



MNL



Newsletter of the Madurai Jesuits

AUGUST 2013

(For Private Circulation)



MESSAGE FROM THE PROVINCIAL

BUILDING OUR CREDIBILITY

Dear Brothers,

The TNPCRI Annual Assembly held on 3-4 August '13, took up for its collective reflection the present status of religious life. The 70 odd major superiors discussed this issue and have proposed to make a scientific study of the present status of religious life and to identify concrete steps that will enable the religious to become more relevant, more credible and more effective in today's context.

This proposed scientific assessment will find out the level of credibility which the religious are enjoying today among the people and among themselves. It will study critically the expectations of the Catholics as well as other people whom we serve through our ministries. This study will also assess the level to which we are involving the lay people as our collaborators. Finally, this study will assess critically the present pattern of formation that is being given to our members, which will include the assessment of

the pattern of formation at the initial stages (basic formation) and also the ongoing formation pattern for those who are finally professed.

In fact, there was a very strong view that the finally professed members, particularly those in the age-group 35 to 50, need very strong orientation, as they hold responsible positions and determine the direction a particular Congregation takes. It was also strongly indicated that the negative factors found among this group of religious – caste feelings, power-struggles, comfort-seeking, unhealthy relationships, disobedience, lack of transparency, etc. - have a very strong negative impact on the young members undergoing basic formation.

The reflections and assessments we have made in the Province about our life, community, financial management, our ministries and our formation during the last two years are leading us in the same direction. We have taken the initial steps and we are aware of our strengths and also the areas where we need to grow, adapt and change. Let us keep up the initial enthusiasm with which we have begun this exercise and take concrete steps to move forward. In these efforts the

full cooperation of every member is absolutely essential. The Local Superiors/Team Leaders and the Directors of different ministries or formation centres have a greater responsibility to ensure that all our efforts of the past two years bear fruit during the present academic year and move on to the subsequent years.

In our efforts to build our own credibility, we should always remind ourselves that our efforts and our actions have to be an integrated one, without neglecting any aspect of our life as religious. We are monks in the marketplace and we are contemplatives in action. We are spiritual leaders with a professional touch, i.e., our approach essentially is spiritual in nature that avoids all the semblances of politicizing, power-centredness, status consciousness, dissipated loyalties, etc. Let us march on in the true spirit of St. Ignatius and build our credibility, so that we become worthy instruments AMDG.

Fraternally,
Sebasti L. Raj. SJ
Provincial

Provincial's Programme:



AUGUST

- 02-04 TNPCRI Meetings, Lumen Institute, Tindivanam
 05 Visitation: Tindivanam, Pondicherry
 10 Meeting: Principals and Secretaries – AAC, Karumathur
 11 Meeting: Headmasters and Correspondents – St. Mary's, Madurai
 13-14 Visitation: Nagapattinam
 15 Last Vows of Fr. A. Irudayaraj, Kalangarai, Nagapattinam
 16 Meeting: Coordinators - Beschi Illam
 17 Meeting: LS/TL and Coordinators - Beschi Illam
 18 Meeting: LS/TL – Beschi Illam – Consult in the afternoon
 19-21 Visitation: Poondy, Vilangudi, Kumbakonam
 22-23 Visitation: IDEAS
 25 Meeting: Campus Ministers – Beschi Illam, Dindigul
 27 Visitation: Kadamalaikundu
 28-31 Visitation: Sacred Heart College, Shembaganur and Retreat to IHM Administration Team

SEPTEMBER

- 01-02 Visitation: Sacred Heart College, Shembaganur and Retreat to IHM Administration Team
 02-03 Visitation: Kodai Hills
 04-05 Workshop: CIC Administration Team - Nilakottai
 06 Meeting: Directors of Social Centres – Beschi Illam
 07-08 Meeting: Young Priests before Final Vows - Shembaganur
 10-11 Visitation: Vadampakkam
 12-13 Visitation: Vallam
 14-17 Visitation: Kuppayanallur, Ongur
 19 Consult
 21-22 Workshop: Strategic Planning for Jesuit Superiors of Goa Province - Goa
 23-24 Visitation: DACA
 25-26 Visitation: LAAS
 28-30 Visitation: St. Mary's, Dindigul

Chennai Mission Superior's Programme

August

- 02 Meeting with Bishop of Salem
 03 Meeting with Bishop of Dharmapuri
 04-06 Salem – Oilpatti & Sentharpatti
 10 Meeting of Superiors/Team Leaders of Chennai Mission
 11 Chennai Mission Consult
 16-18 Meeting: Coordinators/ LS/TL – Beschi Illam & Province Consult (afternoon)
 22-25 Contact Visit (CV): Ooty & Makkampalayam
 28-29 CV : Vallam
 30-31 CV : Dhyana Ashram

September

- 01 Meeting of the "Core Committee" for Salem and Dharmapuri
 10-11 Vadampakkam
 12-13 Vallam
 14 Chennai Mission Consult
 15-17 Kuppayanallur
 21 Province Consult

PCF's Programme

August

- 5-9 Classes: Chennai
 10 Chennai Mission Meeting
 11 Seminar to CSI Pastors, Chennai
 12-14 Classes: Tindivanam
 16 Meeting: Commission Coordinators – Beschi Illam
 17 Meeting: LS/TL and Coordinators -- Beschi Illam
 19-24 National Biblical Seminar, Mangalore
 26 Vocation Promoters Meet, St Joseph's, Trichy

September

- 5-6 Perumalalai, Shembag
 7-8 Young Priests' Meet, Shembag
 11-13 Devakottai, Oriyur
 18 SUPAM Meet
 16-27 Classes, Arul Kadal
 30-4 Oct PCFs Meet, Bangalore

Announcements



Regret inconvenience

The renovation work at the Jesuit residence at LTI, Madurai makes it impossible for the LTI community to receive guests till December. The Superior and the community of LTI regret the inconvenience.

Counselling course

The Formation Commission, in collaboration with the Professional Training Committee, is organising a course on Counselling the Youth: Diagnostics & Practice.

Dates: 7-10 Nov '13.

Place: Anugraha, Dindigul.

Resource Person: Fr. John Antony David, OFM (cap). Though the course is organized for the formators in the province, it is open to all, especially to the campus ministers and spiritual directors. Those interested should contact Fr PCF.

Consultors to the Chennai Mission Superior:

Fr Provincial has appointed the following members as Consultors to the Chennai Mission Superior: Fr. Francis Jayapathy, Fr. Joseph Michael, Bro. Ignacy Augustine, Fr. Ignatius Amalraj.

Committee for Salem and Dharmapuri Projects:

Fr. Provincial has appointed the following team to study the type of Institution that we can start in Salem and Dharmapuri Dioceses in the coming years: Fr. Ignatius Amalraj (Convener), Fr. A. Joseph, Fr. Gunasekaran Rajaiah, Fr. Francis P. Xavier, Fr. Manuel Alphonse, Fr. Joe Arun.

New email & cell phone

Chennai Mission office has a new email id: jesuitcmo@gmail.com

Fr M.J. Victor has a new mobile no: 97632 66718

Fr Wellington Fernando has a new e-mail id: wellingtonfernandosj@gmail.com. His new mobile numbers are: 7598614135, 9159406665.



Events



SOLAR POWER FOR BESCHI

On 31 May, we at **Beschi Illam**, had a farewell Mass for the outgoing community members of Beschi: Frs Britto Peter, Packiaraj and Roch, Brs John Bosco and Aloysius. On the same day we welcomed Brs Jeganathan, Natarajan, and Chinnappan Paul. Frs Devadoss, Paulraj and Br Mariadoss assumed their new or additional responsibilities in Beschi. The feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus was jointly celebrated by Beschi and the Sacred Heart Residence and Press on 7 June. Eight 2nd year novices started an 8-day retreat on 11 June in preparation for their vows under the guidance of Fr Devadhas Muthiah. On 16 June, 14 first year novices entered the Novitiate. The 2nd year novices pronounced their vows on 21 June, the feast of St Aloysius Gonzaga. Fr Raj Irudaya was the main celebrant and homilist and the novices released two CDs. Two of them left for Belgaum for their Juniorate in the evening on the same day. The remaining six left for the SIC Juniorate at Trivandrum on 23 June. CIS, Beschi has started offering monthly recollections to Sisters around Dindigul. Sr Sahaya Mary, PDDM, our Infirmarian, and her companion, Sr Annie Joseph, PDDM, who is helping in the Province Treasurer's Office, are cheerfully contributing to the well-being of the members of the community.

After careful and elaborate preparations led by Fr Deva, a Solar Power Plant was installed for two blocks of the novitiate, after it was blessed by Fr Provincial on 31 July.

- Ilanko Xavier

SPECIAL COLLECTION TO HELP STUDENT

The toppers of Std X and XII of **Carmel School, Nagercoil** and the State level achievers were honoured in a function organized on 01 July. They were given cash awards by

the management, alumni and many philanthropists. The inauguration of Carmel Animation Programme for Students (CAPS) was held on 03 July. It helps the poor and needy students. This year 150 students have been given free uniforms. A special collection was made on 05 July to help Emerson Shaja, the student who came first in HSC examination in 2012-2013. He met with an accident on his way to Carmel when he came to collect his mark statement. Thanks to the efforts of our teachers



and generosity of our students a sum of Rs 50,000 was collected and given for his medical expenses. Kalvi Valarchi Naal was celebrated on 15 July and Dr James R Daniel, Former Principal, Scott Christian College, Nagercoil was the chief guest. The feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel was celebrated on 20 July by Fr Felix, Chancellor, Diocese of Kottar. JAMAAD's 69th camp for alcohol and drug dependents was organized by Fr Martin. While Fr Kumar Raja, Tuticorin gave a one-day workshop on the spirituality of teachers, Dr Victor Louis Anthuvan, Chennai gave a one-day seminar on promoting competence and commitment. - M. Vincent Amalraj

DISCUSSED THE 'MEMORIALE'

The Tertiaries at **Sacred Heart College, Shembaganur**, making their Spiritual Exercises were well supported by the prayers of the community and the conducive atmosphere. On 18 July, the community had its orientation at St Joseph's Agri farm, Perumalmalai. Fr S. Arockiam, the manager, enriched us with his reflections. We had a fruitful discussion on the memoriale of Fr Provincial, which helped us strengthen the various apostolates we do. On 1

July the PEAK team conducted an orientation for 55 girls studying in the community college (Girihini). They organized meetings on 13 and 22 July for the animators of Unorganized Labour Welfare Union and Primary Health Care programs to evaluate and consolidate the works they do. Fr Edward and Fr Stanislaus Mariadoss directed retreats.

- G. Raphael Alexander

NEW, COOL CHAPEL AND HALL

Fr Kumar Raja, Tuticorin, animated the Orientation programme for the staff members of **St Mary's, Madurai** that helped in their spiritual and intellectual growth. The parish Jesuits and the Parish Council members took strenuous efforts to conduct the Corpus Christi procession in a prayerful atmosphere. Fr A. Joseph SJ preached an effective homily and the Archbishop of Madurai gave the blessing. The Community is now blessed with a new, modern Chapel, and an air-conditioned hall and a new lift. Fr Freddie and Bro Joseph worked tirelessly to complete these new projects. Two Sisters from Sacred Heart Congregation, Tuticorin have joined St Mary's - one a staff nurse who will take care of our sick, elderly Fathers and the other who will teach in our school. Fr Roch conducted animation programmes in Chennai and Madurai. - Fr Felix Joseph

FOR SALESIAN RECTORS

Fr Thamburaj of **Dhyana Ashram, Chennai** guided a retreat in Yercaud and seminars at Azamgarh, Varanasi and Andhra. Fr Jerry directed a creative retreat for 55 Salesian Rectors of the southern region and taught a course on hermeneutics at Kristu Jyothi, Bangalore and cultural analysis of the 21st century at NBCLC. Fr V.M. Dhasan preached a mission in a village parish of Kumbakonam diocese. - Xavier Irudayaraj

ELECTED

Sch Joe Livingston of DNC, Pune was elected the beadle for Philosophers. Fr M.J. Victor preached two retreats to Ursuline Sisters. - **T. John Kamilas**

TO LIFE CONVICTS IN CENTRAL PRISON

27 representatives from 12 movements of Arunthathiyar, Aadhithamizhar, Puthirai Vannar and Malai Kuravar communities, participated in a consultation on 20 July and drew up a challenging roadmap for IDEAS, Madurai that visualizes training, field-based advocacy research, legal and media interventions. Representatives from 7 Arunthathiyar movements met on 6 July to discuss how to safeguard the 3% inner reservation policy for Arunthathiyars, promulgated by the T.N. Government in 2009. Fr Philomin Raj addressed youths of Aathi Thamilar Katchi on 5 July and conducted a workshop on 'Stress Management' to 100 life convicts in Coimbatore Central Prison on 6 July. - **Aloysius Irudayam**

TRAINING FOR PARALEGALS

LAAS Illam community had its orientation and planning at JMJ Retreat Centre, Sirumalai on 13 June. As a part of the final phase of training for the paralegals, they were taken for a guided visit to the Madras High Court Madurai Bench and Madurai District Courts on 29 June. The legal aid camp, organized at Sivagnanapuram village in Nilakkottai taluk by LAAS and DEEPAM jointly, has brought hope to the Dalits of the village. As soon as the local people decided to petition the District Collector to resolve the disparities in allotting works and wages under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MNEREGA), the problem was solved. Fr Michaelraj conducted a workshop to students from Vettavalam and Trichy on 'Short Video Film Making for Social Change.' As South Zone Social Action coordinator he organised on 13 July a consultative meeting at ISI, Bangalore. - **Santhanam**

QUEST FOR GOD

IDCR, Chennai organized a meeting with Rev Dr Hans Ucko of the World Council of Churches (WCC), Geneva and Prof Lawrence Surendra, an Environmental Economist on the role and non-role of Religions vis-à-vis contemporary issues. Fr Michael Amaladoss concluded the session with remarks on how religions look at each other, which required an intra-religious conversation to open up to others. The recent devastation at Kedarnath, Uttarakhand, prompted a well-attended Interreligious Meditation and Prayer (IMAP) at IDCR. Vincent Sekhar delivered the inaugural address on the theme of 'Crossing the Boundaries: Our Faith in Relationality' at St. Paul's Seminary, Tiruchirappalli. Fr. Michael Amaladoss travelled to Greece to give lectures on Indian culture to a group of French lay people. On the feast of St Ignatius, Fr Emma introduced Fr Amaladoss's new book, *Quest for God – Doing theology in India* before it was released. - **Vincent Sekhar**

GOLDEN JUBILEE INAUGURATED

Fr Darwin guided the recollection of the regents of the southern region who came to Arulanandar Shrine, Oriyur on 12 July. The school celebrated the birthday of Mr Kamaraj and valedictory of the cultural week on 15 July. We were happy to join with the De Britto community, Devakottai on 18 July for the monthly recollection, animated by Fr Moollel. On 21 July Fr Kumar Raja, Tuticorin conducted a healing service, accompanied by Fr Darwin. Fr Provincial presided over the inauguration of the Golden Jubilee of the school on 25 July. The function, attended by local leaders, began with a thanksgiving prayer service followed by cultural programmes and a meaningful message by Fr Provincial. - **Robinson. A**

NEW BUILDING FOR JMAADD

Sports Day was celebrated in a grand scale at Loyola School, Kuppayanallur on 19 July. Mrs Sumathi Gunasekaran, the President of Uthiramerur Town Panchayat, and Mr T. Tamilselvan were the chief guests. Arulkadal 'theologians' preached a one-day retreat to our school children on 13

and 27 July. The community started the Novena to St. Ignatius by going on a pilgrimage to the cemetery of two French Jesuit martyrs, Fr Maximilleux de Courfil and Fr Maudiyt Pierre who were poisoned and buried in Karuveppam Poondi near Mallikapuram parish. JMAADD-Kuppayanallur has got a new big building which earlier housed the Loyola Teacher Training Institute.

- **Lawrence**

ST XAVIER'S INSTITUTES, PALAYAMKOTTAI

The era of active collaboration with the laity at St Xavier's, Palayamkottai has begun with the appointments of Prof. M. Thomas Punithan as Deputy Principal for Shift-II and Prof S. Mathu Gnaniah as Controller of Exams. On 8 July Fr Danis Ponniah presided over the Holy Spirit Mass and Fr Maria Augustine preached the homily. On 19 July at a special Mass the community prayed along with Fr Stephen de Souza for the repose of the soul of his elder brother, Mr Tony de Souza, who died in Darwin on 10 July. Fr Joe Arun, who is back home after visiting Germany, Peru and Rome, is ecstatic about the chance he had to join Pope Francis at a Eucharist he concelebrated.

Freshers' Days were celebrated enthusiastically by Xavier Hostel and Mother Teresa Women's Hostel, where many novel ventures have been initiated. As an innovative career-oriented initiative, Mr Christu Raja, an officer at the Collector's Office, Tirunelveli, explained how to succeed at the TNPSC Exams. Fr Thomas Alex gave an orientation programme at St Ignatius College of Education, Palayamkottai and Fr Amaladoss attended a 21-day Refresher Course in Education at Bharathiyar University, Coimbatore. On 9 July began a week-long cultural competitions that ended in a grand finale called 'Cultural Extravaganza'. - **Baskar**

RUSH FOR ADMISSIONS

We have felt heartened by the huge rush at St Joseph's, Trichy for admission of students for

the School and College this year. Student elections in the hostels and College went on smoothly. The Jesuit community went on a pilgrimage to Vadugarpettai, formerly a mission centre of the Old Madurai Mission and later to Holy Redeemer's Basilica. The campus has become brighter and more eco-friendly with the installation of solar street lamps.

- Jesu Nesa Raju

THE NEW ATTRACTION

Fr Sales, the new Team Leader of **Thozhamai Illam**, is on the move, establishing "Thozhamai" with religious and lay people. In his retreats to the Carmelite Sisters he combined Theresian and Ignatian contemplations. Fr Cyril is the new attraction as he goes round giving recollections and saying Masses in and around Kanyakumari. Fr Joseph Raj is back after directing a month-long retreat to the Brothers of the Sacred Heart. Fr S.M. Selvaraj animated a heritage retreat for the first year theologians of Arul Kadal.

- S.M. Selvaraj

COMPLEMENTARY EDUCATION CENTRES

On 6 July **JRS-TN** started the new Complementary Education Center (CEC) in Kondam Camp, Thiruvannamali District, on 11 in Avinasi Camp and on 14 in Vellore District. 22 Girihani students from Mullaikuddi Life Skill Education Center (LSE), Trichy have gone for a one-week Personality Development and Social Analysis workshop to IDEAS. Louie Albert has gone to Nairobi to attend an international JRS Meeting.

- Mag Bay

DARE TO DREAM!

After having finished the Hindi Course in Patna we the third year theologians reached **Vidya Jyoti** on 4 July. The academic year began with a solemn Eucharist presided by Archbishop Anil Couto of Delhi who exhorted us to "Dare to Dream". Fr Leo Fernando has taken charge as Principal of Vidyajyoti College this year for the third time. By his administrative skills and gentle human approach he keeps

motivating us. Fr Jerry was here to teach a course on Priesthood. Sch Santhosh has begun his theology studies with the Pre-Theology Course. Sch John Paul has been elected the Sub-Beadle of Vidyajyoti Residence for this term.

- Antony Markus

ARCHBISHOP'S FIRST VISIT TO LOYOLA

At the Community Orientation at **Loyola, Chennai** on 15,16 June the theme "Competency and Commitment" was explored from three different angles: personal, Corporate and the Society. Dr Susan Thomas (LIBA) and Dr Francis Xavier Rajan (Loyola) shared their ideas. We concluded the Orientation with the celebration of the Jubilees of Frs Amal, Malliekal and Jothi.

On 3 July the community celebrated the "Welcome and Farewell to Chennai Mission superiors", Frs. Jebamalai Raja and A. Victor, during the Eucharist followed by a dinner. While the admission-fever has subsided, the Loyola campus has had a few significant events. For the first time, the whole Loyola campus congregated on 15 July to invoke the Holy Spirit during the Eucharist celebrated by Archbishop George Antonisamy of Madras-Mylapore. Bertram Hall was packed to the full and overflowing. This was Archbishop's first visit to the campus.

LIBA's Graduation (for the One-year Executive Diploma Programs) and Convocation (for the Full-time, Part-time, and Executive PGDM programs) were held during July. LIBA Premiere League, in the lines of IPL, is in full swing with sports, extra-curricular and management competitions.

LICET is the first engineering college in Anna University's single window system with all the seats taken. The bridge course developed by LICET is now made compulsory to all the engineering colleges in Anna University. Fr Francis P. Xavier and Dr Jose were resource persons for the faculty orientation program in Idhaya Engineering College, Chinnasalem. Fr. Ignacimuthu had gone for three weeks to Kaiserslautern University, Germany for collaborative research. He was the chief guest at a national seminar on Bioinformatics at SRM University, Chennai.

- Emma

BEFORE THE NEWLY ERECTED STATUE

The new academic year started at **De Britto, Devakottai** with a very effective orientation to the staff by Fr Kumar Raja, Tuticorin on 15 June. A creative Tamil literary and art week led by the Veeramamuniver Literary Association had its finale on 15 July. The Sports Day on 27 July was a fascinating event to students as our alumnus Mr Kanchareyan, H.R. Director, Tessolve Semiconductor Pvt Ltd, Coimbatore, recalled the golden days of his athletic achievements at De Britto. The three day novena organized for the first time in our campus before the newly erected St Ignatius's statue helped the students come to know the heroic life of St Ignatius. Fr Yagoo was conferred the title, 'Thirumarai Selvan' by the Catholic Tamil Literary Association, Madurai on 7 July for his Tamil writings on Fr Levelil, S.J.

- Kennedy

MAKING HISTORY

Making history has become the order of the day at **St. Mary's, Dindigul**. Mr. David Xavier assumed office as the first lay Headmaster in our higher secondary school. Yet another historical feat was the winning of the G. S. Football trophy (S. Gopalakrishnan Memorial Trophy 2013) by the seniors consecutively for 12 years. As part of our interreligious approach to our mission, the school extended a rousing reception to the Vivekananda Ratha on 28 June in collaboration with the Tiruvarutperavai, a forum of the leaders of various religions. Fr Kumar Raja inspired our staff through his orientation on 22 June. Fr S. Arockiasamy put the community on the right track when he guided the community orientation on 20, 21 July in Manalur, where we experienced Fr Rayappan's generous hospitality. Fr Arockiaraj and Fr Louis (AND) have joined our community. The pilgrimage to the Church of St. Ignatius in Anandarayankottai along with our staff and students on 27 July has revitalized us.

- Fr Paul

SHOWERS OF BLESSINGS

Our hearts feel cooler here at the **Belgaum Juniorate** thanks to the incessant rain in Belgaum. On 25 June the Juniorate programme began. We are 16 Juniors from 5 different Provinces. Fr Oscar, our Dean, inspires us to be a close-knit community of love, resembling St Ignatius and his companions. We are determined to make the best use of this great opportunity to learn the English language, Indian culture and our Jesuit way of life.

- **Theophine P.**

ORIENTATION & WORKSHOP

On 28 June Orientation for the AHAL community was conducted in Vettavalam. AHAL team participated in the new Chennai Mission Superior's taking charge ceremony on 30 June and in the Province Social Action GBM in Dindigul on 1 July. The new Mission Superior paid an informal visit to AHAL when we planned for the whole year. On 21 July Fr Guna and Fr Gerlin guided the new team animators. Fr Guna conducted a workshop on Volunteering and Fr Gerlin on Ways of Approaching Social Issues.

- **Selvendiran**



Abide with the Lord

Fr Bernard Toppo, SJ (RNC) 80/57
on 22 July '13.

Br Aloysius Macwan, SJ (GUJ) 78/53
on 22 July 2013.

Br Pascal Tigga, SJ (MAP) 82/ 58
on 26 July 2013.

Fr Thadathikuzhi, SJ (DUM) 68/48
on 5 August 2013.

Fr Benedict Swaminathan, SJ (KAR)
50/28 on 6 August 2013.

Mr P.R. Saleth, 76, elder brother
of Fr Marivalan on 9 July 2013.

Mr Savarirayan, 87, father
of Br Stephen Raj on 10 July 2013.

Mr V.S. Sebastian, 75, the elder brother
of Fr V.S. Raju on 11 July 2013.

Letters from abroad

FROM CHINA

The Jesuit Province of China organized a China Contact Programme from 30 June to 8 July at the Beijing Center for Chinese Studies, Beijing run by the Jesuits. I was privileged to join the ten Provincials, eight PCFs, President of the Jesuit Conference of Africa and Regional General Assistant of Africa who were there. The aim of the programme was to expose us to the Jesuit mission in China and to explore the various possibilities of international collaboration to enhance this mission. Every morning we had presentations by Jesuits, scholars, activists and academicians on the socio-political and cultural history of China, the Church and the Society in China and contemporary issues and challenges. In the afternoon we had guided visits to the places of social, political and cultural importance.

We visited the Zhalan Cemetery to see the tombs of the first Jesuit in China, Fr Matteo Ricci and 63 other Jesuits like the famous Jesuit astronomer Adam Schall. The present phenomenal growth of Christianity is gratefully attributed to the strategic inculturation methods of Fr Ricci and other Jesuits. We were also introduced to the realities of the Open and Underground Churches in China. We visited two dioceses outside Beijing. Religious activities are allowed within the church campus in the Open Church whose bishops are appointed by the Chinese Government, but most of whom are later approved by Vatican also. Open churches are packed for liturgical services, but Catholics of the Underground Church are forced to lead clandestine and harassed lives. The Jesuits today, following the methodology of Ricci, are doing a marvelous work in education, research, cultural studies, environmental ministries, social work and youth apostolate. No formal, established Jesuit community exists in the Mainland China and Jesuits live in their own places of work. The doors of China are wide open to all of us.

- **Raj Irudaya, SJ**

FROM MYANMAR

With the arrival of Paul C Jesuraja, Walter Fernandez and Leo Pereira, the number of Indian Jesuits serving in Myanmar goes up to the perfect number seven. Paul C Jesuraja plunged into his seminary teaching work from the first week. Sch Leo is grappling with the intricacies of Burmese language. Schs Jesuraj and Stalin are in the teaching work. Vinny Joseph is doing the hard task of 'edifying' new entrants to the Society. This year also marks the first local Jesuit ordination and arrival of 8 local scholastics from their Philosophy from Manila.

Walter Fernandez comes with his huge experience with the two social Institutes. A very humble beginning was made on 8 July with a small research centre called ARC (Animation and Research Centre). Walter will head this social institute. This is a new venture for this country.

I have been involved in the training of the Diocesan clergy for the last three years. I was an 'expert' in many fields since there were no other men, foraging even into retreat ministry (my three novice masters must be turning in their graves!). Now that the real experts are arriving, I might revert to my field work.

Burma is changing at a furious pace. With prices skyrocketing, we were forced to move to much humbler abodes since the rents have gone up. As a nascent neo-liberal economy takes root, its ugly sibling, the neo-fascist Buddhist moment, '969' is making waves as attacks on Muslims continue. A draft bill to control the population of non-Buddhists has been introduced by the monks. Sri Lanka leads the way with training such monks.

Last year saw many Jesuits visiting Myanmar - Ama, Fr Provincial and some Jesuits from other Provinces. Visitors and missionaries are always welcome.

- **C. Amal, SJ**

15 August 1534

These are the recollections of **Simon (Simao) Rodriques** of the ceremony on 15 Aug 1534 at the chapel of St Denis at Montmartre outside the city of Paris, where Ignatius and his companions, including Rodriques, made a vow to stay together and go to Jerusalem:

This vow was first made, if I recall correctly, in 1534 on 15 August, the feast of the Blessed Virgin Mary's Assumption, for in this matter all the Fathers took the Virgin as our helper and protector and special intercessor before her Son Jesus Christ our Lord, taking as an intercessor also the blessed martyr Denis at whose holy shrine these vows were first taken.

They decided that the place to take these vows should be the chapel of St Denis, which is situated halfway up the Mount of Martyrs [Montmartre], about a kilometer from the city,

Solitary, removed from all disturbances, and far from crowds of people. To offer their holocaust to God more fervently, they prepared themselves by fasting, mortification. When they confirmed this vow on the same day and in the same place and with the same ceremony the two following years, Father Ignatius was not present [15 Aug 1535] for certain reasons, but they did everything following his counsel and judgement. No outsider was present, just the Fathers. Fr Faber celebrated Mass, and before he gave Communion



to his companions, he turned to them and held the sacred host in his hands. They were kneeling on the floor with their minds fixed on God, and each in his own turn pronounced the vows in a clear voice that was audible to all. Then they all received Holy Communion together. Turning to the altar, Fr Faber, in the same way, before consuming the life-giving bread, pronounced his vows so distinctly that he was heard by everyone.

Those first Fathers of the Society, who at that moment truly committed themselves to God with their whole heart, offered that holocaust with such eagerness, with such abnegation of will, with such hope in the divine mercy, that often, when I think about it afterwards, a passionate burning fills my heart, a new flood of devotion swells up, and I experience incredible awe. Unending thanks and eternal praise to God for his wonderful gifts to us, because he was mindful of us and showed us his mercy. [Tobit 8, 18]

When the ceremony was over, the Fathers spent the rest of the day near the spring. It is situated at the foot of the mountain

across that little chapel where they had taken their vows. With great joy and happiness they talked together about the zeal for the divine service with which they were on fire. At last, when the sun was already setting, they made their way home praising and glorifying God.

Nicolas Bobadilla, another first companion, was also deeply affected by Montmartre. Addressing Fr General Francis Borgia on 31 August 1569 - 35 years after Montmartre - he wrote:

“It was not without deep significance that Your Reverend Paternity wrote the long letter you sent me from Frascati, written on the feast of the Assumption of Our Lady the Virgin Mary to whom I am dearly devoted, for on that day our Company had its beginnings at Montmartre near Paris, where ten of us made the first vows to go to Jerusalem. This holy feast is the root and origin of the Company: “Look to Abraham your father and to Sara who bore you”, said God through the prophet [Is 51: 2], recalling the father and mother from whom they descended. We of the Company ought to do the same, especially those of us who were there and whom Christ and his holy Mother took as their sons and as fathers of this great Company. Blessed be God and his Holy Mother forever and ever, Amen.

(sent by Michael Alosanai, SJ)

Experience



SECRETS FOR WELL-BEING AND PEACE

Deep within I strive to be true to myself. No sham, no show has any attraction for me. It used to be a matter of laughter when, as children, we consciously pretended to be what we were not. As a corollary I wouldn't want to flatter anyone, even if it could have been profitable. One of the most handsome compliments I received was when a Jesuit acknowledged gratefully my appreciation of his substantial contribution to the Church on behalf of the Society.

Secondly, I have learnt to take criticism in stride whenever it is leveled against me or hurting situations arise. Awareness of my quick temper puts me on guard against creating hurting situations. How to make up for them? Simple. Accept gracefully if others choose to hurt me. I don't need to go after the third degree of humility. I relish the advice of Fr Rickaby: You don't need to be a fool for Christ's sake; rejoice rather when you are found out! How realistic!

During my last annual retreat, I read with great profit *The Gentle Art of Blessing* by P. Pradervand (St Paul's). He simply invites all of us to bless people - not just your relatives but anyone you meet on the way... the bus conductor, the street vendor including all kinds of hurters - not necessarily of yourself but all social hurters, rapists, demanders of bribes, child traffickers, etc. I needed to bless especially those things that irked or irritated me - bless the hot sun, dirty streets, power failure... Do I really believe that "The world is charged with the grandeur of God"? Do I believe that all the social hurters listed above are certainly sons and daughters of the Heavenly Father? If no situation is beyond the healing touch of the Father, then no criticism or hurt can harm me beyond repair.

I always read with attention even scrappy information, hoping to find 'pearls of great price'. I always share such pearls with others.

Every moment of life is now precious: ever presenting gifts to wonder at and to thank God for. I hear, read and feel a lot about the sufferings and privations of others. They pain me. Precisely because of this awareness I am quick to rejoice even over tiny fractions of human joy and laughter. 'Thank you' and 'Please' are on my lips and heart, as frequently as prepositions are in a sentence.

- A. Arulanandam, SJ

Memories

FA'S 'SOL' SINGS...LA!

The above is an imaginary, musical title for the Diamond Jubilee celebration of Br L. Gnanapragasam, who is known for decades as Fa, or better Laundry Fa. Ever since his transfer from Shembag in the mid fifties, Fa is at Beschi College except for a brief respite at LTI, Madurai. It is at Beschi that his Golden Jubilee was celebrated 10 years ago, it is again at Beschi that the 60th anniversary or the Diamond Jubilee of his religious life was celebrated on 7 Feb this year (1970).

Beschi feted Fa in a simple and homely way. The morning celebration consisted of the now familiar concelebrated Mass. Breakfast and Dinner had Fa as presiding officer. The greetings at Dinner consisted of songs sung by the Pre-novices, Novices and Juniors; the inevitable Spiritual Bouquet enhanced by the 60 Masses offered by Fr General; reminiscences of Fa narrated by Br. J. Maria Susai; Fa's concluding speech, of which perhaps the only clearly audible word was 'picnic' (granted to the community); and last but not least, the nghw;fhR khiy, that is garland of 'gold coins' which was nothing but 60 gold-coloured and tasty biscuits woven into a garland and presented by the parish priest of Fa's native place, Panjampatty.

If 'la' might stand for the Diamond Jubilee of Fa, may we not hope that he'll live to celebrate his 'si' and 'do', namely his Platinum Jubilee and Centenary, too?

(From MNL, Feb 1970)



Congratulations

to the new 'Doctors' who have successfully defended their doctoral theses: **Frs Joe Xavier**, (ISI, Delhi), **Justin Emmanuel** (Tertianship) and **Stephen Martin** (Vaiharai).

Sch Vargheesh who has scored the first place in Court Practicals in B.L. exams.

Sch Arul Gnanapragasam, Berchmans Illam, who has bagged the first prize in an elocution competition held at Loyola, Chennai, on 'Uniqueness of Jesuit Higher Education.'

Just for...



After reading her mother's letter carefully, Mrs De Souza looked up suspiciously at her husband. "Henry," she said, "Mother says she is not coming here, because she thinks we don't want her to come. I told you to write and say that she was to come at her own convenience. You did write, didn't you?" The husband said, "Er..yes..I did write. But I couldn't spell the word 'convenience', so I made it 'risk.'"