

DECEMBER 2016



(For Private Circulation)

## Message from the Provincial



### Fr. Kolvenbach: A Tribute

Dear Brothers,

Fr Peter Hans Kolvenbach was our Superior General for a long period of 24 years. He became the Superior General at a time when the Society of Jesus faced one of the most difficult periods in our relationship with the Holy See. So, one of his main responsibilities was to regain the confidence and trust of the Holy Father and the other officials of the Holy See. To our great satisfaction and consolation, he was able to build this relationship ably and effectively. In fact, he established a close relationship with the late Pope John Paul II. So much so, that he was frequently consulted by the Pope on several issues and developments in the world.

Here are some of my personal impressions of this great personality, with whom I had the privilege to interact several times, starting from 1983, the year he was elected the General. In December 1983, just three months after his election, I had the privilege of meeting him for the first time. The then Regional Assistant got this appointment for me very reluctantly, as I was not an official at that time. But when he took me to Fr. General's room about 5 minutes ahead of the time allotted to me, Fr Kolvenbach was already standing in front of the door, waiting for me. Although I was given only 20 minutes with him, he gave me about 45 minutes, during which he spoke most of the time. That was the greatness of dear Fr. Kolvenbach.

Whenever he had to appear in public he was rather formal in his talks or presentations, relying mostly on written speeches. However, while talking to individuals or to informal groups he was a man who could keep the conversation going.

Once I had a short conversation with him during a lunch and I spoke to him about the Evaluation of Vidya Jyoti, Delhi, which I had carried out a few months earlier. He had not only read the Evaluation Report but was able to make some specific comments on the concluding section of that Report. He was very well informed and had an astonishing memory.

At the beginning of GC 35 in 2008, Fr Kolvenbach stood at the main entrance to the aula and welcomed each Delegate into the aula. After accepting his resignation, the Delegates honoured him with a standing ovation that went on and on for about 10 minutes! That was a sign of their deep-felt appreciation for his service to the Society for 24 long years. During the entire period of the Congregation, Fr Kolvenbach participated faithfully in all the sessions, though he did not speak in any of the sessions. However,

(continued from p.1)

several times the other Delegates quoted from his writings, while discussing different issues. This indicates how several Delegates were influenced by his writings, guidelines and documents, to which they referred to so often.

In short, Fr. Peter Hans Kolvenbach was a man of few words, very well-informed, a deep thinker with an ability to articulate his thoughts and concerns, proficient in several languages, gifted with a phenomenal memory to remember individuals and also their background, a man who knew when to be formal and when to be informal, a hard worker. He lived entirely for the Society with total commitment. Definitely, Fr. Peter Hans Kolvenbach is a great source of inspiration to all of us in many ways. While we pray for the repose of his soul, let us be inspired by his exemplary life of commitment.

Faternally,  
*Sebasti L. Raj, SJ*  
Provincial

## Announcements

**You can do it yourself!** Now it is possible for every Jesuit to directly upload information about himself into the Society database - information like postgraduate studies, knowledge of languages, and publications. You can upload also your photograph by accessing your profile in the *ad usum nostrorum* section (Reserved Section) in the SJ Website. The link 'My profile SJ' is found on the left-hand side of the *ad usum* page. Those Jesuits who do not yet have access to the *ad usum* section can apply for the required permission using the facility on the official website ([www.sjweb.info](http://www.sjweb.info)) of the General Curia.

**Approval for Diaconate:** After consultations, Fr Provincial has approved the following 9 scholastics for Diaconate leading to priestly ordination: Anton Robert, Baskar Yesumanickam, Francis Xavier A., Parthasarathi Narayanaswamy, Robinson Antony, Sathyabalan Arockiasamy, Swaminathan Krishnamurti, Wenishraj Rayappan, Xavier Antony Selvam M.

**Joseph Xavier A to JRS:** Fr. Provincial has offered the services of Fr. A. Joseph Xavier to the International Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS). He will be stationed in the JRS Headquarters in Rome. The province wishes him a fruitful ministry in this new mission.

## Provincial's Programme

### DECEMBER 2016

- 04 GC 36 – Zonal Sharing: Trichy
- 10 GC 36 Zonal Sharing: Loyola, Chennai
- 11 Last Vows of Fr. Robin Selvan – Satya Nilayam
- 11-14 Visitation: Loyola College, Chennai
- 15-16 Visitation: Dhyana Ashram, Chennai
- 15 Meeting with Brothers, Dhyana Ashram
- 17 GC 36 - Zonal Sharing: Vettavalam
- 18 GC36 - Zonal Sharing: St. Xavier's, P'Kottai
- 21-22 Visitation: St. Mary's, Dindigul

### JANUARY 2017

- 03 Consult
- 04-07 Visitation: St. Joseph's, Trichy
- 10-12 Visitation: SICJ
- 17-19 Visitation: St. Mary's, Madurai
- 22-23 Visitation: Loyola, Kuppayanallur
- 24 Visitation: PAATHAI, Vallam
- 25 Visitation: LAV, Vadamelpakkam
- 26-27 Visitation: DNC, Pune
- 28-29 Visitation: Satya Nilayam 

## Chennai Mission Superior's Programme

### DECEMBER 2016

- 07 Final Vows, St Ann's Generalate, Madavaram
- 08 LAV, Vadamelpakkam
- 10 GC 36 Sharing, Chennai
- 11-14 Loyola, Chennai
- 17 GC 36 Sharing, Vettavalam
- 18 GC 36 Sharing, SXC, Palayamkottai
- 20 Christmas Celebration, Chennai Mission
- 26 Blessing of the Renovated Church, W. Puthupatti

### JANUARY 2017

- 03 Province Consult
- 06-07 Mettala, Harur
- 13-15 LCV, Vettavalam, Kilpennathur
- 22-23 Hyderabad
- 25-26 PAATHAI, Vallam
- 26-27 Loyola, Kuppayanallur

**Temporary Status:** Fr. Provincial has given these temporary assignments to three of our Tertians who have just completed their tertianship:

**Fr. Antony Robinson J.** -- to Loyola Academy, Vadamelpakkam, to teach

**Fr. Gnanaraj Arul Francis** -- to Loyola HS School, Kuppayanallur, to teach

**Fr. Leo Anand** -- to Dhyana Ashram, Chennai to do Spiritual Ministry.



## They met, they celebrated...

*Celebrations, Functions, Courses...*



On 08 Nov, the birthday of Beschi, the Jesuits of **Arul Kadal** community honoured his statue at the Marina Beach. **Fr Britto Peter** attended the 15<sup>th</sup> ARMS (Association of Rectors of Major Seminaries) meeting held at Goa on 03-07 Nov on 'Intellectual Formation.'

On 11 Nov the second year novices finished their pastoral experiments and returned to **Beschi**, and began their 6-day retreat guided by **Fr Bastian**. On 12 Nov the first year novices came out of their long retreat and continued the fifth week in a bid to gather and consolidate the fruits of the long retreat. On 22 Nov we welcomed for breakfast the Province Co-ordinators for Secondary Education from all over the Assistancy, who were attending their annual meeting at Maduralaya. On 25 Nov **Fr Provincial** shared with the novices his experience of GC 36. He took time to explain to the curious novices every technical detail.

At an interface meeting organized by **ICRDCE** on 04 Nov prospective employers from shipping and logistics, construction, hotel & tourism and pipeline industries shared their expectations of the students who pass out of community colleges. **Fr M.S. Jacob** and Mr Anto Vincent were the resource persons. 42 participants from 32 organizations from 9 states of India benefited from the 37th Community Colleges Teachers Training programme organized by ICRDCE on 14-19 Nov at CITADEL, Chennai.

**IDCR** had a one-day ecumenical workshop for pastors of different Christian Churches on *Witnessing to Ourselves and to our Neighbours*, inaugurated by the CSI Bishop in Madras, Rev George Stephen Jeyaraj. Students from Stella Maris College and Berchmans Illam shared their views on how the Churches could use their resources in constructive ways. IDCR conducted competitions for visually challenged students in devotional singing, value-based storytelling, and painting.



Arul Kadal



PCSEs at Beschi



ICRDCE



IDCR



**Fr Emma**, Director, **JESCO**, directed a retreat with the focus on 'Psycho-Sexual Integration' for the Bishop and 73 priests of the Sivagangai diocese on 16-21 Oct at Dhyana Illam, Poondi. He taught a course on 'Personality Development' for students of theology at St Paul's Seminary, Trichy on 31 Oct - 05 Nov. Doctors and nurses of the Coimbatore Presentation Sisters attended his sessions on 'Integration of Spiritual Care and Healthcare Services' on 09 Nov. He spoke to Catholic parents of Holy Angels on 'Dealing with Stress caused by Demonetisation' and to the Holy Family Sisters on 'Psychological Aspects of Waiting and Ennui.'

The **Kuppayanalloor** unit of **JMAADD** has created a street theater troupe of school students who engage in training and weekend performances in the villages nearby to create awareness of the consequences of alcoholism. It brought together 30 men and women from families of recovering alcoholics' families, who reflected on 'Helping other Suffering Alcoholics.' JMAADD-K conducted a two-day course on 'Ministry to Alcoholics' for the Deacons of Good Shepherd Major Seminary, Coimbatore.

**Loyola Academy, Vadampakkam**, will soon have a new compound wall.

Jesuits of **Loyola**, Chennai, led by **Fr Arockiasamy Xavier**, Principal, and **Fr Lazar**, Secretary, garlanded the statue of Veeramamunivar at Mariana Beach on 08 Nov, his birth anniversary. **Fr Ignacimuthu** was the chief guest at the national conference on Bioinformatics at Madras Christian College, Chennai.

**Loyola- ICAM** Joint Steering Committee Meeting (JSCM) was held at LICET on 21-23 Nov. ICAM Director General from France, Mr Jean Michel, and his team were present. A collaborative project was initiated by LICET and Ku Luven University, Belgium on "Digital CMOS (Complementary metal-oxide semiconductor) systems for harsh environments." A total of 25 staff from LICET, LIBA, and LCC attended the Faculty Development Programme on Drupal (an open source platform for building amazing digital experiences), an initiative launched by the Ministry

of Human Resources and Development, Government of India.

More than 22 Head Teachers attended a colloquium organized by the **Loyola College of Education**, Chennai (LCE) on 11 Nov. A one day seminar was organised for the teaching and non-teaching staff on 15 Nov to prepare for NAAC Peer Team Visit. Twenty one research scholars benefitted from a two-day workshop on SPSS on 18, 19 Nov. **Fr. Christie** inaugurated the workshop and **Fr Ignacimuthu** gave the valedictory address and gave away the certificates to the participants. Standard Chartered Bank, Chennai conducted an awareness programme on Financial Education for Youth on 25 Nov to enable students to manage their finances. Mr Dominic Savio, CFO, Loyola, Chennai organized it successfully.

On 27 Oct **LIBA** wore a glamorous look thanks to the celebration of the Festival of Lights and Dandhiya, marked by song and dance.

**Fr Francis Sales**, Correspondent, Loyola School, **Kuppayanalloor**, has made the students understand the value of 'Time Management', through his sessions.

While closing the holy door at **Ongur** shrine, Fr Regis, the Vicar General of Chengalpattu, unveiled the plaque inside the church, depicting the history of the parish. **Fr P.S. Arul**, the parish priest, welcomed the parish priests of the Vicariate who joined the people for this event.

The **Sacred Heart College**, Shembaganur community celebrated the Diamond Jubilee of **Fr Edward Jeganathan** in the Society on a grand scale on 30 Oct. The Jesuits, local priests and religious, and a few of his relatives were there for the celebration. On 12 Nov the Tertiars organized Children's Day celebration for more than 150 children of our coworkers and the PEAK-sponsored students.

After a triduum, the **Shembaganur**





SJCHS

**Tertianship** programme, directed by **Frs Arul Sivan** and **William Sequira** (KAR), concluded on 30 Nov.

**St Joseph's College H.S. School, Trichy** organized a seminar on the New Education Policy for parents and teachers. For the first time it brought the Catholic parents of 10 std students for a meeting that ended with a Eucharist.



St Mary's, Madurai

Jesuits of **St Mary's, Dindigul**, visited the graves of Jesuits in the city on 02 Nov and paid homage to those committed pioneers. In order to promote inter-religious harmony in the wake of communal incidents that have taken place in Dindigul, the administration of Dindigul district, Thiruvavur Peravai, the forum for interreligious harmony, and St. Mary's, jointly organized a rally and a public meeting at St. Mary's. All the top civic officials attended.



St Mary's, Madurai

A popular substation of **St Mary's** co-cathedral, **Madurai**, celebrated the feast of its patron, St Francis Xavier on a grand scale, with the concluding Mass celebrated by former Archbishop of Madurai, Peter Fernando. Several alumni attended the Britto Hostel Day celebration co-ordinated by the Hostel Director, **Fr V. George**. **Fr G. Packiaraj** preached two clergy retreats in Kottar and Raipur, while **Fr Soosai Sebastian** went to a college in Chhattisgarh for a NAAC visit.



SXCE

**St Xavier's College of Education** (SXCE), Palayamkottai organized a series of extension lectures on Basic Legal Rights and Duties, Consumer Rights, Yoga, HIV and AIDS, Transgenders, Dengue fever and Alcoholism etc from 05 -25 Nov. A book exhibition was held in the campus



SXCE



on 21, 22 Nov. The UG students visited three special schools in Tirunelveli in order to understand the psycho, social and academic challenges faced by the children in Special Schools. In collaboration with SAILS (Society for the Advancement of Library and Information Science), **SXCE** organized a two day National Conference on Electronic Resources and Academic Libraries.

On 22 Nov the **Supamites** went for a picnic to Nambi Malai falls and the shrine of Bl Devasahayam, Aaralvaymozhi. On 23 Fr Vincent Britto, St Xavier's, gave us a SAP at Karenkadu, focussing on the interior freedom to be open to restructuring for our universal mission. On 24 Nov the Supamites, along with the PCF, SUPAM Coordinator and Arul Kadal Staff had the SUPAM Meeting and shared their experiences and reflections.

At **Vidyaniketan**, Trivandrum, we celebrated on 26 Nov the feast of our Patron, St John Berchmans, after preparing ourselves through a novena. A three-day course on Media Education, given by Fr George Sebastian (KER), was an eye-opening experience. The community visited St Martha's Special School for autistic children as a part of our activities for the Year of Mercy.



*The Provincial and the members  
of the Curia wish  
all the readers of the MNL  
a joyful Christmas  
and a grace-filled 2017!  
May the Christ Child  
and His Virgin Mother bless you  
and all your dear ones!*



## New Books

***Dalit Bible Commentary  
on the Book of Job***, trans. into  
Tamil by **Fr Maria Arul Raja,  
SJ**.

***Draft New Education  
Policy -2016***, ed. by **Fr Xavier  
Alphonse, SJ**, MDU Jesuit Higher  
Education Commission

***Induction into Jesuit  
Higher Education***, ed. by **Fr  
Xavier Alphonse, SJ**, MDU Jesuit  
Higher Education Commission.

## Correspondents:

*Benitto, Emma, Franklin, Frankly, Jacob, John Kennedy, John Pragasam, John Richard, Lenin,  
Leo Anand, Packiaraj, Rayappan, Ronald, Sekhar, Stalin Joseph, Tagore, Viji Bose, Vimal, Wenisch.*



## They have done it!

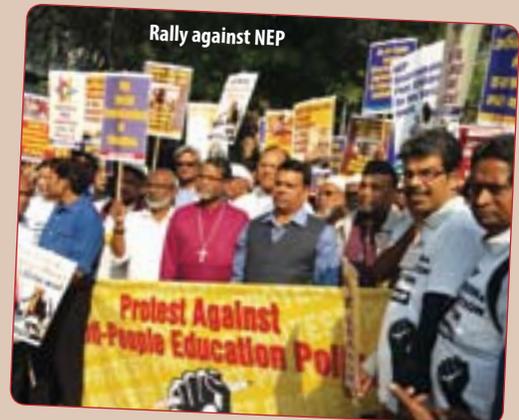
*Something new, something good...*

As a new initiative the **Province Vocation Team** and **CIS**, Beschi brought the student-members of the Manresa Clubs of St Mary's Dindigul and Madurai, and St Joseph's, Trichy to spend two days at CIS. The students were addressed by several Jesuits and were introduced to facets of our history and heritage. They also interacted with the senior Jesuits.

**ICRDCE**, Chennai organized a four-day Workshop on Community Colleges in Myanmar on 01-04 Nov at the Archbishop's House, Rangoon. 38 participants from all over Myanmar attended the programme.

Joint Action Committee Against Anti People Education Policy (JACAAPEP) which includes **JCERT** and **SEC**, organized a rally and demonstration against the proposed new education policy in Delhi on 17 Nov. About 2,500, including about 1,000 from Tamil Nadu, participated. Mr. Manish Sisodia, Deputy CM of Delhi, Sitaram Yechuri of CPM, Digvijay Singh of Congress, D. Raja of CPI, Kanimozhi of DMK and many other political and religious leaders and educationists addressed the rally. Several Jesuits and Jesuit institutions like VJ, ISI, JCSA office, JEA and St. Xavier's School, Delhi participated.

**Loyola, Chennai** has come up with a Sewage Treatment Plant. LIFE (Loyola Institute of Frontier Energy) and ERI (Entomolgy Research Institute) organized a 2-day workshop on 24, 25 Nov on 'Innovations in Water Resources Management in Educational Institutions' on the occasion of the inauguration of the Loyola Sewage Treatment Plant. The project, worth more than 1 crore rupees, was inaugurated by Mr. Bart Degroof, the Consul General of the Belgium Consulate in Chennai in the presence of





Mr. N. Ram, the former Chief Editor of *The Hindu*. Thanks to this green initiative, nearly 4.5 million liters of waste water in the campus will be recycled and reused every month for flushing, washing, gardening and recharging the ground water. It is unique in South India as it has adopted a herbal-based technology to convert the black sullage into purified, odour-free, and E-coli-free water. Loyola Water Expo- 2016 brought home to the students and school children the need for recycling and reusing of waste water. These are part of the Loyola Green Initiative, conforming to Pope Francis' encyclical, *Laudato Si*.

More than 100 slum dwellers, affected by floods last year, attended a one-day seminar on "Voice of Slums in Post-Flood Chennai: Future Concerns" organized by LCC's Dept. of Service Learning (Outreach) on 24 Oct. Disaster relief and livelihood were among the concerns raised by slum dwellers and experts.

This year **LIBA** has transformed its Informatic Centre into its CSR initiative. As part of this effort, LIBA has already admitted one Tamil student from Sri Lanka and 4 Sri Lankan refugees sent by JRS and 28 migrants identified by Fr Sebastian Crossian. They will be pursuing different certificate and diploma courses. More than 80 First Year students received Summer Placement Offers from companies with stipends ranging from Rs.10,000-30,000 per month. Final Placement commenced on 23 Nov. By 27 Nov 73 Second Year students had received offers with remunerations ranging from Rs 7 lakhs to 14 lakhs.

**LICET** has won 11 Anna University ranks this year.

**Fr Mark Stephen, Kuppayanalloor** has launched a group called 'Kuruthu.' It aims to bring together men and women from all walks of life, all religions, communities and ideologies - provided they are committed to working to protect our environment. At present it is a team of 20 members, who first met on 16 Oct and have since been meeting once a week to discuss eco-related topics.

**PEAK**, SHC, Shembag, in collaboration with Leonard Hospital, Batlagundu, held a one-day free

medical camp in Nattam Patty (Upper Hills) on 26 Nov. More than 150 poor Dalit and tribal people benefitted from it. **LISTEN (Loyola Institute of Spirituality, Training and Education)**, launched its first programme for the year - 'Kalvi Vizha' - on 23 Nov. Five Christian Schools from the Kodai Hills sent a few of their students. Activities were geared towards appreciation of Tamil culture, awareness of the natural history of Palani Hills, exposure to the usage of dictionaries and learning to speak in public.

**Fr Micheal John, St Joseph's**, won the second prize for a research paper he presented at the Global Conference on Leadership and Business Management (GCLBM-2016) held on 01,02 Nov in Singapore. **Fr Joe Arun** handled two sessions at the annual JEA meet, held this year at Maduralaya and helped the province co-ordinators of secondary education face the challenges of teaching today's unschooled and networked students. **Fr Xavier Antony** has written some more books of stories and produced an audio CD called '175 Everyday Prayers for Educational Institutions.' Several institutions are beginning to use these multi-religious prayers.

Thanks to the hard work of **Fr Marianathan**, the physical director, **Fr Stephen L Pragasam**, sports in charge and **Fr Bastin**, HM, for the first time in history, 18 teams from St Mary's, Dindigul have qualified for state level competitions.



## Abide with the Lord

- Fr Cornelius Lakra, SJ (JAM), 77/59 on 06 Nov '16 at Golmuri.
- Fr Cherubim Sah, SJ (PAT), 88/66, on 10 Nov '16 in Patna.
- Fr Derrick Mendis, SJ (SRI), 79/50, on 07 Nov in Negombo, Sri Lanka.
- Fr Richard A Kenna (JAM), 90 /72, on 12 Nov '16 in Jamshedpur.
- Fr Paul F. Terrens, SJ, (RAN), 92/74, on 21 Nov '16 at Mandar, Ranchi.
- Fr Sabu Malayil S.J.(KER), 55/24, on 23 Nov '16 at Angamali, Kerala.
- Br Anthony (Tony) D' Souza SJ, (PUN), 92/66, on 01 Dec '16 at Shrirampur.



## MEEMPILLIKAVIL J. JOHN, SJ

1924 - 2016

**F**r John Meempillikavil was born in a traditional Catholic family at Kakkoor, a village in Ernakulam Dt of Kerala. He was the second son of Mr Joseph and Mrs Mary, in a family of seven children, three sons and four daughters. Of the three sons John and his elder brother Mathai became Jesuits. Of the four daughters two became nuns in the Congregation of the Missionaries of Ajmer.

After passing his S.S.L.C. John joined St Joseph's College, Tiruchirapalli for his Intermediate Course and then joined the Jesuit novitiate, following his elder brother, Mathai. After his regency at Leo XIII High School, Alleppey and his theology at Kurseong, he was ordained a priest on 21 Nov 1956. He served as a quiet and committed pastor at Elaiarasanendhal, Theni, Uthumalai, Vandanam and Karuthapillaiyur. He was loved by the people for his simplicity and availability. He was also the assistant pastor in Veeravanallur and Puliampatti for six years. He had a stint as Chaplain at Nettur and Irudayakulam for eight years. From 1998 to 2005 he was at Vailankanni Shrine ministering to the Malayalee pilgrims, saying Mass for them and hearing their confessions. In 2005 when his health deteriorated, he was assigned to St Mary's, Dindigul as Spiritual Father. After a year at Manalur he was shifted to Beschi Iilam for his well-earned rest. He was regular for his daily Mass and prayers. The rest of the time he spent in reading

newspapers and magazines.

He was a source of joy and cheerfulness in the community, and went about like a free bird humming tunes all along till the evening of 14 Oct, when he fell down and broke his left femur bone. He was rushed to St Joseph Hospital, where he was operated on successfully to set right the fractured femur.

After some painful days, he was brought to Beschi. But as he developed pneumonia, he had to be taken back to the hospital, where on 06 Nov he died peacefully.

The funeral Mass on 07 Nov was presided by Bishop Jude Paulraj of Palayamkottai who wanted to honour the veteran pastor who had worked in his diocese. Fr Joe Antony, the Acting Provincial,

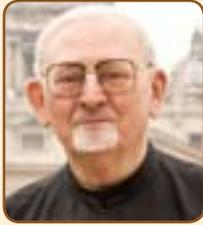


recalled Fr John's pastoral services in the different parishes of Tamil Nadu and thanked God for him and conveyed the message of Fr Provincial who was in Rome, attending the GC. Fr Mampra was the homilist. After the Mass, Bishop Jude Paulraj, Fr Masillamani Pauliah, and Fr Puthiadam paid tributes. Mr Justin, a grand nephew of Fr John, thanked, on behalf of the family, the Society, the Beschi community and those who looked after him in his last days. The commendation in the chapel was done by Fr Leo Tagore, the Superior. At the cemetery, the rite of final Committal was performed by Fr I. Lourduraj of Palayamkottai diocese. May the soul of Fr John, the silent, hard-working and committed pastor, rest in peace!

- Mampra C. Xavier, SJ

## Memories

### The Spiritual Legacy of Peter-Hans Kolvenbach



Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, SJ., who died on 26 Nov '16 in Beirut, Lebanon, was the 29th Superior General of the Society of Jesus, who guided the order through one of the most tumultuous periods in its history. He served as Superior General for nearly a quarter-century; only four superiors general have held the office for longer. Fr Kolvenbach was known for his simplicity and moderation. Gerard O'Connell said, "He was a man of few words, but was ever gracious and kind."

Perhaps Fr Kolvenbach's most lasting legacy will be his ability to ease the tensions that had arisen between the papacy and the Jesuits during the generalate of his predecessor. As Fr Joseph M. McShane, SJ, president of Fordham University, said, "Most Jesuits would tell you that his humility, holiness, integrity and savvy diplomacy were what stabilized the society after one of the roughest periods of our history. Without his serenity and savvy, we would have been very much at sea. We owe him more than we could ever repay." In his nearly 25 years at the helm of the Jesuits, Fr Kolvenbach was the quintessential peacemaker between the papacy and the society.

After his resignation as Superior General in January, 2008, Fr Kolvenbach practically disappeared from public life, never granting interviews, and hardly ever making public appearances. He was back in the Province of the Near East, where he served as assistant librarian in his Jesuit community in Beirut.

- **Daniel Cosacchi**  
in *America*

## Just for...



"Daddy, who did you say gave me that bike for Christmas?"

"Santa Claus."

"Well, he was here this morning and said you had to pay the next installment for it."

## Secrets

*for Well-being and Peace*



### Joy of Christmas is meant for all

Mary's joy that was announced by the Angel ("Rejoice, full of grace!"), stressed by the shepherds ("I announce to you a great joy"), and expressed in the vibrant melody of her canticle ("My spirit rejoices in God my Saviour"), passes now from Mother to Child day by day, look by look, smile by smile in the long nearness of 30 years which imprinted on the Son the features he had in advance imprinted on his Mother. He, who knew the physical and moral heritage that he would receive from his mother at the virgin conception, shapes her as he himself wants to be shaped in his bodily humanity. He gives to Mary the gift of joy because he wants to be joyful.

True, there were trials too and difficult moments and downright suffering. Simeon's prophecy, Jesus' staying back in Jerusalem at 12, the death of Joseph, the continued poverty, the incomprehension of relatives and friends, the untold fear about what could happen at any moment and would certainly happen at the end.. were all shadows that hovered over Nazareth, as similar shadows hover over all families on earth. But they were only passing shadows.

The joy the angels announce is meant for the shepherds in the fields near Bethlehem, for Mary and Joseph by the side of the manger in the cave, and for all of us who share in the faith and the joy of the first Christmas.

- **Carlos G. Valles, SJ**  
in *Our Lady of Joy*