish Priest in Chaibasa, Fr. John Deeney was liked, loved, and almost worshipped by the 'HO' people. He came to India in 1949. He was a Mathematician and he applied it in his mission work, planning schedules of visiting Mission Stations on a regular basis. With him, there were no formalities. I was inspired by his way of living and, later it promoted me to join the Society of Jesus. I am proud to be reckoned as the first Jesuit of the same land in which this great man trod upon these umpteen years. I have never seen such a person so simple, so humble, so committed and, down to earth. Every Saturday he used to go to the villages using a cycle, staying overnight in a village

and returning the following day. I would say he followed the Jesuit way of life "MEN FOR OTHERS". I did not get a chance to stay with him for a longer time but, yes, I am fortunate enough to offer the last Mass in the hospital where we both were admitted together. I remember. It was Sunday and I went to him in the morning and asked him whether we could have Mass or not. He said, "Okay", in a smiling tone, "but without damadurang" (hymns). We offered Mass. Then, after a day or two, he was discharged from the hospital and, later I got the news that he passed away.

He contributed a lot for my people. Some of his achievements that I would like to enumerate are the

HO-ENGLISH DICTIONARY, HO PRAYER BOOK, HYMN BOOK IN HO, to name a few. Though Fr. Deeney is dead and gone but, according to our tribal beliefs, the one who dies becomes part of our life and will live forever in our land. This is what I believe.



(Fr. John Sumbrui SJ)



Interview with a Lay Person

Who is Fr. John Deeney for me?

I heard many stories about Fr. John Deeney. After listening to them, I was very eager and enthusiastic to meet him in person. Finally, the day came after 1958 when he came to Tepasai by cycle, and I met him. It was really an enriching experience for me. I cannot simply forget it. Within my heart I experienced like meeting a man who is close to God. Thereafter, we met time and again for certain tasks to be executed. Gradually I began to know him and about his work in Kolhan area. I see his mission and life in the following four categories.

Simplicity: Why do I say that he is a man of simplicity? Whenever I met him, I always found him simple in appearance and with a gentle smile on his face. He never compared his life with others. He knew his purpose and mission very clearly. Whoever came to meet him, he warmly welcomed them and treated them with love and care. In other words, his life among the Hos was simple. As Anuj and so many say, "The best charity to serve humanity is just a person's simplicity of living with the basic necessities."

Generosity: Though he came from America, he had great love for the people. Whoever asked him for help, he happily helped

them and fulfilled their urgent needs? No one felt hesitant and afraid to meet him. He understood everyone equally and never made a distinction between poor and rich. He was generous enough to give whatever he had.

Spirituality: He was a man of deep spirituality. He was very particular about Sunday Masses and family prayers. During the Mass he explained the real meaning of the Readings to be lived in daily life. He really accompanied the faithful to help them understand the mystery of God. He used to teach Daily Prayers to the children which was appreciated by everyone in the parish. Whenever he came for family visit, he prayed over the family members. He made a circle of love for all. He was like a man who is spiritually ready to accompany the people and lead them towards God's kingdom.

Man of Mission: Though he came from America, he learned the local languages first. Then he started his work with the people of Kolhan. He spread the word of God among the 'Hos'. Not only the Word of God but the love and compassion of the Lord. At first, he went around the villages and talked to them. Slowly, he built up a relationship with the villagers and, if needed, he helped them in their difficulties. In

this way, he became a good friend of many, and they accepted him as one of their village members or family members. His complete commitment and selfless service inspired many to accept Christ as their saviour. First and foremost, he opened St. Xavier School in Basahatu for the local children. As a result, today the children of that place are getting a proper education and are to have an identity of their own. The impact of Fr. John Deeney has really touched the hearts of many. As part of his mission, he also wrote some books, which are related to Ho traditions.



(Mr. Simon, the Catechist of St. John's Parish Tepasai)



Deeney's Mission Today

Father John Deeney was a man for others who left everything behind and walked in the footprints of St. Ignatius, a person rooted in the Spiritual Exercises. He was the man who selflessly dedicated his life for others. Being an American and adopting the culture and tradition of the tribals was not easy for mere mortals. He was more! He internalized the values of the tribals, embraced their culture and loved their language and, above all, he nurtured a preferential love for the poor. As he remarked while teaching us the rudiments of HO, the Ho language is almost mathematical in its structure. And, since Fr. Deeney enjoyed Maths as well as enjoyed teaching it for ten years in St. Xavier's School, Lupungutu (LPG), the Ho language was a sheer delight for him! The impact of Fr John Deeney on the people depicts that his heart was larger than his words. In a way, he was a shepherd, who not only protected his sheep from the snares of the fox but also led them to green pastures.

Once it so happened, there came a group of people armed with traditional weapons. Seeing them, Fr. John Deeney drew himself near to them and asked them, "Do you want to kill me? Kill me but do not do any harm to my people." This statement says it all - that he was a good shepherd in every sense of the words of the Psalm. In other ways, he was a sower of the seeds of faith in the land of the Hos.

Thus, in the contemporary times we see the faithful professing their faith as Christians. Being a great evangelist, Fr John Deeney baptized many who never embraced Christianity and who were against him. Subsequently, they became Catholics. Now they are the pillars of a parish called Basahatu. Thus, he has been a great missionary in a place called Ho Land.

Shortly, after his Ordination, John spent a month in Jamshedpur and Chaibasa where he was given



a copy of a Ho Grammar and Vocabulary written by Burrows in 1910. From that time, John started to learn the Ho language and later spent his entire life among the Hos.

The contact of the Hos with the Christian missions started in 1865 when the Lutherans came to Chaibasa. For various reasons

the whole complexion of the Christian missions, Lutheran, and later Anglican and Catholic, made the Hos feel that joining these missions would lead to the loss of their identity. The earliest Christian missionaries among the Hos were the Lutherans. They encouraged easy mixing, including marrying, with other castes and tribes. Later the Anglican did the same. The Catholic Mission had no initial success among the Hos and started their work with an orphanage. The

orphans came from a variety of racial backgrounds. These orphans along with some local people, mostly poor, recruited to work at the orphanage, made up the bulk of the Catholic community. All this gave the Catholic community the image of being racially mixed.

When John came to work among the Hos, he was very much aware

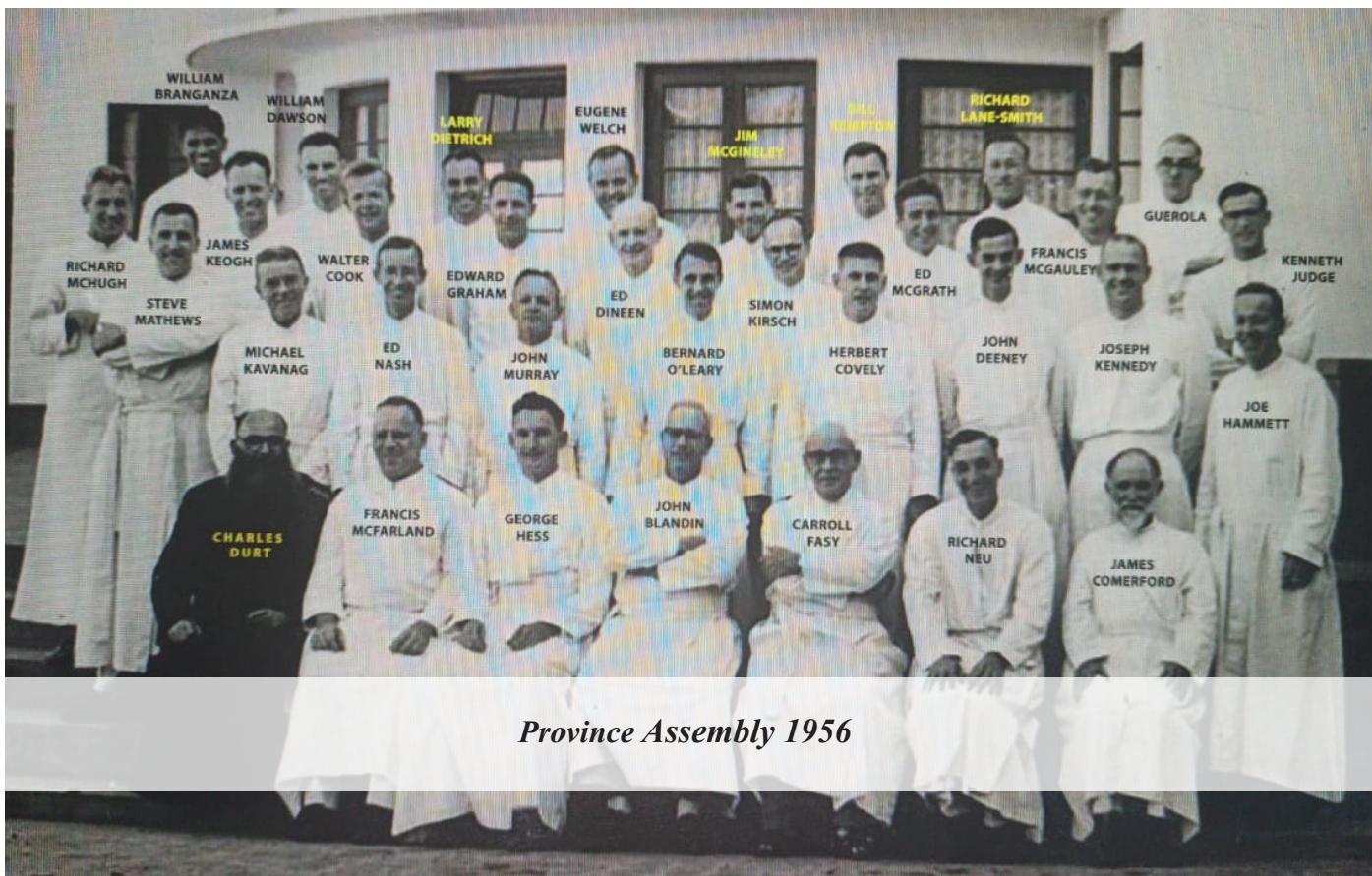
of the above phenomenon, having read and studied early documents and spoken with Fr. Defrijn, S.J who had worked with Fr, Dejardin and with older catechists. Hence, Fr. Deeney came with very strong convictions that they need to know the Ho culture, customs, and language thoroughly and do everything possible to encourage any Ho who became Christians to preserve all that is good in the Ho culture, and, hence, to do all that was possible to break down the common perception becoming a Christian meant one ceased to be a Ho. Also, that they should do everything possible to prevent a wall coming up between Catholic Hos and other Hos. In 1992 they

put out in Ho a Bible History, a book containing many colored pictures and giving a summary of the history of both the Old and New Testament.

1995 they put out a book on the role of Saints in Church History containing colored pictures of 80 Saints given in chronological order with some details of Church History filled in. Similarly, many were done by him.

Today our work among the Hos gives the strongest possible proof of the importance of inculturation. The Hos are very proud of and anxious to retain their Ho identity. When the first Hos became Christians Church failed to realize

how important this was for the Hos. They disregarded fundamental aspects of Ho culture leading to severe out casting of those Hos who became Christians. The common understanding among the Hos then was that by becoming a Christian, one automatically ceased being a Ho. Hence very few Hos became Christians. In recent decades, the Catholic Church has made every effort to appreciate all that is good in the Ho culture that is not directly against our religion. This has helped break down the early practice of ostracizing from the Ho society any who became a Christian. Now the Hos realize that one can be both a Ho and a Catholic.





The Impact and Present Status of his Mission in Ho land

When people come into our life. No matter how long a time they spend with us, they make an impact on our life. This person is none other than Fr. John Deeney SJ known as “the Apostle of the Hos” for his invaluable contribution to the Ho tribes in Jharkhand. Undoubtedly, he was the sole acclaimed authority in the Ho language, culture, and liturgy. Fr. Deeney’s work has left its impact on the people of Ho land.

The impact is so enormous that it is unforgettable for the Ho because Fr. Deeney dealt with people in such a way that the after effect has been imprinted in the hearts and minds of the people. He is remembered by every Ho even today. What could be the reason behind this? We feel that because of his missionary approach, he became one among them. It looks similar to Jesus becoming a human being. Likewise, Fr. Deeney became as one of the family members of Ho people. Firstly, he mastered the language that is why someone rightly said, “language connects communities and nations.

The knowledge of languages apart from being a communication skill enables the authoring of books that depict values about a nation, a state and its people, culture and history.” We think this was the best way to be with them and work with

them.” He had not only learned the Ho language but also generated the script of the Ho language which is lovingly cherished by everyone at present. Because of his intimate love and constant presence among them, today the Ho people have developed in so many ways. For example, education, one’s way of living, fighting for their rights as well. At present they are flourishing

rapidly and have come up from their status of life life which describe the replace beauty with underscores of Deeny’s work. During Jesus’ ministry, Jesus was rejected by the Scribes and Pharisees and elders of the people. Similarly, Fr. Deeney was opposed by the Hos in his time. But the interesting part of it is that they were transformed by looking at the amazing work of a foreigner for the uplift the Hos. So valuable has

been the work among the Ho’s, that the Govt. of India granted Fr. Deeney, a citizen of the US, Indian Citizenship!

Finally, Fr. Deeney himself baptised them and they themselves became the pillars of the Ho parish. So, in this way his presence made a life-changing impact in the life of the Hos.





Fr Deeney's Last Days: Burial According to Ho Tribal Custom

Fr. John Deeney spent his last days at Guidera Jesuit Residence, XLRI Campus, Jamshedpur. There came a day when he was rushed to Mercy Hospital as his physical condition took a turn for the worse. It appeared more than certain that he had reached his point of no return. It was 18 January 2010 when he breathed his last.

The ornately decorated ambulance with a bust size colour photo mounted on the centre of the windshield of the ambulance left

Mercy Hospital, Jamshedpur at 9.30 am for Chaibasa. It took 3 hours to cover 70 km on the worst possible roads one could ever find – bumps and potholes galore! Another forty-seater-bus from XITE carried some of our Jesuits, Novices, Sisters, while there were others who also accompanied the ambulance in 4-wheelers.

The Parish Priest of Chaibasa, together with the faithful, waited patiently, half a kilometre away from St Xavier's Church, Chaibasa, for the ambulance. This

was in order to meet the funeral procession of Fr. John Deeney at the end of his final journey. There was a contingent of 80 or more from St. Xavier's School Band who provided the beat for the slow – dead - march as the pallbearers made their way towards the Parish Residence. It was so genuinely moving that it brought tears to many an eye.

The Requiem Mass began at about 2.15 pm. Fr. Mike T. Raj, the Provincial, was the Main Celebrant, assisted by Fr. John Deeney's



nephew, Fr. George Deeney, OCD, and Fr. C. R. Prabhu, the Vicar General of Jamshedpur Diocese. There were a hundred and twenty priests who concelebrated in the Mass. Fr. Joe Surin was the Master of Ceremony and kept the gathering well informed about what was to come next. In his introduction, Fr. Joe Surin gave a brief life-sketch of Fr. John Deeney. The Mass and the singing were both in Hindi and Ho.

A short homily was given by Fr. Camil Hembrom, the Parish Priest, in Ho expressing what the Hos meant for Abua Gomke John Deeney and what Fr. John Deeney meant for the Hos. Fr. Jerry Cutinha SJ, (Current Provincial of Jamshedpur) read out the Eulogy sent by John Gill (John's grandnephew) on behalf of the Deeney

Family in the US, which was later translated into Hindi and Ho. Fr. George Deeney, who represented the whole Deeney family for the funeral, also spoke, expressing his sentiments on Fr. John Deeney and the Ho people of Chaibasa, which was simultaneously translated in Hindi.

After the Requiem Mass, the mortal remains was taken to St.

Xavier's Parish Church and then to its final resting place. According to Ho rituals, the body was washed with water and oil, and turmeric was applied to his body. The body was then wrapped with a



white burial cloth and placed in the coffin. A bronze plate filled with raw rice was kept under his head. It is the practice of the Hos when they bid a final farewell to someone - they give rice, money and a paste of rice beer so that the person could prepare for himself food and drink whenever he felt hungry or thirsty. It indicates a kind of deep love for the person. His body was carried around the

grave seven times, beginning from the left side. As they took his body, they invoked their gods 'Ai Guru' 'Desauli' and 'Marang Buri' so that his soul may rest in peace. The ritual also denoted the purification of the body.

The Hos believe that our body and soul are holy. Hos believe that their ancestors came from the north. Laying the body in the grave north-south (north side legs and south head) means that the dead person's spirit is still alive and when he gets up, he may see and join his ancestors. A long thread is placed in the grave which is taken out through the mound of mud protruding outside the grave which symbolizes that the spirit of the person can come out and join the ancestors of the family in the ritual ceremony called 'keya ader'. Slabs of stone covered the inner pit of the grave to signify that the body is to be held in reverence where the mud is not to directly touch the body or the coffin. Only when

a white linen cloth covered the slab stones, people drop mud into the grave as a mark of respect to the person.

It was said that during the Mass and the conversations that followed, one factor that came up strongly and obviously was "He lived a saintly life", "He was a saintly man." Everyone said, "We have never seen such a grand and moving funeral ever before".

Eulogy on Fr. John Deeney SJ

Greetings to the parishioners of St. Xavier's, friends of Fr. Deeney, and his Jesuit brothers present here today. We, Fr. Deeney's family, wish to express our deep appreciation for all the love that you have shown to our dear Uncle John throughout his many years in India, especially during his difficult final month. The distance between Philadelphia and Jamshedpur is approximately

mourn here and celebrate his life in our own way with a Memorial Mass in his honor.

Many years ago, Uncle John made it clear that it was his desire to spend the rest of his days in India and to eventually die there. He was happy to come back to America to visit us every few years. But he was always eager to get back to his work, his people, his community,

credence to Fr. Greg's words that day. We truly treasured his home visits to Philadelphia. But we know that his real home was here in Chaibasa, where he will be laid to rest here today.

As we reflect on Uncle John's life, we see clearly that we, and you, were blessed to have been in the presence of a true saint. He sought no glory, notoriety, or praise. Everything he did was "Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam" – For the Greater Glory of God. We will hold up his life's work as a beacon that we can look to when we are feeling weak, encumbered, or put-upon, and use it as motivation to improve ourselves and our relationship with God each day. We hope that you too can take Uncle John's life into your hearts and go forth filled with the spirit!

So again, thank you to all present today. In some way, each of you helped to make our Uncle John's life here in India happy, and profoundly meaningful. May God bless each of you. And as Uncle John assumes his rightful place in Heaven, no doubt receiving a congratulatory hug from St. Ignatius himself on a job well done, may he continue to affect each of you through his prayerful intercession.

Jisu marang ka!

Sincerely,

Fr. Deeney's family



13,000 km. But due to the diligent email correspondence of many, especially Fr. Eric Cassel, S.J. and Fr. Jerry Cutinha, S.J., we were made to feel close to the situation and were constantly informed of his ever-changing health status. More importantly, we were comforted that his Jesuit brothers were caring for him and doing all that they could to ease his pain. We wish that we could be there with you today to mourn and to commend his soul to the Lord. But given the great distance, we will

in India. In 1991, he denounced his American citizenship and was granted Indian citizenship. We imagine this to have been a joyous day for him. Surely, he fancied himself an Indian long before then, but on that day, he had the paperwork to prove it. Fr. Greg D'Silva, S.J., told Uncle John's grand-nephew Johnny Gill during his 2008 visit to India that "In many ways, Fr. Deeney is more Indian than we." Uncle John's desire to spend his life working with and for the Ho people, lends



Search for God

Hagar the Horrible by Chris Browne is one of the world's most loved comic strips, which I like the most. In one of the strips, we find Hagar kneeling in prayer – "It is not easy to believe in you, God. We never see You. How come You never show Yourself? How do we know You even exist?" Next, we, see: A flower springing into life beside Hagar, a volcano erupting in the distance, an eclipse of the sun turning the sky black, a star shooting across the stratosphere, a tidal wave rushing over Hagar, lightning flashing, a bush beginning to burn, and a stone rolling away from the entrance to a tomb. Hagar pulls himself up from the ground, dripping wet,

love He has for me. I belong to God. I do not belong to myself. I am a beloved son/daughter of God. God created me to love Him, serve Him and thus find happiness in Him. Only in God can my heart find rest, peace and happiness (Sp. Ex.23.1)." But we forget this, and we question about God's existence like Hagar.

According to our Constitutions [288], "All should strive to keep their intention right, seek God our Lord in all things, love him in all creatures and all creature in Him, with His holy and divine will." We find it difficult to experience God's presence in all things because we are unable to give sufficient time for God. We rather spend it on less

According to St Ignatius, God can speak directly with people in astonishingly personal ways. This can even lead the doubtful, the confused and the lost to God. The key, the - leap of faith - is required. It is believing that these intimate experiences are ways through which God communicates with us. In his Spiritual Exercises, Ignatius wrote that the Creator deals immediately with the creature and creature with its Creator (Sp. Ex. 15). In other words, we can say that the beginning of the path is to finding God is awareness. It is not simply awareness of the ways that you can find God, but awareness that God desires to find you. God communicates with us, but seekers need to be aware of the variety of ways God communicates with us, of making His presence known.

There is also another way to find God. It is to find Him in all people as St. Alphonsus Rodriguez did. He was a Jesuit Coadjutor Brother, who was devoted to finding God in the present moment. He would pray, saying "Lord, let me know you. And let me know myself." Each time the bell rang; he looked to the door and envisioned that it was God himself, who was standing outside, seeking entrance. On his way, he would say, "I am coming, Lord." So, we need to develop in the same way, as St. Alphonsus Rodriguez, the means of "finding God in all things and all things in Him".



surrounded by darkness. "Ok, ok! I give up! Every time, I bring up this subject, all I get is interruption!"

The aim of our life is given in the Principle and Foundation of the Spiritual Exercises, which says, "God created me out of the great

important things. God also tries to communicate with us in our heart, which is known as the inner call/voice, but we ignore it because the networks in us are too busy, and we all are disturbed or too comfortable in this modern world.



The Religious - A Way of Life

Religious life is a way of life which leads a person to be sound in mind and in body. It demands from a Religious a total surrender, to leave every worldly thing behind and walk in the footsteps of Jesus Christ since the ultimate purpose of each Religious is to be like Christ.

The life of a Religious is a Mystery, where everyone strives to fulfill the will of God through various ministries. We do not know what is going to occur in our future life. Therefore, we do not plan for tomorrow rather we live for today and for Christ. We are always ready for mobility and availability for any mission that is entrusted to us. Thus, I would say that religious life is a mystery.

The prime duty of each Religious is to raise the society and the Nation to a higher level by reaching out to the needy people.

Religious are walking in the path to God and doing splendid service round the clock for the welfare of the people. Thus, one can see the deeper meaning of religious life. It is like a candle, that has been handed over to each one to keep burning and giving light to those in darkness, as we go around the world. Our dream and goal are to see humanity growing together as one nation and body.

All the religious men and women are for God alone and His people. During my Manifestation of Conscience Fr. Jerry, the Provincial asked me a question. "For whom are you studying? I answered, "For myself". But he told me very clearly that I was studying for God. Whatever we do, we do for God alone. Jesus did not come to be served, but to serve. Likewise, a Religious is not there to be served but to serve the world through

various apostolates, especially in apostolates for the poor and the suffering. If one looks at History, Religious have been facing a lot of challenges and difficulties in their life. Many are tortured and killed brutally but a Religious never gives up on being a true disciple of Christ. Today our politicians are completely against the Religious, Why? It is simply that religious are promoting justice, which is indigestible for the politicians. I am very much taken up with the selfless service of Fr. Stan Swamy, SJ, who is fighting for the rights of the Adivasis of Jharkhand even at the age of 83. Fr. Stan says, "I am not going to be a silent spectator". Despite facing a lot of challenges and difficulties, Religious are playing a vital role for justice and growth of the whole of humanity. Religious are the LIGHT of the world.





Why I am a Jesuit?

Pedro Arrupe once said, “Come, if serving Christ is at the very Centre of your life.” Being a Jesuit Junior, I believe that I have the spirit of Christ. I remember my vocation camp in Patel Bagan, Jamshedpur (2014) Br. Basil Sanga SJ (who is now a priest) during a meeting asked me, “What would you do after becoming a priest?” “I will serve the poor and the people in need”, I replied. “Anil, you can serve the poor even in the married state., Why don’t you become a catechist?” he added. “No way, I have decided to become a priest and I will be serving the least.” It was a headstrong reply to him. Br. Basil tried to convince me, but I was not ready to change my mind.

I have been in the Society nearly seven years. I have learnt a lot many things during this period. The Society of Jesus has also given me a broader sense of understanding of the Society and its function. However, I refer to just three of them:

1. The sense of belonging to the Universal Society: Fr. Anthony Parapullil SJ said, “The sense of belonging to a worldwide company of Jesuits who would stand by you in all your undertakings, initiatives, challenges and crisis. True companionship in dispersion.” Right. We join different Provinces or Regions, yet we all belong to the same Society. Yes, I have a sense of feeling that we are bound together. I did not feel myself as a

stranger when I went to Bhopal for my Pre-Novitiate. The presence of the Fathers there made me feel at home. Their hearts seemed as if I had known them for years! Similarly, I had such, almost identical experiences in Calcutta. The goodwill of the Fathers makes me a younger brother or a son.

2. Jesuits as frontiers, pioneers, explorers and missionaries: Fr. Lionel Mascarenhas SJ states, “That you belong to a company whose vision knows no barriers or bounds. It is a joy to be driven by the urge of Magis and always seek the Major (AMDG).” My feeling is that the Society trusts you. It gives you freedom to decide your life and

Society which flies high above in the open sky. I can pluck all the stars without fearing of falling to the ground because a thread of the Society is there to support me.

3. Freedom with Responsibility: My foundation has been built in the Novitiate itself. Father Master trusted me undoubtedly. Whenever he entrusted me with a piece of work, he never came to see how I was doing the job but always to see how much I was growing. His silent attitude taught me to enjoy the work but with responsibility. Whatever I do, I do it for God. This is the spirit the Society of Jesus has given me.



encourages you to break your legs to do things which please the Society and the Lord our God. And I belong to that larger network. Yes, I am a kite in the hands of the

In a nutshell, I would like to say that I am a Jesuit because I love to be a Jesuit. The Society of Jesus is my life and everything.



Loving Surrender to the Call

Vocation is a gift of God for those who not just hear and presume but listen to the Voice and trust it firmly. It is realistic for the one with deep religious orientation. It demands a lifelong commitment for the service of God and readiness to face any challenges. Nevertheless, our prompt response to the call needs to be “yes”.

During a sermon, a preacher asked us “Why did God call you and not the ones who were sitting beside you or the ones who were at the top in academic performance in the class?” Some responded, “To be available for the service of God”, “To fulfill His mission”, “To serve the poor”, etc. At last, he said “He called you because He loved you and chose you exclusively to love Him and to live according to His plan.

Yet it does not mean that God does not love my companions. He has another plan for them. He has meticulously planned for everyone. We will have a purposeful and meaningful life if only we live in accordance with the plan of God.

The word ‘love’ of God generates

a lot of peace, joy, and sense of life in my heart and mind. Over the years in the Society, reflecting upon this love of God, gave me hope to live, courage to face life,



faith to rely on and live every day of my earthly life to the full.

I experienced the challenges, difficulties and feelings of despair and meaninglessness. They have become part of my life. For all these I approached God. He has always

been considerate to me. When I said, “I can’t go on” He said, “My grace is sufficient for you.” (2 Cor. 12:9) When I said, “I can’t do it” He said, “You can do all things” (Phi.4:13). When I said, “I am not able” He said, “I am able” (2Cor.9:8). When I said, “I am afraid He said, “I have not given you a spirit of fear” (2Tim.1:7). When I said, “I am not smart enough” He said, “I will give you wisdom” (1Cor.1:30). When I said, “I feel all alone” He said, “I will never leave you or forsake you” (Heb.13:5). All these positive and motivating words of God through Holy Scripture enabled me keep moving in this way of life.

The Call demands sacrifices and choices to make every moment of my life - to be or not to be. After acknowledging and

being convinced of His love, I discovered my true self. Though an unworthy and an undeserved person I am still a chosen one and loved by Him. He recreated a new spirit in me to have a new direction in my life. Thus, I surrender.



Is the Present Media Trustworthy?

There was a time when people praised and supported the media – printed – whatever - for its work and believed in all that it had said. Today we are in a time where one could clearly see media becoming more of a truth - less show - and a money-making industry by being puppets in the hands of politicians.

Why do I say that the media today is not trustworthy?

Reason number one: Media and its Focus: I still remember that as a child I used to hear a lot about media and its role in a democratic country like ours and it's work in gathering the right information and presenting it before the people. But today what I see and hear is that the media's focus is set on particular organization or a company which can direct more money to it.

Reason number two: Media and Politics: Once our teacher in the



High School told us that media always stands in between while gathering the truth and presenting it before the public. Which means, showing no favouritism on either side of the information or people. But what I see today is just the opposite. The Headlines and important corners of the newspapers and news channels are

kept ready to portray the small acts of politicians on a grand scale. In this way injustice is being done to the common man.

There are also other reasons like 1. A lot of unauthenticated information is being spread on various issues 2. It is afraid to speak the truth in print format and 3. It is moving away from its original spirit for its existence - the truth, the full truth and nothing but the truth

Media today which was supposed to be the voice of the voiceless and a gateway for providing justice, has unfortunately become a puppet in the hands of a few. By doing so it has lost its trust of the people. Therefore, I say that the media today is not trustworthy. I still hope that one day the media will rebound to its original spirit.



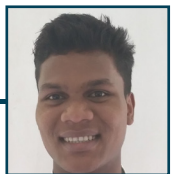


“A True Novice”

Is one who accepts others as they are
 Is ever trustful of the Lord’s care
 Deep down he feels loved by God
 Kind and soothing words flow from his mouth
 Is an open book to his Master

Always prim and proper
 Strives to overcome his core-sinfulness
 Never far from the Lord in heart or chapel
 Knows where he is going

With God’s grace he feels he can say “I can!”
 Ever on good terms with one and all, he all things to all



Attitude - A Road Map for Better Living

Attitude is a simple, practical, and easy way to cultivate one’s strengths and avoid the pitfalls in one’s search for inner happiness. It is interesting to know that when some people experience bitter disappointment, they could quit and just give up. While others could stand up with courage and say that there must be a better way.

Once a daughter complained to her father about her life and how hard things have been for her. She did not know how she was going to solve it and wanted to give up. She was tired of fighting. It seemed to her that as one problem was solved another arose.

Her father, a chef, took her to the kitchen, filled three pots with

attitude
is everything

water and placed them on the fire. In one he put carrot, in the other some eggs, and, in the third he put some coffee. And he boiled them. The daughter grew impatient and wondered what he was trying to do. She had problems and he was doing something strange in his kitchen. In about half an hour, he walked over to the cooking stoves and turned down the flame. He pulled the carrot out and placed it in a bowl. He pulled out the eggs and placed them in a bowl. Then he ladled the coffee out into a cup. Turning to her, he asked "My girl, what do you see?"

Smartly she replied, "Carrots, eggs and coffee". He asked to come closer and asked her to feel the carrot. She did and noticed that it was soft. Then he asked her to take an egg and break it open. She observed the hard-boiled egg. Finally, he asked her to sip the coffee. A frown appeared on her forehead because the coffee was extra strong. Puzzled, she asked "What does all this mean, Father?" He explained to her that each of them faced the same adversity – placed on a stove for a fixed amount of time. But each reacted differently. The carrot was strong and tough, but after going through the boiling period, it became soft and weak. The egg was fragile. The thin outer shell protected the liquid contents inside the egg. But after being processed under a boiling temperature, the shell became hard. The coffee beans are unique, however after they were left in boiling water, the water turned a coffee brown colour, strong and rich in taste. He asked his daughter, "Which of the

three are you?" When adversity knocks on your door/ how do you respond?" Are you - a carrot, an egg, or a coffee bean?

Are you like a carrot that with adversity and under heat, you will wilt and become soft? Are you like the egg, strong on the outside but after going through a tough time in boiling water, the softness within it became hard? Or are you like the coffee beans which do not lose their flavour. The more it is subjected to heat, the tastier it gets and gives a fragrant aroma.

A similar thing happens in our lives too. There will always be laughter mixed with tear drops, pleasure and pain, triumphs and defeats, success, and failure. When you are put in tough situations, do not say why? Why ME? Just say, "Why NOT me?" Try me.

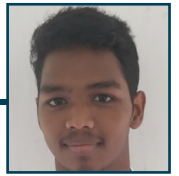
There will always be a time when you will be facing failure and disappointments. But in such

adversities, never lose heart. Failure does not mean you are less than others, you are inferior. It does not mean you are not perfect.

When things are
at the worst, you
get better

Therefore, be positive and give yourself a boost. After darkness, comes the early morning dawn to drive away our gloom. And remember, when things are at the worst, you get better. When the hour is the darkest, you are the greatest. The late John F Kennedy, President of the United States, said, "When the going gets tough, the tough get going"





Struggle

Nothing is white. Nothing is black. Everything is green!

Many people say that life is a struggle. But for me life is not a struggle. Even though my life is full of struggle, I do not consider it a struggle when I recall this incident in my life.

There was a boy by the name of Ranjan. He was a good and smart boy. But she grew in age and wisdom, he also began to fall into bad habits. He went to school not to study but to tease and annoy girls. Yes, he even took to drinking and smoking. He used the school fees for supplying drinks and cigarettes to his friends.

One day, one of his friends arranged a birthday surprise party. After consuming a few drinks, Ranjan and one of his friends got into an argument. He left the party disgust and went home. The next morning, he did not attend school on the excuse he had a bad headache.

In the evening when he was walking through the market to refresh his mind, an orphan child approached him for alms. He did not have any money in his pockets and sent eh child away. He left for home. He felt ashamed that he could not help the poor waif. Throughout night he was sleepless unable to drown out the cry of the child. That cry disturbed him. The thought came back to him again and again," You killed a poor child

sending him hungry". He started hating himself.

However, Ranjan was a good boy at heart. He decided to turn over a new leaf. He had chosen a wrong path when he found himself unable to help a hungry child. Yes, there was a time he had money for drinks and cigarettes. But this hungry orphan? ... He felt that he failed to return the love his parents gave him.

He felt drawn to the life a priest. He would be able to help others in need. He joined the Jesuits. Unfortunately, he found life as a Jesuit was a struggle. He experienced so much of dryness in prayer. He even thought of leaving. The struggle began to affect his



mind and body. Each time he thought of giving up, the face of the orphan who approached him in the marketplace came to mind. It was this image of not being to help that made him not give up. Yes, this image of refusing an orphan helped him to struggle on and to recognise that God was calling him.

When I read this story of this boy's struggle, it reminded me of the parable of the Prodigal Son. Yes, I realised that Ranjan and the Prodigal Son were two of a kind. It was the love of the Father that brought back the Prodigal Son.

If someone should ask "What keeps you from giving up?" I can definitely respond that St. Ignatius went through such a struggle but finally God's grace helped him to surrender himself.

There are times when I feel like Ranjan. Many a time I also want to leave the Jesuits. I was not very sure of my vocation to the Society. Perhaps I am in the wrong place. I made the wrong choice. It was during the Long Retreat that the life of Jesus and his call to follow Him, the life of many a Jesuit helped me to stay rooted in my conviction that God was calling me. I can confidently say" Yes, I am called!" It is not hard to obey if we love the one whom we obey.

Life is a journey. One may find many roadblocks along the road. But never stop. Never give up. We need to remember the river that never stops flowing even if there is a large boulder in the path of its flow. Nothing can stop the flow. It will find a path. It will keep going until it reaches its destination.



Love

Love is a four-letter word that defies description. If you ask me what is love, I do not know. If you do not ask me what is love, I know. It is not something in the mind. It is in the heart. It is the heart that matters when it comes to loving. A query now and then comes to mind, "What is love?" Some say Love is an inner feeling or attraction, and some love is life, love is blind, but I say love is warm like one having a fever, but it can be cold like ice. At one moment one can see it, can feel it can experience it truly, but one cannot express freely. Love is something that can never grow old, nor can it ever come to an end. Love is a commitment, taking responsibility. It is a mutual trust where no one can be free from for this has been planted by God and, therefore, one can find nothing wrong. There is love that is honest. There is love that can be described as true. Love can be associated with parents, children, friends, and even your enemy with whom you can fall in love because love is affection, a feeling of the heart. It is a fulfilment of a life like that of Christ on the Cross or a mother who always wants the best for her child.

Love between Parents and their Children:

Parents love for them allow their children is like the love of the

Heavenly Father. Our parents love their children all the time and, in all conditions, whether they do good or bad, when they slip and fall, with deep love embrace them when they get hurt, they give them their tender love and concern, when they do something wrong, they make them understand and teach them what is good and bad



in life. There is no like our parents, who love us so much. Sometimes we fail to understand their love and concern. As we know in the Gospel the love of the Heavenly Father is without end. He loved us so much that He sent his beloved Son to teach us how to love one another.

Love between Boys and Girls:

Every boy and girl at one time or other or pass through a mutual attraction for one another. The adolescent period is a transition period. It is a period of change and it is a passage from our childhood to adolescence. The adolescent love of a boy and a girl cannot take

a right decision for their lives. Their love is called infatuation. It is only a strong feeling and it is not at all a real love. It is true that a boy needs a friend. And a girl needs a friend too. But of course, both are at different maturity levels. They are infatuated with one another. Their love is momentary love and can break up in no time.

Love between Friends:

Love is a gift of life and likewise a friend is a gift for our life. I think it is true love and everlasting love. A friend always understands and feels each other's need as it is demanded because there is a deep love between them. But it also happens sometimes due to lack of true fidelity, doubt, and jealousy our love begins to grow cold, and we go different ways.

As Mother Teresa says, "We have been created for greater things: to love and to be loved". So, love is an inner feeling that only can be experienced. I say love is patient, kind, just not jealous, not conceited nor proud. Love is not ill-mannered or selfish or irritable. It does not keep a record of wrongs is not with comfortable dishonesty --- evil but with truth. It never gives up. There's faith, hope and love. Love never fails. So, my dear friends, love one another, and we will be loved.



Atmosphere of the Noviciate

It is true, “God, whom you cannot see, how can you serve Him when the person you see you don’t serve.”

I was deeply touched and struck by this sentence on the other hand, I was wondering how to find and see where I could find Him. With a great desire and purpose, I joined the Jesuit noviciate. In such a favourable atmosphere in the noviciate I could feel the presence of God at every moment of my life. I went through the thirty days one of the Long Retreat wherein I experienced that God who cannot be seen by in the naked eye. This kind of thoughts and experiences left me sad. But there was still hope. I reflected over the

Scripture passages in meditations and contemplations. I realized that God can be experienced within my heart. According to me, the noviciate is the atmospheric, the cradle to find and experience God. Therefore, I believe whatever I have been able to accomplish in the noviciate is a gift of God. And I believe that punctuality for every aspect of life from rising in the morning to going to bed at night is the secret of finding God in all things, persons, and places. phenomenal in the noviciate.

Frankly, I need to admit that all the novices, are aware that opportunities to grow in God’s love are always there for them to grasp with both. It is for us to

put our whole heart and soul into those periods. These opportunities grasped with whole heart and mind will make the difference in our life as Novices. It will turn us into soldiers of Christ, disciplined in prayer and good works. Yes, in those activities God reveals Himself, and we must need to believe with all our heart. These words do not capture my God-experience. At the end, my parting words are that you do not look for Him. He will find you. He is within you and me. Once we experience God’s unconditional love in our hearts, we shall be able to sing that hymn. “God is dwelling in my heart. He and I are one!”





Driving My Wheels

“Goodbye! Take care!”

“Take care?” people who take care, never get anywhere.

Instead of “take care” try saying, “Take a chance! Take charge! Take control of yourself!”

Taking a chance by itself is a risk. By taking charge you manage that risk. When you take control, you manage problems of your life. Therefore, when you are faced with any such choices in life, never-never surrender yourself to these 15 F’s:

1. To outside Forces: the shoe does not tell the foot how big to grow. Be yourself.

2. To Faces: for you are a unique masterpiece of God’s creation.

3. To Farces: such as, “I am inferior to others.” They are lies, my dear.

4. To Fences: such as, “It’s never worked before. Why should it now? I do not have an education. I do not know the right people, etc.” For they are only your concepts that limit you... They cause us to lower our goals.

5. To Frustrations: over lack of time and money, high interest rates, disappointments, or inadequate support from others. For you cannot be that person.

6. To Fantasies: such as “I might try it and be rejected. People might laugh at me.” Criticism is certain

to come your way but be a person of ‘Tantum Quantum’.

7. To Fears: Paul’s letter to Timothy 1:7 says, “God has not given us a spirit of fear but of power, love and of a sound mind.” Cure your fears saying, “I’d rather attempt something great and fail than attempt nothing and succeed.”

8. To Fatigue: to run tired is human. To Retreat occasionally feels good, does good.

9. To Faults: these are problems with every idea. They call for polishing not for demolition. Take control over them. Let not a problem become an excuse.

10. To Facts: the problems you are facing today may be facts not just theory but never let them influence you. Attitude is more important than facts.

11. To Frenzies: when something catastrophic is threatening, do not do anything. Just think.

12. To Fates: never allow fortune-tellers, chart readers or ever your dreams to move into the control position of your life.

13. To Forecasts: people say, “things are bad, and they are only going to get worse.” There will always be negative, cynical people who only believe that life will go downhill as time goes on. Dare to be different.

14. To Foes: for they will not be accountable when you stand before God one day to give an account of your life.

15. To Friends: listen to their advice and opinions but final word must be yours. Be true to yourself, your ideas, and your goals.

But surrender yourself to ‘FAITH’. Let faith be in control of every decision you make and every action you take. Let God be in control of your life.

Let the positive possibilities set your goals. Leave the crowd and be who you really are. Look for the extraordinary in ordinary. Reward yourself. Hunt for good behaviour.

Let faith be in control of every decision you make

Do not miss the forest for the trees. Give your praise, smile love, enthusiasm, laugh and time etc for free, expecting nothing in return.

You cannot win, if you do not begin and you do not have to be great to start, but you must start--- to be great, before God. Therefore, take a chance! Take charge! Take control of yourself! Remember: if you do not act on life, life will act on you.



“Dreams to Reality”

The 15th former President of India, Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam, used to say, “You have to dream before your dream can come true”. His purpose of making this statement means that our dreams need to be limitless whether our dreams become a reality or not.

There have been numerous times when I have had dreams which I believe God has formed in me and seeing them become a reality. But to be honest, in the early stages of these dreams I have not always been sure whether they were from God or simply the result of an overactive imagination. This is because they have often formed as a quiet internal idea. They have not been accompanied by angelic visitations or visions that appeared as vivid high-definition videos playing out in my sleep but -instead, they have been thoughts which have begun to captivate my thinking and my faith.

Louis and Linus were the best of friends. Once they planned to fish in a distant lake. Louis yawned, stretched his arm, and sighed, “My friend, I just dreamt that I could catch a thousand trout. Then, Linus replied, “If you caught a thousand trout, would you give me half of them”? Lewis replied, “No, my friend, I would not”. Linus enquired again “Would you give me a quarter of them?”. Louis replied, “No, I would not give you a quarter of them”. Linus asked again, If you got a thousand trout,

wouldn’t you give me at least ten of them? Lewis replied, “No, I would not give you even ten of them”. Louis asked for the last time, “Well would you not give me at least one lousy trout?” And Louis said, “No. I would not give you even one lousy trout if I caught a thousand.” Linus said annoyingly, “But, why not? I regard you as my best friend”. Louis said, “Because you are too damn lazy to dream for yourself!”.

possible. If you dream, then only your dreams will become a reality.

Dream is a word which is only applicable to human beings. It is a fact that no other creature dreams in the world except the humankind. Hence, we should be grateful to God for creating us so unique creature in the world. We too know that our every dream may not become a reality. But whatever is pleasing



This incident teaches us that the future belongs to those who dream dreams, to those who go through life with high positivity! We can make out that Linus, without an attempt wanted to have a trout and did not even think of dreaming about catching a trout. Hence, everyone needs to dream because without first dreaming, nothing is

to God will become real. We must dream, whether our dreams would become a reality or not. However, our dreams must make each day an auspicious one. Our dreams need to lead us to actualize them into a reality. Hence, President APJ. Abdul Kalam also said that dreams are not what you see when you are asleep, but dreams are those that keep you away from sleeping.



Ready to Serve

When I heard for the first time from the Second Year Novices that they were going to two different places, Kharagpur, and Kolkata, for their month-long Experiment, I felt that it would be very difficult for them to manage the patients and inmates. I considered also the problem of language. Yes, none of them I believe had a Bengali background. In such matters, it is the language of the heart that matters.

However, I was happy to stay in the Novitiate and to do my Community Experiment for a month. I was excited not because I was going to be free from classes but because I was going to experience something new.

Then I waited impatiently and with great expectation for that day to come. When the day for the Experiment drew near, I got a piece of news that two of the First Year Novices were selected to go to a village called Tundi in the Santhal area for their month-long Village Experiment – living and being with the tillers of the soil, the poor, whose livelihood came from their crops. They also were going to experience first-hand poverty and the struggles of people who live off the land.

Finally, the day to begin our Experiment came. All the Second Years and Two First Year Novices left for their respective places; they were assigned. I remained

in the Novitiate along with my companions, Scholastics and Fathers.

When I began my Experiment in the Community, initially I was worried because I was preoccupied with the thought that I would be given hard tasks. The right hand that I had injured in a basketball game just before the Long Retreat was still under treatment. However, at



the same time I was enthusiastic to carry out my responsibilities with my whole heart.

Since all the Second Years were sent for their mission, I was left alone on the ground floor. So, I was appointed Beadle. It was not difficult for me since I had been a Beadle even in the Pre-Novitiate.

Nevertheless, several times I failed to ring the bell on time and Fr. Master had to remind me. But that was a momentary lapse.

Other than that, I was engaged in physical work. I was very active in that. I always made an attempt to do the task as best as I could. Yes, I realized that what a dozen Novices were doing, there was just four of us to carry the burden

of the Community. I was so intent that the month-long- Experiment passed away as one would say in the twinkling of an eye. I learnt that if a task is done with great love, even that appears very light.



Happiest Beyond Expectations

“Whatsoever you do to the least of my people that you do unto me.”

I feel privileged that I could reach out to the least and the poorest of the poor during my hospital experiment in Kharagpur, through service to the mentally and physically challenged. It was the joy of being with them and to listen to their sad, gloom-filled stories. Within a month a bond of love was forged, and I felt loved and accepted.

My first day of the experiment began with the birthday celebration of Br. Albinus Soreng. I went to the patients ward for the first time with Anit. All the patients rushed towards us to greet us and some embraced us. I was completely flustered and confused and ‘afraid’. That did not allow me to go closer to them to see their soiled dress, their foul-smelling bodies. Hiding all my disgust, I greeted them gently and accepted their invitation. It was just the beginning, I began to feel bored to be with them, and I ignored them sometimes when they came closer to me. “If one reaches out to those abandoned, he needs to have hope, trust and love”. And I was lacking the greatest of these three - “love”. I felt guilty for doing this. And hiding all my negative thoughts I took my own initiative to speak to them and to greet them

with a mile. I began to help them in their need, and they all felt free and comfortable to come to me. And within a few days a bond of love was forged, and I fell in love with them. I began to feel a great affection for them, and the feeling of affection made every uneasy task easier.

They loved me so much that they would always greet me whenever they saw me with a cute smile on their faces. They loved to come to me when I gave them a bath and I enjoyed giving them bath and washing their filthy and foul-smelling clothes. I loved to be with them, to see them fighting and becoming friends after quarelling.

It was very inspiring to see them. Even though they were mentally or physically challenged, they

were very happy in their lives and they loved God and praised Him in their suffering also. They are very generous, and they really care for one another. And I really felt more motivated to see them sharing and caring.

It was a great time and has become a memorable event of my life that, if I want to forget it, I cannot. They will always be in my heart. They would always tell me “We will miss you”. How one month passed very fast I could not even realize, and the day came for returning to Jesu Bhawan. I will always be grateful to everyone for the opportunity to serve the suffering Jesus in the modern era.

“Life is an open book with unending pages” remarked an elderly patient in Kharagpur, when a question was put to him “what is life?”

I wish to write only inspiring words on those pages of my life, such as “Happiness beyond expectations.”





With the Poor

On 25th of February Rahul and I reached a village called Karmagoda. It was almost evening. All the children had gathered there to welcome us. My first lesson was in the way of greeting people. Language did not present much of a problem for me since there's some resemblance between Mundari and Santhali.

It is amazing to see in the life of the poor, the suffering, the marginalized, and the migrants, see Jesus carrying his cross in them. Earning their daily bread was hard for them. Most of the people are illiterate and jobless. Somehow, they make enough by

making bricks.

They are newborn Catholics. Their faith is deep and strong. This could be seen in their participation at Mass.

Visiting homes and communicating with people were some of the heart touching moments. When I visited their homes, they seemed to feel as though the Lord had come to visit them. We used to listen to their stories, pray with them. I found them very loving and caring.

Teaching the children and the elderly was one of the tasks given to us. The children seemed sharp, quick, and full of enthusiasm. It

was amazing that whatever we taught, they were able to grasp. The sad part of their life was there was no school nearby. They had grown so used to us, so fond of us that we never felt lonely.

Looking back, I am very grateful to the village folk. I felt that I had grown stronger in my vocation. I have been deeply touched. I have grown and have learnt much from them by way of language, understanding their culture and the attitude of perseverance - never to give up.

Roshan Kerketta, NSJ



Love as to be Loved

The Second Year Novices of Jesu Bhavan, Mango, went two by two to different communities of the Brothers of the Missionaries of Charity in Kolkata for a 30-day Hospital Experiment on 19th of February 2021.

The place of my hospital experiment was - Karuna Bhavan, Dum Dum Cantonment, Kolkata, West Bengal.

I would love to share my experiences using the three-phase formula:

- TURMOIL
- TRANQUILITY
- ENLIGHTENMENT

The TURMOIL phase: the word itself speaks volumes about the state of my heart regarding the thought of working with the poorest

of the poor. I was confronted with a strong mental and emotional turmoil at the very first step I took in that direction.

a. Is my vocation meant to walk, arm in arm, living in such situations?

b. Is it God's plan for me?

And the burning issues that led to my state of emotional turmoil were the following:

- * Why do I need to help them?
- * How can I help myself by helping them?

With such haunting thoughts and with the blurred hope of a 'happy ending', I began my Hospital Experiment.

The very next day and the days that followed, I was in the field of 'helping souls' (the apostolate) and encountering new experiences every now and then. Here is a gist of all my first-hand experiences:

- I bathed physically challenged inmates and applied oil on their sore-infested bodies.
- I washed their soiled clothes.
- I served them food and washed their dishes.
- I gladly gave them a shave as well as trimmed their moustaches.

- I played and prayed, cared, and shared, and loved and served them.

Certainly, I met with many bitter-sweet experiences. I was confronted with fight-flight situations. Can you dare to guess what made me to go ahead?

I was motivated by the salient characteristics of the JESUITS:

- * Men with - great desires, men of the MAGIS, flexible and available to go where no one ventured to set foot, ready for the unknown, for the Greater Glory of God.
- * Men capable of finding God in all things

Though I was reluctant, I used these Jesuit characteristics, to cook up a tasty meal (to do well). By practising them, I experienced phase 2 in my experiment: the phase of TRANQUILITY

I experienced the feeling of Tranquility, of feeling content with my work, of daring to be indifferent, of becoming a person of the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola and of being able to help souls which, undoubtedly, brought me to the phase of ENLIGHTENMENT. I learnt that:

- God dwells in all.
- God works miracles if one allows Him.
- God helps those who help themselves.
- Service to humanity is service to God.
- God loves equally all of His creation
- Quitters never win and winners never quit.





Challenges to Democracy

Introduction:

The Constitution of India states that democracy as “the government of the people, by the people and for the people. The real power is vested in the hands of its citizens by exercising their franchise to elect the Government. The picture of a democratic Republic where the Preamble envisages not only a democratic form of government but also a democratic society, infused with the spirit of ‘justice, liberty, equality and fraternity’. In a democracy, people have the freedom to raise their voices against the Government and express their opinion without any pressure. But, today, it is unfortunate that the values of Democracy are being destroyed by the authoritarian style of governing. The backbone of democracy is being broken by suppressing people’s fundamental freedom. The dictatorial style of the Government and religious fundamentalism are raising its head in India. The roots of Democracy are being weakened day by day, under the, so called ‘Desh Bhakt’ rule.

Let us review and recap some of the most current incidents and news to become aware of the challenges and threats to Democracy in India.

Draconian Laws:

I am not against the laws but the manner in which they are made is totally unacceptable. We are

well aware of the recent protests over the whole country against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), which was passed in Parliament on 12 December 2019. It gives a home, shelter to illegal migrants, to nearly everyone except for Muslims. The manner in



which it works is unconstitutional. One of the main setbacks of the CAA was that it was exclusive, discriminatory, and biased. It excluded, particularly the Muslim minorities.

Secondly, the National Registers of Citizens (NRC); the law was implemented in Assam where over 1.9 million people were declared as foreigners. Even the citizens of this country were branded as illegal migrants. Imagine, if it is exercised throughout the country, how many more people will be homeless. And the Government is in the process of making concentration camps to kind of incarcerate these people as illegal migrants.

Thirdly, the abrogation of Article 370 of the Indian Constitution, which gave special status to Jammu and Kashmir. People had their own freedom and ways of living, but this law snatched those privileges away. People there were denied the basic rights by cutting off their

internet, freedom of movement, speech, and expression. The manner in which it was passed was totally unconstitutional.

Fourthly, we are well aware about the recent controversy over the Farmers Bill, which is also another undemocratic step that was taken. It is not benefiting the farmers but the big corporates. In spite of the huge and prolonged protest, the Government is so adamant in repealing the Farm Bills.

Freedom of Speech:

Article 19 of the Indian Constitution underscores that everyone has the right to freedom of opin-

ion and expression. Today, one is put behind bars not because he or she has committed a crime but just because of raising one's voice

their religious views are right and looks at others as inferior. Today, Religious Fundamentalism is another concern in India. India's

political parties, corporates, and industrialists.

Unemployment: India is a large country. The unemployment rate in India fell to 7% in September 2020 from the record high of 29% since the country went into lockdown from March 2020. However, the unemployment rate later rose to 9.1 percent in December 2020 according to the Center for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE). The lockdown that was imposed to contain the coronavirus outbreak forced many industries to shut down, thus increasing unemployment across the country. However, the present Government is doing nothing to provide employment other than the MNREGA Scheme.



against injustice that affects the core of one's being. Citizens have the right to ask and be critical about the Government. Today, journalists, intellectuals, social activists, lawyers and their ilk whoever is critical about the Government are being arrested. A prime example is that of Fr. Stan Swamy S.J. Ms. Shudha, Mr. Arun and the list goes on and on.

On the other hand, some people are misusing the Freedom of Speech, Expression and Thought, by inciting people to violence and spreading fake news. For example: some of the Godi Media, which are misusing the Freedom of Speech through media.

Religious Fundamentalism:

Fundamentalism is the extremism seen in India. It believes that only

multi diverse culture, allows people to live together for ages but, today, communalism has been injected into the brains of people to hate other religious groups.

Corruption: Corruption is seen everywhere in India. A study conducted by Transparency International in 2005 recorded that more than 62% of Indians had at some point or another paid a bribe to a public official to get a job done. In 2008, another report showed that about 50% of Indians had firsthand experience of paying bribes.

Today even Judicial Authorities are being bought by money. Justice is for the mighty and the powerful. In the Media we see only sensational news which is being controlled by Political parties. The media, which is supposed to be the voice for the voiceless but, unfortunately it has become the voice only for

Conclusion: The Constitution of India declares our country as democratic and thus its charism, values, the aims, and the goals of democracy should be protected from an authoritarian, totalitarian Government. People should enjoy their fundamental rights to live freely without any fear. Our Opposition Leaders must challenge the present Government and need to put a stop to the undemocratic way of ruling the country. It is also the duty of the common people to raise their voice against the wrong doings of the Government who are suppressing the poor and working for the Corporate Company. Let us not divide ourselves on religion, cast, and society but unite ourselves to face the future challenges that confront our country.



Digital Jesuits

Promoting Faith and Justice through Technology and Communication

“For any change, we must travel beyond, and, the journey, is called Magis!” The Scholastics of South Asian Assistency (JCSA) initiated a bold venture to form themselves through a new Ministry --- that of accompanying people through technology. This accompaniment of the Scholastics is to promote Faith and Justice through means of the social platform and technology, as St Ignatius instructed us to use any means to accompany souls to reach God. Digital Jesuits are proving that modern technology of today would lead them to reach out with care and compassion for the people of God who are waiting to be pioneered which confluences snugly along with the Universal Apostolic Preferences of the Society Jesus.

The genesis of this accompaniment was inspired by the online retreat hosted by JCSA. It is because, today’s young minds are more connected with social media that led Digital Jesuits to deduce that it was a need of the hour to accompany them through the world of advanced technology.

So, Digital Jesuits proposed the idea to the former POSA, Fr George Pattery, and he whole heartedly accepted the proposal and encouraged us to go ahead as

a new ministry to set the world on fire. The mission began by taking up the Issue of Fr Stan. “Stand for Stan” provided such solidarity through social media whose analysis showed a positive reach. Also, Digital Jesuits have been the front runners in conducting Prayer Services for Fr. Stan that took the form of “A Candlelight Prayer” which now has been taken up by several Provinces. The Hashtag storm (#Standwithstan), the team’s

of the Digital Jesuits. Though the team continues to keep Fr Stan’s issue as a focal priority, have also branched out into many other avenues of making their presence felt.

Hence, the team justified their standpoint through the official support from JCSA which makes the Ministry absolutely a part of the Jesuit Conference of South Asia. This is a venture that is exclusively run, explored, and programmed by the Scholastics. The event “Cheers with Berchs” very well showed the wonderful bond that exists among the Scholastics in bringing the entire Scholastic contingent of



own creation, is now making waves worldwide. The penetrating posters on Stan and Lenten Reflections that are popping up over and over again on the social media platforms are the fruit of the strenuous efforts

the South Asian Assistency under one umbrella through the online platform for an excellent evening of fun and frolic celebration on the feast of St John Berchmans.

In the season of Advent 2020, the team organized a series of Advent talks which culminated with Christmas along with an extremely competitive contest named “4G Jingle Bells”. Hence, the contest was not only for the Scholastics but also opened up for all. The team was enthused by the fact of having more than 1000 participants in this event. The forte of the team is that it has been offering Webinars on various burning issues, ranging from Social Justice, Peace, Social Media, Farmonomics, etc. through collaboration with the top Jesuit Institutes in the country. Some of

the epoch-making Webinars like “Peace is Your Right” was done in collaboration with the Centre of Humanities (XUB) and “Social Media & Me” in collaboration with Indian School of Media and XIE, Mumbai, “Farmonomics” with AICUF etc. At present, the team is busy in chalking out a new series of Vocation Promotion strategies for the Society of Jesus and vocations in the Church as well as Interpreting the Letters of St Ignatius as the Jesuits get ready to celebrate the 500th Year of the Conversion of St. Ignatius of Loyola, etc.

The coordinators of Digital Jesuits feel blessed for the opportunity of being a part of this wonderful venture that has strengthened their vocation in the Society of Jesus.

Surprisingly, Digital Jesuits has taken up a new task and the Mission. this Mission is becoming further more adventurous as well as explorative. Digital Jesuits are ready to venture into new challenges and mission.

Sch. Pawan Promod Dungdung SJ



The Effects of Covid-19 on Our Youth

Life, these days, feels like a river flowing at its slowest pace. No doubt, the effects of the pandemic have already taken a devastating toll on millions of people world over. But our youth are especially vulnerable to the greater societal shifts being witnessed as a result of the virus.”The Covid-19 pandemic has disrupted every aspect of our lives. Now, unless urgent action is taken, young people are likely to suffer severe and long-lasting impacts from the pandemic. Half of the world’s youth population is subject to anxiety or depression-causing circumstances while more than a third is uncertain of their future career prospects due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Today, most of us are not happy with own selves as we cannot spend even ten minutes alone with ourselves without making use of any gadgets! It’s because we have started ignoring our feelings, paying hardly any attention to our own needs, because for us the outer world is more important. We now see that millions of children are at the risk of being pushed into child labor, which could lead to the first rise in child labor after a gap of 20 years of positive progress.

Furthermore, the youth who are currently in the work force – or who are now trying to enter the work force – will find it increasingly difficult to find decent employment.

We will face permanent exclusion from labor markets and, as the world recovers from the pandemic, it’s a fear that many young people will be left behind.

Young people are giving their best to fight against Covid and root it out. The initiatives taken are: raising awareness and enhancing connectivity: young people are spreading a message for combating misinformation, any discriminations, and stigma which is related to this crisis and making them aware of social distancing and about taking measures to bring this virus to a halt. Supporting others: our young people are helping and volunteering in

assisting seniors and other groups in supplying food and medication. The youth are taking accountability for decisions that are made in response to COVID-19 to strengthen the institutions and the rule of law through anti-corruption measures and transparency in our transactions. Addressing economic and food security: our young workers, which include young farmers and the rural entrepreneurs, are into innovations by making use of various technologies that are vital for access to adequate food supply. Due to the pandemic, there would be devastating losses in the working hours and employment. The sectors which are at most risk include food services, accommodation, manufacturing, retails, business, and administrative activities.

In short, the whole world has come to a halt. Billions invested in real estate have become of no value.

Access to healthcare and health systems are of great concern during this time because people are already living in poverty

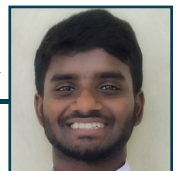


and are experiencing income inequality. So this pandemic is bringing additional economic risks for the people with low incomes. Young people always have this in their mind: how can they change the world? The best answer to this is that young people could

self-organize, self-mobilize, and come together in global solidarity. We are in a situation where it is not possible to disregard the

dire consequences of this virus. However, our youth by working together can show more dedication in their work, helping a bruised and battered world to recover from the losses that have yet to be taken into account in the near future.

Sch. Arun Prasath I SJ



Ignatian Year 2021

“An unexamined life is not worth living” is rightly said by the classical Greek Philosopher Socrates. I think this is what apparently, we need to celebrate the Ignatian Year from 20th of May 2021 to 31st of July 2022, where we examine our past – our triumphs – our defeats and, to start anew and afresh.

I assume that all of us are familiar and agree that one of the significant incidents that completely transformed St. Ignatius of Loyola was the battle of Pamplona and the treatment that he endured – thrice - with excruciating pain and suffering. However, it is radically the life of Christ that as he began that triggered the change

of course.. Hence the mantra of our Ignatian Year is grounded on “to see all things new in Christ.” The very life of Christ triggered a new chapter in the life of Ignatius ---to perceive the world in a new way and, eventually “to know Jesus more intimately, to love him more intensely, and to follow him more closely.” Indeed, the interior



knowledge of Jesus Christ had a great impact on Ignatius' life and on the life of others through his Spiritual Exercises.

As far as the 'the Universal Apostolic Preferences' is concerned, that is, showing the way to God through the Spiritual Exercises and their practice of discernment. ii. Walking with the poor, the outcasts of the world and those whose dignity has been violated in the mission of reconciliation and justice. iii. Walking together with young people, to build a hope-filled future, and iv. working together to care for Mother Earth, our common home, is our responsibility to examine the ground situation and, thus begin our mission here and now. Today, almost every one of us, directly or indirectly, are already experiencing the tragic part of our life in terms of the commercial, psychological, spiritual, and physical domain, that are badly impacted by Covid-19. The entire world is apparent to be terribly devastated; many people have lost their jobs, dear ones, as well as

deeply going through the pang's of poverty and hunger. As Jesuits, for each and every individual, It is our duty and mission as Jesuits entrusted to be the stewards of Mother Earth. Hence, every act of our life is accountable to contribute something better for the world; and celebrate the Ignatian Year by decisively reminding ourselves to go forward with a helping hand in whatever way we can transmit our talents. Ignatius too has tangibly experienced the annihilated side of life when plague came to ravage Spain. He went out and helped in the hospice serving the people day and night. Though he felt a certain reluctance, nay, repugnance, to beg but accepted the call to be poor with Christ poor. He totally surrendered himself into the hands of God with absolute trust that, if God wanted him to die, he was ready to accept His will.

Today, there are innumerable hospitals, nurses, and doctors to look after patients; however, there are very many, who are not heard, are neglected, and dismally traumatized. Perhaps we need to

extend our help in terms of spiritual, commercial, psychological, and intellectual.

As Helen Keller has rightly said that "the world is moved along, not only by the mighty shoves of its heroes, but also by the aggregate of tiny pushes of each honest worker". I believe that the flood of articles that have motivated our budding young Jesuits would enable people to maintain to live a better and happy life, especially during this time of catastrophic times brought about by Covid 19

It is our tireless effort that by our innovative writings hopefully to supplement the positive vibration to overcome the melancholy that has affected our creativity to move ahead; especially, from the loneliness caused through depression and anxiety. We are sure that our work will stimulate people to revive physically, spiritually, and psychologically from their deep depression caused by a virus that eats, corrodes into the inner fabric of our lives.



VOICE OF HOPE

You may send me behind bars
With your bitter and fabricated lies
You may kill me physically
With your guns and power
But you cannot kill my spirit
Nor the seeds I have sown

What causes you to be so fearful, my dear?

Is it my trembling voice?

Or my feeble body?

Is it my honesty?

Or my stand for truth?

What are you afraid of, my dear?

Leaving behind my country I came

Not for comfort nor for power

But to be the voice for the suppressed

To stand against injustice

To be with the most overlooked of society

To fight against the insolent to bring about justice

Does my truth cause you to tremble?

Then, I will speak even more for my people

Does my stand with the weak upset you?

Then, I will firmly hold my stand with them
Does my voice for the voiceless enthuse you?

Then, it will increase even if I am no more

I am not a caged bird

To be behind bars

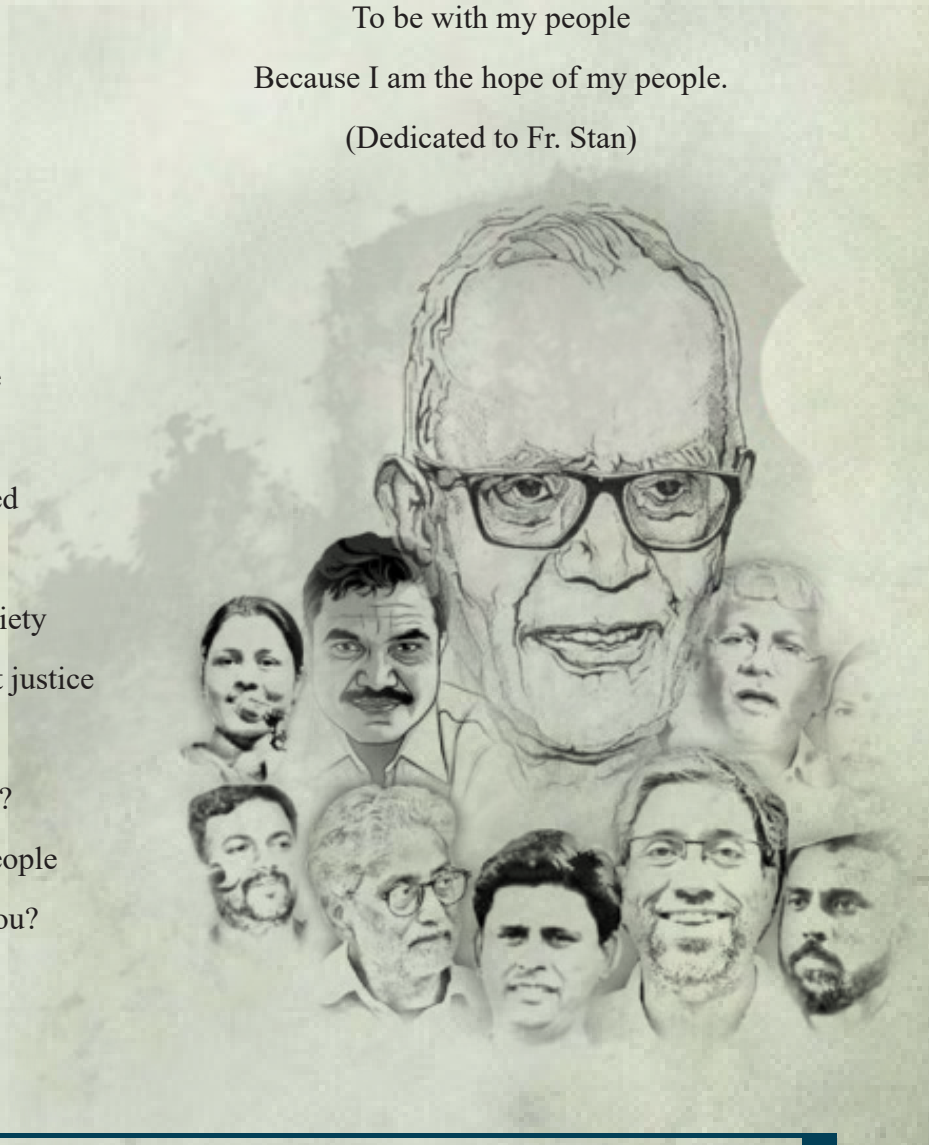
I am a phoenix, I will rise again

With more vigour and spirit

To be with my people

Because I am the hope of my people.

(Dedicated to Fr. Stan)





कोरोना का कहर

सुना तो था यही,
अच्छे दिन आएंगे ऐसे;
लो, आया दिन आज वही,
हो गये सब घर से बेघर!

निकले थे प्रवासी घर को अपने, ढोकर खौफ़ अपने मन,
होगा क्या अब हमारा?
गर हो जाए वीरान,
सड़कें, दफ़तर, घर- घाट हमारा!

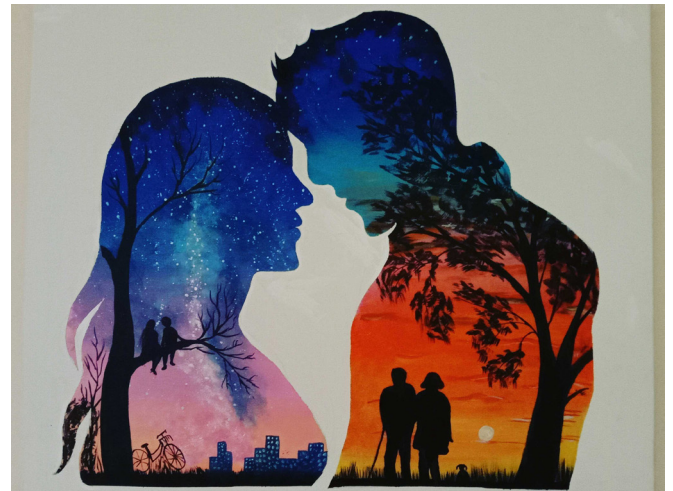
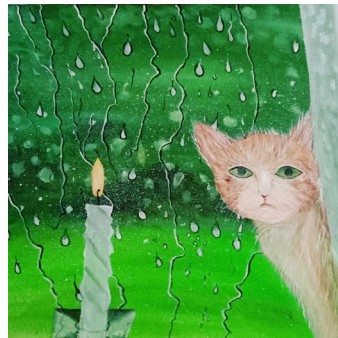
सोचने को थे सब मजबूर,
“थी कसूर किसकी?”
भटकते रहे दर-दर, वो थे प्रवासी मजदूर,
न काम-न -काज, न खाना-न-पानी, बरसती रहीं सड़कों पे लाठियां, पुलिस की!

आई खवाबों में तब अपनी,
उठ गई अरथी, बिन देखे प्रियजनों की अपनी जब;
खयाल आया बहुत हमें, “ बन जाऊँ कंधा सबकी,”
किसको थी खबर कभी, जलेंगी चिताएँ, बंद कैमरे से अब!





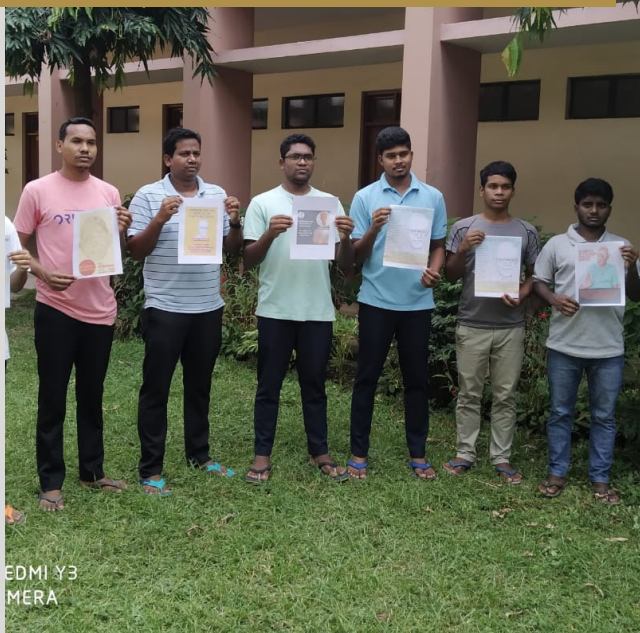
Art Gallery by Swethan



Scholastics and Novices
of Jamshedpur Province



In Solidarity with Marginalised



Friends in the Lord